



Office of the Borough Mayor

144 N. Binkley Street, Soldotna, Alaska 99669 • (907) 714-2150 • (907) 714-2377

Charlie Pierce
Mayor

March 14, 2018 @ 13:00

Alaska Judiciary Standing Committee

HB 355: Human Caused Wildfire Reduction Act

Public Testimony - *Documented*

On behalf of Mayor Pierce, the borough administration supports enactment of HB355. As the population continues to grow on the peninsula so too does the expectation that wildland fires must be reduced using combined strategies. Too often we quickly lose the sense of awareness or fail to practice prevention after the response to wildfires and costly rehabilitation measures have been completed for the season.

This bill creates an updated framework that addresses fire prevention and enforcement actions aimed at reducing risk, educating the public through outreach and recognizing the movement toward establishing fire adapted communities. Let's face it: we live in the trees - the wildland urban interface - or WUI, and fuels reduction projects on private and public land holdings should complement fire as a natural occurrence on the landscape. What shouldn't be acceptable is that approximately 98 percent of all fire starts on the peninsula are human-caused ... 98 percent.

As the WUI continues to intermingle with forested lands, as we continue to live in the trees, let us recognize that minimizing wildfire risk is a shared responsibility among all landowners.

Testifier:

Brenda Ahlberg, Community & Fiscal Projects Manager / Public Information Officer for the Kenai Peninsula Borough

bahlberg@kpb.us
907-714-2153