

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS**
NOVEMBER 28, 2017
10:00 AM

10:06:20 AM

Members Present:

Senator Dennis Egan (Teleconference)
Representative Chris Tuck
Representative David Eastman
Conner Thomas, Chair (Teleconference)
Dennis "Skip" Cook (Teleconference)
Lee Holmes (Teleconference)
Joyce Anderson (Teleconference)
Deborah Fancher

Others Present:

Jerry Anderson, Administrator (Teleconference)
Dan Wayne, LAA Legal (Teleconference)
Janice Stewart, Administrative Assistant

1. Call the Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Conner Thomas at 10:04 a.m.

2. Approval of agenda:

A motion to approve the agenda was made by member Lee Holmes. No objection. Agenda was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes:

a. October 30, 2017 Full Committee Minutes

Motion to approve by Skip Cook. No Objection.
Minutes approved.

b. October 30, 2017 Senate Subcommittee Minutes

Motion to approve by Skip Cook. No objection.
Minutes approved.

c. October 30, 2017 House Subcommittee Minutes

Motion to approve by Skip Cook. Member Lee Holmes noted that Representative Eastman was present via teleconference and asked that the minutes be amended

with the notation. No objection. Minutes were approved with the amendment.

4. Public Comment:

Representative Wilson spoke to the committee regarding a letter written to Ethics Committee administrator Jerry Anderson on September 19, 2017, from Representative Wilson's attorney, Ted Stepovich. The letter was in response to the committee's decision regarding Complaint H 16-01 which had been filed against Representative Wilson. She had not received confirmation that the letter had been received and did not know if the committee members had opportunity to read it. Representative Wilson stated that she was not invited to the August 16, 2017 meeting when the complaint against her was being discussed. She believed this to be a violation of the Ethics Act as she was not allowed to testify. Representative Wilson proceeded to read the letter aloud. Chair Conner Thomas asked if the letter had been provided to the committee. Representative Wilson confirmed that it had, and to the administrator as well. Chair Thomas thanked her for her statement and assured her that her concerns would be addressed.

Thomas Obermeyer, an Anchorage resident and former legislative aide to Bettye Davis, made a statement to the committee regarding the Alaska Bar Association and the licensing of attorneys in Alaska. Mr. Obermeyer stated that the Bar Association was controlling the licensing of attorneys in Alaska by setting an unreasonably high score on the bar exam. He also stated that he was a licensed attorney in the state of Missouri, but strict rules of reciprocity did not allow his success on the bar exam there to translate into an Alaska license. He felt the Alaska Bar Association was unsupervised and able to set whatever rules they like to control who becomes a licensed attorney in the state of Alaska. He asked the committee to submit a bill on his behalf that would change the rules of reciprocity, allowing for a more lenient scoring rubric.

Mrs. Theresa Obermeyer handed out a statement and copies of the legislation, written by her, to the members present in lieu of an oral statement.

Chair Thomas thanked the Obermeyers for taking the time to present to the committee.

5. Motion to go into EXECUTIVE SESSION to discuss matters which by law must remain confidential under AS 24.60.160, Uniform Rule 22(b) regarding executive sessions, and Rules of Procedure Section 5: Executive Sessions and discussion of matters, the immediate knowledge of would adversely affect the finances of a governmental unit, and discussion of subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of a person.

A Motion to move into executive session was made by Lee Holmes. No Objection.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

7. PUBLIC SESSION

Chair Conner Thomas asked for a motion to approve the amended Advisory Opinion 17-05. Motion by Lee Holmes. No objection.

Formal Advisory Opinion AO 17-05 advises whether a legislative staffer may on government time 1) participate in charting the general strategy for passage or defeat of a state ballot initiative, 2) conduct research related to a pending state ballot initiative and 3) prepare documents for a state ballot initiative other than documents related to signature gathering or fundraising.

Chair Conner Thomas reminded members that a vote of YES will be a vote to concur with the draft opinion. A vote of NO will be to not concur with the draft opinion.

Those concurring with AO 17-05:

Senator Dennis Egan
Representative Chris Tuck
Skip Cook
Conner Thomas, Chair
Joyce Anderson
Deb Fancher
Lee Holmes

Those not concurring with AO 17-05:

Representative David Eastman

Absent:

Senator John Coghill

With a majority of the committee voting to concur, the Advisory Opinion will be published as amended in executive session.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics will be held on January 12, 2018, in Juneau. Time and location to be determined.

Representative Eastman noted that he may have a conflict on that date.

9. ADJOURN:

A Motion to adjourn was made by Lee Holmes. No objection. Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

11:56:56 AM