

Senate Labor & Commerce Committee
Hearing Presenter Biographies

Wednesday January 18th

Dan Robinson

Chief of Research & Analysis

Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Dan Robinson returned to the department in 2011 after spending two years at McDowell Group, an Alaska economic consulting firm. Prior to that, he had worked as statewide economist for the Department of Labor for eight years. Mr. Robinson's work experience has included time at a Washington, D.C. energy consulting firm, a New York City law firm, and the Alaska Attorney General's Office in Anchorage and Juneau. He is a graduate of Utah State University and Cornell Law School.

Dr. Mouhcine Guettabi

Assistant Professor of Economics

University of Alaska Anchorage Institute of Social & Economic Research

Mouhcine Guettabi has been on the ISER faculty since July 2012. He holds a joint appointment with the economics department where he teaches Urban and Regional economics, and Health economics. His research interests range from the role of sprawl in affecting health outcomes to econometric modeling at the sub-national level.

Jonathan King

Vice President & Senior Economist

Northern Economics

Jonathan King joined Northern Economics, Inc. in March 2003 as an economist specializing in both fisheries and land use issues. Upon his arrival, he was mildly amused by the fact that this focus could easily describe as an entree option in a nice restaurant (surf n' turf). Jonathan was invited to join NEI's ownership team in 2007 and has served as the company's Vice President since 2012. In his years with NEI, Jonathan has continued to work on land and fish issues, but has also had a strong presence in projects involving surveys, rural transportation, aviation, taxation, forecasting, and customer satisfaction. Jonathan can frequently be found on the local and state lecture circuit speaking on economic issues.

Jonathan has been a professional economics consultant since graduating with a B.A in economics and class valedictorian from St. Lawrence University in 1996. From 1996 until 2000 he worked as an economist for Triangle Economic Research in Durham, NC. He completed his M.Sc. in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics in August 2002. In addition to being a practicing economist, Jonathan has expanded his skill set to include leadership development and strategic planning.

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Thursday January 19th

Dr. Ralph Townsend

Director & Professor of Economics

University of Alaska Anchorage Institute of Social & Economic Research

Ralph Townsend became ISER's director in August 2016. He has 30 years of experience in higher education and government, including research, administration, and teaching.

Dr. Townsend was dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Winona State University in Minnesota from 2010 to 2016. Before that he was on the faculty of the economics department at the University of Maine for 20 years; for five of those years he chaired the department and for two years he was associate dean of the graduate school.

Much of his past research has been in fisheries economics, but he has also studied a range of public-policy issues, including health-care policy, anti-trust and regulatory policy, education finance, and waste management. He has broad experience in the classroom as well, teaching principles of economics, antitrust and regulation, history of thought, mathematical economics, graduate microeconomics, undergraduate and graduate econometrics, and graduate public finance.

Dr. Townsend has been an advisor to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Western Pacific and New England fishery management councils, and the U.S. Department of State. For three years, he was chief economist for the New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries. He is also past president of the International Institute for Fisheries Economics and Trade and the North American Association of Fisheries Economists.

Marcus Hartley

President

Northern Economics

Marcus Hartley's work for Northern Economics has focused on issues involving fisheries and fisheries infrastructure. He has also had significant involvement in natural gas and LNG pipeline projects and has been a leader in developing tools and resources to enhance community impact assessments. Before coming to Northern Economics in 1997, Marcus was Senior Economist at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, where he became a recognized expert in providing economic analysis for decision-makers in some of the world's most important fisheries.

Marcus has been a professional economist since receiving his M.Sc. in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from Oregon State University 1989. Working as an applied economist to help communities and individuals make good decisions about their resources became a priority for Marcus after 2 years in the Peace Corps. Working in Nepal as a fisheries extension officer, Marcus witnessed the power of economic thinking and the consequences of uninformed decisions.

The fisheries program presented small farmers an opportunity to move from their tradition of growing rice on their land—which might be just enough to support their families—to fish farming—which could give them a chance to accumulate wealth and break free from their cycle of poverty. Unfortunately, fish farming was not risk-free, and it required new skills, dedication, and hard work. If the farmer wasn't able to meet the challenge, or if external factors turned negative, then the decision could result in failure, the

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loss of a farmer's land, and even starvation for the family. The trade-off between relatively risk-free rice farming—with a continued life of poverty—against a very risky leap of faith into fish farming—with a higher profit potential and a chance to accumulate wealth—was clear. It was also clear that economics could provide information to help these farmers—and many other people facing complex issues—in their decision processes.

While much of Marcus's work has involved fisheries, his most satisfying work comes with application of ideas and concepts from one field to areas of study in which they have not been used.

Mark Romick

*Deputy Executive Director
Alaska Housing Finance Corporation*

Mark has worked for the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), since the merger with the Alaska State Housing Authority (ASHA) in 1992. Mark held several positions within in the planning and program development department, including the directorship beginning in 2006.

Mark has 28 years of experience in the housing industry including housing market research, housing policy and program development, financial analysis of rental housing and the use of state and federal housing programs for affordable and special needs housing development.

Mark holds a Bachelor in Economics from the University of the Pacific and a Master of Economics from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Joe Beedle

*Chairman
Northrim Bank*

Joe Beedle joined Northrim Bank in 2006 as Executive Vice President, Chief Lending Officer. Joe was promoted to President in 2009, President & Chief Executive Officer in 2011, and to his current title of Chairman in late 2015. He has over 30 years of banking experience, including 20 years in an executive role, having served as Executive Vice President and Chief Credit Officer for Key Bank of Alaska from 1985 to 1993 during a devastating recession. Joe was the University of Alaska's Chief Financial Officer from 2000 to 2006 and he served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Goldbelt, Inc., in Juneau for six years prior to taking the university position.

Joe currently serves on the board of the Pacific Coast Graduate School of Banking at UW, is a past-president of the Alaska Bankers Association, a past past-president of Commonwealth Northrim and is on the University of Alaska Fairbanks Chancellor's Advisory Board. He served on the board of the Small Business Development Center for 30 years, UA ISER Advisory Board, on various Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy committees, Cold Climate Housing Research Board and the JA Business Hall of Fame Laureate Selection Committee.

Mr. Beedle was for six months a Governor William Egan college intern including during the 1972 legislative session and has followed closely the economic, political and fiscal issues facing Alaska ever since.

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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.

Thursday January 26th

Chris Hladick

Commissioner

Alaska Department of Commerce Community & Economic Development

As Commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Chris Hladick oversees six divisions and seven corporate agencies. He serves on the boards of the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Alaska Marine Pilots, Alaska Railroad Corporation, and Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute. Commissioner Hladick also serves on the National Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee’s Arctic Working Group and on the Arctic Council’s Arctic Marine Cooperation taskforce. In 2011, Commissioner Hladick was appointed by the Alaska State Legislature to the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission. He is also an active member of the Alaska Municipal League and the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference.

Commissioner Hladick came to the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development from Unalaska where he served as city manager for 14 years. He was directly responsible for the day-to-day operation of city services and for the city’s long-term planning goals. Under his leadership, the city built the Carl E. Moses Boat Harbor, renovated the Spit Dock, built the Coast Guard Dock and a new diesel powerhouse, laid asphalt on previously unpaved streets, and completed the elementary school. In 2011, he was selected by the Alaska Municipal League Board of Directors as the Municipal Employee of the Year.

Previously, Commissioner Hladick served as city manager in Dillingham, Alaska, and as the city manager and public works director in Galena, Alaska.

Bill Popp

President & CEO

Anchorage Economic Development Corporation

Bill Popp has spent more than 40 years in both the Alaska private and public sectors. As President & CEO of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation since 2007, he sets the strategic direction in marketing Anchorage and Alaska to companies and global industries considering Anchorage as a place in

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which to do business and assists local businesses looking to expand both within Anchorage and Alaska as well as Lower 48 and international markets.

Prior to joining AEDC, Popp was a special assistant in the Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor's office focused on oil and gas and mining policy. Popp was also an elected municipal government official for the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) and presided over the KPB Assembly as president in 2000. Popp has over 25 years' of private industry experience working for large national and regional businesses and as a small business owner. He also served as project coordinator of the Challenger Learning Center for Alaska.

Popp is currently Chair of the 49th State Angel Fund Business Advisory Committee. He is a board member of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, Visit Anchorage, Anchorage Downtown Partnership, Alaska Public Media, Anchorage Concert Association, and membership development committee of the International Economic Development Council. Popp also serves as a member of the Alaskan Command Civilian Advisory Board, and is chair of the Mayor's Base Economic Analysis Research (BEAR) Working Group.

He has previously served as a member of Governor Bill Walker's Transition Committee and member of Mayor-Elect Ethan Berkowitz's Transition Committee. He has also served as chair of the Governor's Broadband Task Force, the UAA College of Business and Public Policy Advisory Board, and is a member of the Alaska Film Group, Municipality of Anchorage Energy Policy Task Force.

Other past service includes serving on the Legislative Energy Policy Stakeholders Group; chairman of the KPB Economic Development Criteria Task Force; chair of the Economic Development Committee for the Municipality of Anchorage; vice chairman of the Alaska Stranded Gas Act Municipal Advisory Group; co-chair of Governor Murkowski's Agrium Task Force; chair of the Kenai Peninsula Development Coalition; consultant for the British Columbia Provincial Government's Offshore Oil and Gas Team; member of the Tri-borough Commission Energy Task Force; Board member of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development District; Fundraising Chairman of the 2006 Arctic Winter Games; Fundraising Chair for the USS Anchorage Commissioning Ceremony; and a member of the Cook Inlet Natural Gas Pipeline Terminus Group.

Jim Dodson

Executive Director

Southeast Conference

Jim Dodson has been President/CEO of the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation since 2005.

Jim is a lifelong Fairbanks resident. He and his wife Kathi raised 4 children and have 2 grandchildren. Jim served in the US Army Vietnam 5th Special Forces Group and is a UA graduate. He is a successful businessman who serves on numerous local, state and national business and non-profit advisory boards; including the Chief of Staff of the Air Force's Civilian Advisory Board, the Governor's Alaska Military Force Advocacy and Structure Team (AMFAST) and the State of Alaska Aviation Advisory Board.

Jim's work at FEDC has been instrumental in supporting and developing new industry in the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the state. He is a tireless supporter of Energy programs and new jobs for Alaska.

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Shelly Wright

Executive Director

Southeast Conference

Shelly has been the Executive Director of Southeast Conference since June 2007. She has lived in Juneau since 1975. It took her a couple years to fall in love with Southeast Alaska, but once her heart was captured, it will be here forever. She raised her family here -- three sons, one daughter and four grandchildren, and they are all still living and working in SE AK.

She has had many careers and all of them have been directly connected to Southeast Alaska. She worked with Division of Elections, training elections workers for Region I (Southeast). She worked eight years for Wings of Alaska when their main focus was scheduled service to southeast communities. Shelly also worked five years at Silver Bay Logging during the time they had seven logging camps, a mill in Wrangell, an aviation division, and a marine division. Just before coming to Southeast Conference, she managed the Juneau Aspen Hotel for four years.

Her experience with Southeast Alaska has given her connection to the people, knowledge of how they live and work, and the big picture vision to represent Southeast Alaska as the Executive Director of Southeast Conference.