

Senate Labor & Commerce Committee
Hearing Presenter Biographies

Tuesday January 24th

John Binder

Deputy Commissioner

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

John Binder currently serves as the Deputy Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), overseeing the State of Alaska's International Airport System and managing the state's rural and international airports.

After retiring from the United States Air Force in September 2012, Mr. Binder joined Lockheed Martin's National Airspace Implementation Support Contract (NISC) team in assisting the Federal Aviation Administration upgrade Alaska's airspace and air traffic infrastructure. He joined the State of Alaska government in June 2013 when he became the Operations Manager for the Division of Statewide Aviation, directing aviation operations and planning for the state's 247 rural airports.

Mr. Binder had a distinguished active duty career, retiring in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel after 21 years of service. He was a command pilot with both fighter and trainer aircraft experience in the F-15C Eagle, T-38 Talon, and the T-6 Texan II. His career encompassed several key leadership positions including managing the Air Force's busiest airfield, directing installation safety programs, and directing operational and training flying programs. Lieutenant Colonel Binder is a combat veteran with service in Operations Southern Watch and Noble Eagle, with military decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal (4), the Air Medal, and numerous additional campaign and service recognition medals.

Mr. Binder graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Astronautical Engineering. He also earned a Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Sciences from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 1995 and a Master of Science degree in Space Systems from the Air Force Institute of Technology in 2006.

Lori Wing-Heier

Director

Alaska Division of Insurance

Lori Wing-Heier was appointed Director of the Division of Insurance in February 2014. Director Wing-Heier has approximately 30 years of experience in the insurance industry, including as a broker and agent.

She most recently served as Director of Risk Management at a large Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporation where she designed and implemented a comprehensive enterprise-wide risk management program. She also served as senior vice-president at a national brokerage, working with Alaskan entities throughout the state, and as president of the Alaska Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers, Inc.

Director Wing-Heier attended North Central Michigan College and holds the Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) and Certified Risk Manager (CRM) designations. As Division Director, Wing-Heier oversees and enforces the division's mission to regulate the insurance industry to protect Alaskan consumers. Director Wing-Heier is a thirty-year resident of Alaska.

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Sarah Leonard

President & CEO

Alaska Travel Industry Association

Sarah Leonard is the President & CEO of the Alaska Travel Industry Association – the state’s leading membership trade association for the travel industry in Alaska. Sarah has an extensive educational and professional background in tourism management with a Master’s of Science degree in recreation management and tourism from Arizona State University. She earned her Bachelor of Art’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Journalism with a special emphasis in public relations. Because she is from Wisconsin, she is required to be an avid Green Bay Packer’s fan. Sarah has been involved in promoting Alaska’s wildlife, cultural and natural resources for almost twenty years in Alaska.
