

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 30, 2001

1:10 p.m.

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

OVERVIEW: INDIAN LAW

**TAPES**

01-26, SIDE A

**CALL TO ORDER**

REPRESENTATIVE BEVERLY MASEK, Co-Chair, called the House Resources Standing Committee to order at 1:10 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Committee members present were Representatives Masek, Scalzi, Kerttula, Fate, and Chenault.

**SUMMARY OF INFORMATION**

BARBARA RITCHIE, Deputy Attorney General, Civil Division, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, reviewed a timeline of the history of Alaska's Indian law and tribal status.

ELIZABETH BARRY, Assistant Attorney General, Natural Resources Section, Civil Division (Anchorage), Department of Law, testifying via teleconference, explained Metlakatla and Annette Island Indian country issues to the committee.

MS. RITCHIE explained that there is not much Alaska law on Indian Country, because we don't have reservations. She clarified that we should be able to decide tribal authority without litigation. She cited John G. Baker's case, regarding custody matters involving two parents of different tribes and the comity doctrine as it relates to what jurisdiction the tribe would have.

DALE BONDURANT, representing the Alaska Constitutional Legal Defense Conservation Fund, testifying via teleconference, mentioned ANCSA [Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act]. He said, "I think its most important declaration was that our nation

intended to see that all Alaska Natives will be recognized as equal citizens of the U.S." He said he recognizes only the human race. Mr. Bondurant stated that he was involved with ANCSA and wants us all to be equal Americans in the state of Alaska.

CO-CHAIR MASEK asked what would happen to the Commonwealth North Urban-Rural Unity report.

MS. RITCHIE replied that the agreement would be signed April 7, and stated that she sits on the State Tribal Relations Team.

CO-CHAIR MASEK inquired as to whether this task force was funded through the governor's budget.

MS. RITCHIE replied, "We pay travel ourselves." She specified that that meant out of her specific budget.

CO-CHAIR MASEK requested a copy of expenses for each meeting.

CHRYSTAL SMITH, Special Assistant, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, explained that each department takes care of its own travel expenses and that the numbers would be difficult to put together. She said she could get the numbers from each department, but that it would take a few days. She further explained that there is a recommendation for a state tribal forum and an oversight office with a committee appointed to that.

CO-CHAIR MASEK stated that she wants reports on the money the state has spent on this made available, in order to be able to determine if "we" are mishandling federal money. She stated her wish to see the numbers and to take time to review the report handed out today.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

The committee took no action.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

CO-CHAIR MASEK adjourned the House Resources Standing Committee meeting at 2:20 p.m.

NOTE: The meeting was recorded and handwritten log notes were taken. A copy of the tape(s) and log notes may be obtained by contacting the House Records Office at State Capitol, Room 3, Juneau, Alaska 99801 (mailing address), (907) 465-2214, and after adjournment of the second session of the Twenty-Second Alaska State Legislature this information may be obtained by contacting the Legislative Reference Library at (907) 465-3808.