

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

May 11, 2002
11:50 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Robin Taylor, Chair
Senator John Cowdery
Senator Gene Therriault
Senator Johnny Ellis

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Dave Donley, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 230

"An Act relating to recommending or refusing psychotropic drugs as a treatment for children and to the evaluation and treatment of children with behavioral or psychological problems."

MOVED CSSB 230(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 207(RLS)

"An Act moving election district 24 as described in the Constitution of the State of Alaska at statehood from the Second Judicial District to the Fourth Judicial District and adding the Nabesna area to the Third Judicial District and removing it from the Fourth Judicial District."

MOVED CSHB 207(RLS) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

SB 230 - See HESS minutes dated 3/4/02.

CSHB 207(RLS) - No previous action to record.

WITNESS REGISTER

Senator Bettye Davis
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 230

Representative Mary Kapsner
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 207

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 02-31, SIDE A

Number 001

CHAIRMAN ROBIN TAYLOR called the Senate Judiciary Committee meeting to order at 11:50 a.m. Senators Cowdery, Therriault and Chair Taylor were present. The committee took up SB 230.

#SB230

SB 230-PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS FOR CHILDREN

SENATOR BETTYE DAVIS, sponsor, informed members that SB 230 has the support of many groups, school districts, and the Department of Education and Early Development (DOEED). Many other states have adopted similar legislation because of problems where children were being forced to take prescription psychotropic drugs. Senator Davis said this legislation has no cost. She pointed out this legislation will be helpful to school districts and the Department of Health and Social Services because many times workers can force children out of their homes by insisting they need to take psychotropic drugs. With SB 230 in place, workers can recommend that children be placed on psychotropic drugs but it would not give them the authority to demand that children take those drugs.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR thanked Senator Davis and said he has heard of situations in his district in which children were placed on psychotropic drugs but once the children were removed from the drugs and the school setting, they did very well.

SENATOR ELLIS moved SB 230 with individual recommendations to the next committee of referral.

SENATOR THERRIAULT asked if the committee adopted Version J.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR noted that Version J needed to be adopted and SENATOR DAVIS agreed.

SENATOR ELLIS moved to withdraw his previous motion and then moved to adopt Version J (Lauterbach, 3/26/02) as the working draft before the committee.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR announced that without objection, Version J was adopted.

SENATOR ELLIS moved CSSB 230(JUD) and any accompanying fiscal notes on to the next committee of referral with individual recommendations.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR commented that the fiscal notes are zero fiscal notes so the bill does not have to be heard in the Finance Committee. He then announced that with no objection, CSSB 230(JUD) moved from committee.

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The committee took up HB 207.

#HB207

HB 207-REALIGNMENT OF JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

REPRESENTATIVE MARY KAPSNER, sponsor of HB 207, told members that HB 207 is a "clean-up" bill. It removes 13 villages on the Yukon River from the Second Judicial District and places them in the Fourth Judicial District. She explained when judicial districts were designed at Statehood, they were put together based on commerce and transportation patterns at the time. Nome and Fairbanks were the transportation hubs and Yukon villagers could easily go to Nome for their judicial needs. However, transportation patterns have changed so that residents of the 13 villages have to travel to Bethel and Anchorage to get to Nome to deal with their legal matters. Those residents are currently being serviced by the Fourth Judicial District based in Bethel, but they cannot vote to retain the judges in that district.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR asked if anyone else wished to testify. No one responded. He then said no amendments have been offered and that he would entertain a motion.

SENATOR COWDERY moved CSHB 207(RLS) from committee with individual recommendations.

SENATOR THERRIAULT asked if this legislation is supported by the court system.

REPRESENTATIVE KAPSNER said it is and that Doug Wooliver of the court system helped to draft the bill and resolve the Nabesna problem.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR said he spoke with Mr. Wooliver earlier who expressed support. He then announced that with no objection, CSHB 207(RLS) moved from committee with individual recommendations. He then recessed the meeting to a call of the chair.

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