



THE STATE  
of ALASKA  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
Ryan Anderson, Commissioner

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February 24, 2022

The Honorable Click Bishop  
The Honorable Bert Stedman  
Co-Chairs, Senate Finance

Deliver via email to [Senate.Finance@akleg.gov](mailto:Senate.Finance@akleg.gov)

Dear Senator Bishop and Senator Stedman:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information back to the committee after the February 14 bill hearing on Senate Bill 168, an *“act relating to program receipts; and relating to the acceptance of gifts, donations, and grants for the purpose of providing signage for assets under the control of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.”* There were several wide-ranging questions that we researched to provide you with the following answers.

**Senator Stedman asked DOT&PF to provide all the ways in which a road, bridge or other DOT public facility can be named.**

Naming is predominantly accomplished via legislative action under AS 35.40 as required by AS 19.10.085 with both enacted into law in the early 1980s.

Many roads in Alaska were named prior to statehood through the Alaska Road Commission (Army) such as the Glenn, Parks, Richardson, and Sterling to name a few. When a new major road was added, it often took the name of the area it was built or, if replacing a previous road, the former road was renamed “old” such as “Old Glenn Highway” where there are many examples across the state. There are newer examples such as the Mitchell and Johansen expressways that can be found in AS 35.40 as directed by the legislature.

For local roads intersecting state rights of way, when DOT&PF installs signs, we depend on local ordinances. The department will, if need be, verify street names against local records or DNR plats. Only when all other naming entities are booked does DOT&PF rarely get called on for naming and in those cases the department tries to use the most simplistic/closest existing name. Examples include Old Glenn, Old Sterling, Old Seward Highway until such time that the legislature choose to name those routes.

For bridges, the department's naming policy is presented in Section 10.6.2 of the Alaska Bridges and Structures Manual. Bridges are named after the body of water crossed and sometimes have a modifying descriptor. For example, we have many Chena River bridges, so we clarify with Chena River at University Avenue to distinguish it from the Chena River bridges at Cushman Street, Parks Highway, etc. Section 10.6.2 provides further information for overcrossings, railroad grade separations and other types of bridge structures. When the Legislature names a bridge in statute, we keep track of both names. For example, we have the Yukon River Bridge which is also known as the E.L. Patton Bridge, and we keep track of this structure with both names.

*“Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure.”*

**Senator Stedman asked for a list of all sign legislation and the associated costs (primarily under AS 35.50) for the past five years.**

A spreadsheet with legislation from 2015-2021 is attached to this response. In summary, two bills in 2021, that together totaled about \$16k, were all the costs in fiscal notes for such legislation. Many of the other naming legislation costs were for current projects where costs would be rolled into the on-going work, or the costs were for future projects to fund signage.

**Senator Stedman requested DOT&PF to provide how much money has come in from foundations, for any purpose in the last decade, that wasn't expensed for the purpose we gave you the money for.**

DOT&PF knows of no instances in which money has been misappropriated. If there is a specific situation known by legislators or staff, we would ask for more information to address any specifics given the details.

**Senator Stedman asked if donations can be accepted for other purposes beyond DOT&PF signage?**  
*Example cited was an anecdote about girl scouts raising money in a district for a flashing crosswalk installation.*

Yes. DOT&PF allows optional devices in areas that meet volume, demand, sight distance or some network need. The key here is that the local entity or third-party provides the DOT&PF approved equipment for use at the designated site. For example, DOT&PF allowed a locally sponsored, optional device in Girdwood, at a logical connection to the park from the town center. DOT&PF has signed similar agreements for extra pedestrian islands in Palmer and Homer and offered it for seasonal traffic control in Homer and Talkeetna.

**Several senators expressed interest in the following question: Do/can third parties already give DOT&PF money for the purpose of having DOT&PF infrastructure named (without the legislature being a part of the process)?**

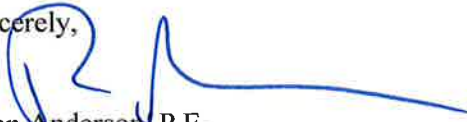
No, DOT&PF knows of no situation where this scenario would happen. The only path for something close to this request is found in the AK Traffic Manual's section on memorial or dedication signing in section 2M.10, per directives from the legislature, not third parties.

**Senator Wielechowski asked if DOT&PF could be held legally liable if they take third party funds but do not spend them as directed by the third party?**

The most likely scenario is that DOT&PF would refund any third-party funds when requested if no signage or materials were produced according to an MOU. If signage and materials were purchased with donated funds, DOT&PF would install those per legislation.

Should the committee desire any additional follow-up on the above subjects, please direct those requests to DOT&PF Legislative Liaison, Andy Mills ([andy.mills@alaska.gov](mailto:andy.mills@alaska.gov)), 907-465-3900.

Sincerely,



Ryan Anderson, P.E.  
 Commissioner Designee

cc: Akis Gialopsos, Deputy Chief of Staff/Legislative Director, Office of the Governor  
 Andy Mills, Legislative Liaison, DOT&PF

### Recent DOT/DOA Naming Legislation w/Costs (2015-2021)\*

Year	Bill #	Bill Name	Cost**	Notes
2021	HB 27	NAMING IRENE WEBBER BRIDGE	\$10.2	Cordova, Breakaway posts
2021	Hb 34	NAMING VIETNAM HELI. PILOTS' MEM. BRIDG	\$6.3	Mat-Su Valley area
2019	HB 34	NAMING SCOTT JOHNSON MEMORIAL BRIDGE	\$0.0	Part of Fed Project Funds
2019	HB 88	NAMING TROOPER GABE RICH MEMORIAL BRIDGE	\$0.0	Future Project/Maint for Sign
2017	HB 143	NAMING THE DANIEL R. FAUSKE BUILDING	\$0.0	Anchorage, DOA Building
2015	SB 63	NAMING ST. LIBRARY/MUSEUM & READING ROOM	\$0.0	Juneau, part of SLAM project

\* Included DOA naming as DOT has since consolidate public buildings.

\*\* Numbers in thousands