

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE ZACK FIELDS

Fairview • South Addition • Forest Park • Downtown • North Star

Sponsor Statement: HB 79

House Bill 79 recognizes the contributions of Vic Fischer to Alaska by naming Shoup Bay State Marine Park in Valdez after him.

In the 1960s, Vic Fischer was recruited from Alaska to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in Washington, D.C, where he managed Regional Planning for Urban Centers across the nation. On March 27, 1964, Alaska was struck by the largest-ever recorded earthquake in North America, known as the Good Friday Earthquake. Situated in the epicenter of the earthquake, the town of Valdez was devastated by an underwater landslide and tsunami that deemed the townsite uninhabitable.

Upon hearing the news, Vic Fischer immediately secured a seat on Air Force One from Washington, D.C. to return to Alaska to survey the damage. Fischer witnessed overwhelming destruction to infrastructure, businesses, and schools, and noted that without significant intervention, the area would not survive economically. Through his position, Vic Fischer was instrumental in directing the federal finances of the reconstruction of Valdez, Kodiak, and Anchorage.

Shoup Bay State Marine Park is located five miles southeast of the Port of Valdez and is where the largest tsunami wave of the 1964 earthquake – measuring over 200 feet in height – was recorded. Today, Shoup Bay State Marine Park boasts alder forests, flower-filled meadows, stunning views of the Shoup Glacier, and is visited by roughly 100,000 visitors a year, contributing an estimated \$5 million to the local economy.

One of Vic's legacies was sponsoring legislation in 1983 to establish a new system of state marine parks across Alaska. His legislation designated thirteen state marine parks, and more have been designated since. Because of Vic's dedication to the reconstruction of Valdez and preservation of Alaska's marine parks, visitors for generations to come can enjoy Shoup Bay State Marine Park and other wonders of Alaska.