



For Immediate Release
April 30, 2026

Shelley Hughes Announces Brig. Gen. Blake Gettys (USAF, Ret.) as Lt. Governor Running Mate

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — April 30, 2026 — Gubernatorial candidate Shelley Hughes today announced Brigadier General Blake Gettys, U.S. Air Force (Ret.) of Eagle River, as her choice for Lieutenant Governor, bringing decades of military leadership, Alaska-based service, and proven crisis management experience to the ticket.

"I took the task of choosing my Lt. Governor very seriously on behalf of Alaskans who now, due to ranked choice voting laws, are no longer able to select the LG on their ballots. I did not rush the process. I was looking for someone smart, competent, and with demonstrated leadership who could work alongside me to help lead our state forward," said Hughes. "After vetting a number of qualified Alaskans, it was clear that Blake was the right person, a man of character and integrity."

"Blake Gettys is a tested leader who understands service, sacrifice, and the importance of putting mission and people first," continued Hughes. "From combat deployments to leading thousands of Alaskans in the Air National Guard, he has consistently stepped up in the moments that matter most. I am proud to have him as my partner in this campaign and have full confidence in his abilities to carry out what will be an expanded Lt. Governor role as we work together to ensure Alaska remains not only a great place to live for this generation and the next, but an even greater one — with abundant opportunity, a thriving economy, safe and vibrant communities, and strong families."

Gettys, a longtime Alaska resident and former commander of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing, built a career defined by leadership under pressure, innovation, and a deep commitment to those he served alongside. Over the course of his military service, he led large, complex organizations, including overseeing thousands of personnel and multiple operational squadrons with global deployment responsibilities.

"I've spent my life serving something bigger than myself—first in uniform, and now as a member of the Alaska community I've come to call home," said Gettys. "Alaska has given me so much, and I believe it's time to give back in a new way. Shelley Hughes is a principled leader with a clear vision for our state, and I'm honored to join her in this effort."

A graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he earned a degree in civil engineering and competed as a Division I athlete, Gettys went on to serve as a pilot flying missions across the globe, including during the Gulf War. After transitioning to Alaska for active duty at JBER, he continued his service through the Alaska Air National Guard, where he rose through the ranks to senior leadership.

During his tenure, Gettys was known for taking on complex organizational challenges, improving operational readiness, and strengthening coordination across military units. He also helped develop rapid-response capabilities tailored to Alaska's unique geography, including Arctic and remote rescue operations. Gettys also worked as a Northwest Airlines, then Delta Airlines 747 pilot. He and his wife April enjoy hunting and fishing in Kenai.

Gettys' leadership has also been shaped by personal resilience. A survivor of a life-threatening brown bear attack and profound personal loss, he returned to command with a renewed focus on mission, mentorship, and the well-being of those under his leadership—experiences that continue to inform his approach to public service.

As a Governor / Lt. Governor team working on behalf of Alaskans, Hughes and Gettys are prepared to meet both current challenges and future opportunities. Their campaign will focus on building a strong and diversified economy, ensuring government accountability, and unleashing opportunities so Alaskans can live affordable and rewarding lives.

Additional details about the campaign and upcoming events can be found at www.alaskansforhughes.com.

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