

Kodiak, Other Chambers, Distance Themselves from Sullivan Ad

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Liz Ruskin/APRN and Jay Barrett/KMXT

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the latest Outside group to launch campaign ads in Alaska's U.S. Senate race. The national business lobby has a 30-second television commercial running this week that slams incumbent Democrat Senator Mark Begich and supports one of his Republican challengers.

"Mark Begich sided with Washington. Again. Dan Sullivan puts Alaska first"

Almost immediately chambers of commerce around the state distanced themselves from the ads. Kodiak Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Trevor Brown reassured members in an e-mailed statement that the local organization has no affiliation with the U.S. Chamber, and remains independent and non-partisan.

Anchorage Chamber President Andrew Halcro also issued a statement to say the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a separate organization.

"We just wanted to notify our members that these ads, which are identified as produced by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, have no affiliation with the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce."

Likewise, the Alaska Chamber of Commerce says it does not endorse candidates for federal office. The Alaska Chamber, though, IS a member of the U.S. Chamber. President Rachael Petro says the U.S. group notified her of the ad but says the Alaska Chamber had no input.

"We just have no opinion on this topic and we have nothing to do with those ads."

The older brother of Republican candidate Dan Sullivan, who is the beneficiary of the attack ads, sits on the board of directors of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Frank Sullivan, who lives in the family's home state of Ohio, runs the company that makes Rust-Oleum.