



FAIRBANKS

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Health care is law

By JENNIFER LOVEN  
AP White House  
Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Claiming a historic triumph that could define his presidency, a jubilant Barack Obama signed a massive, nearly \$1 trillion health care overhaul on Tuesday that will for the first time cement insurance coverage as the right of every U.S. citizen and begin to

reshape the way virtually all Americans receive and pay for treatment.

After more than a year of hyperpartisan struggle — and numerous near-death moments for the measure — Obama declared “a new season in America” as he sealed a victory denied to a line of presidents stretching back more than half a century.

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Bill brings Medicare options

By CHRISTOPHER ESHLEMAN  
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JUNEAU — The new health care program will let the state, if needed, kick in to help reimburse Medicare costs in much of

Alaska, state House Democrats said Tuesday.

The group said a clause in the bill, signed by President Obama on Tuesday, partially lifts a ban on state supplements to federal reimbursements.

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The Associated Press  
President Barack Obama signs the health care bill Tuesday in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

Chimney fire destroys cabin



Eric Engman photos/News-Miner

Firefighters work to extinguish a blaze that destroyed a 2,400-square-foot home off Chena Hot Springs Road on Tuesday.

Blazing fire chars hillside on which cabin sat

By JOSHUA ARMSTRONG  
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A chimney fire destroyed a large cabin near Chena Hot Springs Road on Tuesday morning.

Donald “Buster” Culver, 50, was the only person in the house at the time. He heard popping from high in the wood stove’s chimney and on the roof.

Culver immediately ran out of the house and called the North Star Fire Department. He said the cabin went up in flames the moment he stepped out of the doorway.

The fire quickly engulfed the house, a progression that North Star Capt. Justin Boddy attributed to sawdust insulation and tightly sealed walls that kept the heat inside.

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The North Star Volunteer Fire Department responded to the chimney fire at 757 Adventure Road and were assisted by the Steese and Fort Wainwright fire departments. There were no injuries reported.

Rossi’s defense

Curt letter chastises detractors of wildlife chief

By TIM MOWRY  
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Calling their approach “regrettable,” Alaska Department of Fish and Game commissioner Denby Lloyd on Tuesday

responded in writing to a group of nearly 40 retired biologists and supervisors who protested the recent appointment of Corey Rossi as the state’s new wildlife director.

“Unless and until you become familiar with Mr. Rossi and his leadership of the division, your simple call for his replacement will foment the very erosion of staff morale and reduction of public support for the division that you decry,” Lloyd wrote in a letter of response.

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Rossi



Lloyd

Sourdough Jack sez:



“Heck, I know how to jig for fish, bait bears and clean a moose. Maybe I should be a fish and game employee, too.”

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House Dems warn against rush on energy tax bill

By BECKY BOHRER  
Associated Press Writer

JUNEAU — Weeks after key state senators warned that Alaska could lose billions in revenue if it didn’t change its system of taxing oil and gas production together, House Democrats said Tuesday that the opposite may be true.

Democrats said after a meeting with the Alaska’s

attorney general that the state could face financial ruin if lawmakers rush through changes before a natural gas pipeline open season later this year, when producers can reserve space in proposed pipelines. They said Alaska can



separate oil and gas for taxation after the anticipated May 1 open season but the state risks locking itself into a gas tax rate if the oil and gas taxes are separated before the open season.

Minority Leader Beth Kerttula, D-Juneau, said lawmakers pursuing a change now are going down a dangerous path that could lead to “financial ruin.” The current scheme tax-

es oil and gas together, with gas calculations based on its energy value relative to oil. A bill sponsored by the state Senate Finance Committee would separate gas from oil and is intended to do away with a potential “dilution effect” on state revenues, notably when oil prices are high relative to gas.

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