



Assembly Chair Anna Brawley

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August 6, 2026

To Assembly Members and other interested parties:

This letter accompanies the summary memo from the Internal Audit (IA) Department, dated July 28, 2026, regarding a special project requested by me in my capacity as Chair on June 22, 2026, to review the approval process of Assembly members' travel expenditures, adherence to our existing policies, and identify any findings and recommendations for process improvement. Because there is considerable interest by members as well as the public in the findings of this special project, I am providing this cover letter to document the purpose and scope of the project as I originally requested in June, what has happened to date, and intended next steps.

Scope and Purpose

In June 2026, questions were raised by some Assembly members and members of the public about (1) specific past travel expenditures by a member, which led to (2) broader questions about the processes used for Assembly members to initiate and seek approval for travel in their official capacity, and travel as one authorized use of Assembly members' individual spending accounts (ISAs), which is an annual allotment of \$24,000 per member (by seat), prorated in a partial year where a person's term begins or ends. ISAs and other allowed uses are not addressed in this letter or the special project, but will be part of future discussions (see *Next Steps*). The first set of questions is a separate matter not covered here.

The second broad set of questions was the impetus for requesting this study from IA, using an existing internal process available to department directors to do an internal special project, with findings released to the director, a separate process from that more familiar to Assembly members, the official audit process which produces a public report from IA. My intent in making this request has been to make these results public, now available in the summary attached; using a special project to request this review also allowed for a much faster turnaround than a full audit project would have provided. Parameters provided to IA:

- *Scope*: Approved travel requested and completed by Assembly members who served in the provided timeframe, and whether those instances of travel followed existing policies and procedures set out for Assembly travel, either using branch travel or ISA funds.
- *Timeframe*: January 2025 – April 2026, intended to be a recent sample of approved travel, rather than a comprehensive lookback over multiple years.
- *Key questions*:
 - For travel within the scope, was the travel approval process followed, including required documentation upon returning?

- Was any travel approved that appears to have not followed current policies?
- If members used other fund sources toward travel on Assembly business, were these properly reimbursed and/or costs not charged to the Muni?

IA staff agreed to take on this project, and stated they would be able to complete the project by late July or early August, and would provide a summary memo as well as discussing findings in a meeting with the Chair. Clerk staff were tasked with compiling all relevant records (travel approvals, receipts, e-mail exchanges regarding approval and booking, etc.), and promptly provided all available records to IA. The Municipal Attorney was also informed of this process.

What's Happened to Date

- June 22, 2026: Chair made request to IA, IA agreed to conduct project
- June-July: Clerk staff gathered records; based on preliminary findings and takeaways from reviewing records, Clerk and Chair discussed ideas for process and policy improvements, to bring to the body at the conclusion of IA project. Chair and Vice Chair also discussed ideas for process and policy improvements.
- July 1, 2026: Initiation and scope of project briefly discussed at Audit Committee
- July 27, 2026: IA staff reported project complete, requested meeting to discuss findings.
- July 28, 2026: IA staff, Chair, Clerk, and Municipal Attorney staff met to discuss findings. Chair shared intent to discuss findings at next Rules Committee meeting, and continue working with Clerk on proposed improvements.
- August 6, 2026: Chair prepares this letter and requests staff to formally transmit letter and IA findings to Assembly members.

Next Steps and Proposed Discussion Topics

Below is a brief outline of next steps, with more information forthcoming:

This topic will be discussed at the next Rules Committee meeting on Thursday, August 13, including a brief presentation of findings by IA staff, and discussion with the body about current policies, proposed changes, and other responses to the findings.

This conversation needs to be in context of two broader considerations for members:

- First, the parameters and limitations the body wants over members' discretion over ISA expenditures. Travel is one allowed expenditure; others include hiring contract aide services; supplies, equipment, and other resources; participation in events not requiring travel; mailing and other communications.
- Second, the approval process, and specifically approval authority, of the Chair in regard to how other members choose to carry out their legislative business (and for the Chair, the approval authority is the Vice Chair). Who should make these decisions? Is the

Chair's role totally discretionary, and can deny things with or without a reason? Is it ministerial, meaning signing something after confirming it follows policy, but not discretionary judgment to approve or deny? Who is ultimately responsible for determining and justifying expenditures?

The proposed next steps to make any changes of interest to what's allowed or prohibited, and what the approval process should be for expenditures, is to consider our current Assembly policies that apply to travel (one regarding travel approvals, the other regarding allowed and prohibited expenses with ISAs), and update those policies. Assembly policies are ultimately adopted by the chair, but this warrants discussion of the full body about what rules and processes we feel are proper for members' individual discretion over spending accounts, including but not limited to travel.

I do not anticipate we will come to final conclusions and specific policy changes in the August 13 Rules Committee meeting, but we can start the conversation after a review of the facts (IA project findings), current policies, and delving more deeply into what resources members have available to do legislative business and the process for utilizing those resources.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'ABrawley', written in dark ink.

Anna Brawley, Assembly Chair
District 3, West Anchorage

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 28, 2026

TO: Chair, Anchorage Assembly

CC: Municipal Attorney
Municipal Clerk

FROM: Director, Internal Audit *Asst*

SUBJECT: Assembly Travel Review

Honorable Chair Brawley,

At your request we have completed a review of Assembly travel for the period of January 2025 through April 2026. The object of this review was to determine if the approval of Assembly members' travel and the associated expenditures adhered to applicable Municipal and Assembly travel policies. To accomplish this objective, we reviewed Assembly travel authorizations, email correspondence, expense reports along with submitted receipts. We also ran an SAP query on Assembly travel to determine if the SAP records matched the expenditures listed on the expense report.

In summary, during the period of January 2025 through April 2026, eight Assembly members took 38 separate trips (not including two cancelled trips) with a total cost of the travel at \$93,232.22. All 38 trips had travel authorization forms with the Assembly Chair or Vice Chair approving the travel prior to the travel date. All 38 trips had expense reports with complete documentation to support the expense listed on the form. No Assembly Member's travel expenses exceeded their Individual Spending Account allotment (\$24,000/year) during the review period.

According to the Municipal Clerk, the Office of the Municipal Clerk "...follow [Policy and Procedure] 68-1 and travel procedure guide which prioritizes the use of Alaska Airlines and Easybiz." Policy and Procedure 68-1 Travel Approval, *Travel Expense And Per Diem*, states "Travelers should attempt to travel by the most economical method possible." It also states "Airfare...Refer to the Travel Procedure Guide for reservation and payment procedures." The Travel Procedure Guide states "Travelers are encouraged to obtain a ticket from Alaska Airlines' Easy Biz as the MOA, in addition to travelers will earn miles which can be used for free tickets, but only if Alaska Airlines has the lowest cost airfare." We verified all 36 trip booked by the Clerk's Office staff were booked through Alaska Airlines. However, we were unable to determine if Alaska Airlines had the lowest cost airfare at the time of booking, since the Clerk's Office was unable to provide documentation for the validation.

In addition, our review found that, in July 2025, former Assembly Chair Constant established an Assembly Travel Policy requiring a 60-day pre-approval by the Chair or their designee prior to the travel authorization form being submitted. The Assembly Travel Policy states that "Travel must be approved by the Chair or their designee before submitting a travel request. ... Travel request should be submitted to the Clerk's Office at least sixty (60) days prior to departure." The Assembly Travel Policy was updated on February 26, 2026, but the verbiage that required the 60-day pre-approval by the Chair or their designee prior to the travel authorization form being submitted remained unchanged. 15 of the 38 trips taken by Assembly members during the review period were subject to the requirement of the 60-day pre-approval. We received only one document from the Clerk's office to determine if this requirement was met. We know recovering emails from former Chair Constant may be challenging, but we could not verify the other 14 travel requests met this requirement.

Finally, when Assembly member Martinez attended the 2025 Somos Inc Puerto Rico Conference in November 2025, the conference was completed on Sunday November 9, 2025, however, Assembly member Martinez elected to stay November 10th and November 11th post conference. The Municipal Clerk sent an email to Assembly member Martinez to ask if those two dates were personal days and not business related days. Assembly member Martinez replied "... the extra day is for post-conference -related meetings..." No other information on who he was meeting, or a meeting agenda was provided. Subsequently, the extra days were processed as business related days by the Clerk's Office, and \$48/day (\$96 for two days) per diem was paid.

A review of all our collected documents are available upon your request.