

Austerman Critical of Senate Actions and Inactions

Thursday, 03 May 2012

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The Alaska Legislature's top lawyer says the special session is, indeed, over.

Senate President

Gary Stevens of Kodiak had asked attorney Doug Gardner if the Senate needed to adjourn again, after having done so last Thursday. Under the state constitution, the Senate could not stay out longer than three days without the concurrence of the House, so they gaveled back in on Monday just to meet that constitutional requirement. Later that day, the House adjourned as well.

Gardner, in

a legal memo, says there's no need for the Senate to take any further action because the special session is over.

At a press

conference after the House adjourned, Majority Leader Alan Austerman of Kodiak criticized the Senate for its inaction on the oil tax bill.

"One

of the things I think (we) ought to refer back to is when the senate adjourned last time, and they adjourned because the governor had withdrawn 3001 because he didn't see progress on it. The Senate had the option at that point in time in keeping that bill and working it. They even said so much, that the governor didn't have that right to withdraw that bill. So they had every opportunity both with the natural gas line that we've been talking about here in the last couple days, but also with the oil. And I think that's probably the biggest disappoint and surprise on my part is why they didn't stay and do the work they're supposed to be doing."

Governor

Parnell has said he has no plans to call legislators back in for a second special session.