

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

May 9, 2002

1:15 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Vic Kohring, Chair
Representative Beverly Masek, Vice Chair
Representative Scott Ogan
Representative Drew Scalzi
Representative Peggy Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Mary Kapsner
Representative Albert Kookesh

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CS FOR SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 226(FIN) am
"An Act relating to design of highway projects; and providing
for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSSSB 226(FIN) am OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS ACTION

BILL: SB 226

SHORT TITLE:DESIGN OF HIGHWAY PROJECTS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) DONLEY

Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
05/07/01	1621	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/07/01	1621	(S)	TRA, FIN
01/14/02	1938	(S)	SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE INTRODUCED-REFERRALS
01/14/02	1938	(S)	TRA, FIN
02/12/02		(S)	TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/12/02		(S)	Moved CS(TRA) Out of Committee
02/12/02		(S)	MINUTE(TRA)
02/19/02	2221	(S)	TRA RPT CS 3DP 2NR NEW TITLE
02/19/02	2221	(S)	DP: COWDERY, TAYLOR, WARD;
02/19/02	2221	(S)	NR: WILKEN, ELTON
02/19/02	2221	(S)	FN FORTHCOMING

03/21/02		(S)	FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532
03/21/02		(S)	Heard & Held
03/21/02		(S)	MINUTE(FIN)
04/10/02		(S)	FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532
04/10/02		(S)	Moved CS(FIN) Out of Committee MINUTE(FIN)
04/10/02	2707	(S)	FIN RPT CS 5DP 3NR NEW TITLE
04/10/02	2707	(S)	DP: DONLEY, KELLY, AUSTERMAN, WILKEN,
04/10/02	2707	(S)	WARD; NR: HOFFMAN, OLSON, LEMAN
04/16/02		(S)	RLS AT 10:30 AM FAHRENKAMP 203
04/16/02		(S)	MINUTE(RLS)
04/18/02	2830	(S)	FN1: (DOT)
04/22/02		(S)	RLS AT 9:30 AM FAHRENKAMP 203
04/22/02		(S)	MINUTE(RLS)
05/06/02	3185	(S)	READ THE SECOND TIME
05/06/02	3185	(S)	FIN CS ADOPTED UNAN CONSENT
05/06/02	3185	(S)	ADVANCED TO 3RD READING FLD Y14 N6
05/06/02	3185	(S)	ADVANCED TO THIRD READING 5/7 CALENDAR
05/06/02	3182	(S)	RULES TO CALENDAR 2OR 5/6/02
05/07/02	3206	(S)	READ THE THIRD TIME CSSSSB 226(FIN)
05/07/02	3206	(S)	RETURN TO SECOND FOR AM 1 UNAN CONSENT
05/07/02	3206	(S)	AM NO 1 ADOPTED Y16 N2 E1 A1
05/07/02	3207	(S)	AUTOMATICALLY IN THIRD READING
05/07/02	3207	(S)	PASSED Y12 N6 E1 A1
05/07/02	3208	(S)	EFFECTIVE DATE(S) ADOPTED Y18 N- E1 A1
05/07/02	3208	(S)	ELLIS NOTICE OF RECONSIDERATION
05/08/02	3222	(S)	RECON TAKEN UP - IN THIRD READING
05/08/02	3222	(S)	MOVED TO BOTTOM OF CALENDAR
05/08/02	3243	(S)	PASSED ON RECONSIDERATION Y16 N3 E1
05/08/02	3243	(S)	EFFECTIVE DATE(S) SAME AS PASSAGE
05/08/02	3244	(S)	TRANSMITTED TO (H)

05/08/02	3244	(S)	VERSION: CSSSSB 226(FIN) AM
05/09/02	3459	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME -
			REFERRALS
05/09/02	3459	(H)	TRA
05/09/02		(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 17

WITNESS REGISTER

KRISTIE KEELE, Staff
to Senator Dave Donley
Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building, Room 506
Juneau, Alaska 99801
POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 226 to the committee on behalf
of Senator Donley, sponsor.

DENNIS POSHARD, Legislative Liaison
Office of the Commissioner
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 9981-7898
POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions pertaining to SB 226.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 02-14, SIDE A
Number 0001

CHAIR VIC KOHRING called the House Transportation Standing
Committee meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. Members present at the
call to order were Representatives Ogan, Wilson, Masek, and
Kohring. Representative Scalzi joined the meeting as it was in
progress.

SB 226-DESIGN OF HIGHWAY PROJECTS

CHAIR KOHRING announced that the matter before the committee was
CS FOR SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 226(FIN) am, "An
Act relating to design of highway projects; and providing for an
effective date."

Number 0088

KRISTIE KEELE, Staff to Senator Dave Donley, Alaska State
Legislature, presented SB 226 on behalf of Senator Donley,
sponsor. She explained that it would require the Department of
Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to design and

construct major upgrades and new roads to last longer. The timeline of a project's design life would begin when construction is projected to be completed, and would vary by the dollar volume of the project. Projects costing under \$5 million would be required to be designed for anticipated traffic levels at least 10 years after completion; projects costing \$5 million to \$10 million would be designed for levels at least 20 years after completion; and those over \$10 million would be designed for levels at least 25 years after completion.

MS. KEELE pointed out that current federal regulations require federally funded major upgrades and new roads to be designed for at least 20 years of use, and bridges must be designed for 50 years of use; federal law doesn't prohibit longer periods of design life. She said DOT&PF currently requires a 20-year design life after completion of a project, but construction and right-of-way delays can result in a reduction of design life. If the design life of major projects - those over \$10 million - is extended to 25 years, there should be less need for frequent road upgrades and construction-related traffic delays.

Number 0214

MS. KEELE explained that the legislation was modified after discussions with DOT&PF staff to exclude maintenance projects and road projects outside of major metropolitan areas.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON asked why that was done.

MS. KEELE answered that the bill also applies to federally funded roads. She yielded the second part of her answer to Dennis Poshard.

Number 0250

DENNIS POSHARD, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, explained that the department had worked closely with Senator Donley in developing the bill to make sure he was getting what he wanted out of it: he was mostly concerned with metropolitan areas, which is where the problem he was addressing primarily exists.

MR. POSHARD said the problem occurs when a project is built based on a particular traffic projection and then growth occurs at a rate that prevents the full design life from being realized before a new project is required to deal with traffic problems. He said the problem being addressed is not mainly the design of

asphalt or actual construction. Rather, the bill is trying to promote longer-range traffic models for projects so they will last longer.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON said it sounds like common sense and that [the department] should be doing that anyway.

MS. KEELE gave the example of a road improvement after which, within five years, cars are backed up. That design did not last as long as it was anticipated to.

Number 0411

MR. POSHARD added that for any kind of new construction or a major reconstruction, projects are designed to a 20-year design life anyway. But there are [instances] when a "smaller fix" is required. He told the committee that when there is a large project, it takes longer to implement the solution because of right-of-way issues and environmental regulations. On occasion, the department will use smaller projects designed to last maybe ten years to "carry you through" until a large project can be implemented.

Number 0518

REPRESENTATIVE SCALZI asked if the short-fix option Mr. Poshard had just described would be affected by the bill.

MR. POSHARD said the option would be affected slightly: for projects over \$5 million, the department would not be allowed to use that "tool." However, it would probably not affect too many [of the smaller] projects. The bill would affect the big projects, those over \$10 million, which would have to be designed for 25 years instead of the current 20. He said the question of what solution should be used is a philosophical one. Traffic engineers would say they want to have every tool available to them, no matter what the dollar value, but [when setting] policy, one can set any criteria desired. He said he felt Senator Donley's concern was that [the state] is doing too much construction of a smaller scale, and that projects are not lasting long enough.

REPRESENTATIVE SCALZI expressed his support for the concept, and for the concept of the bill. He asked: If there were an extra five years [added to the life of projects], wouldn't there be a fiscal impact? He requested an estimate of the impact.

MR. POSHARD replied that there would be an impact on individual projects, most likely an incremental growth. The difference in a 20-year project and a 25-year project would not be that great. He said it wasn't an operating-budget concern to the department.

Number 0768

REPRESENTATIVE MASEK moved to report [CSSSSB 226(FIN) am] out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSSSSB 226(FIN) am was moved out of the House Transportation Standing Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:29 p.m.