

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

May 11, 2002
11:40 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Gene Therriault, Chair
Senator Randy Phillips, Vice Chair
Senator Rick Halford
Senator Ben Stevens
Senator Bettye Davis

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 50
Supporting the participation of Taiwan in the annual summit of
the World Health Assembly.

MOVED HJR 50 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

HJR 50 - No previous action to record.

WITNESS REGISTER

David Brewster
Alaska State Capitol, Suite 418
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced HJR 50

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 02-02-31, SIDE A

CHAIRMAN GENE THERRIAULT called the Senate State Affairs
Committee meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. Present were Senators
Davis, Stevens, Halford and Chairman Therriault. Senator Phillips
arrived shortly.

#HJR 50

HJR 50-SUPPORT TAIWAN IN WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

DAVID BREWSTER, Legislative Aide to Representative Lesil McGuire,
introduced HJR 50 as a pressing issue. Speedy passage would allow
the resolution to be transmitted to the Taiwan Economic and

Cultural Office in Seattle, Washington so they can attend the annual World Health Assemblies annual summit in Geneva, Switzerland.

Taiwan has made substantial achievements in the field of public health while demonstrating a willingness to provide technical and financial assistance to international aid and health activities supported by the World Health Order (WHO). During the last seven years, Taiwan has contributed \$100 million to 78 countries. A WHO membership is vital to Taiwan in order to gain access to the latest information on epidemics and diseases. While Taiwan has been able to indirectly acquire health information, it is often a case of "too little, too late."

He noted there were copies of both U.S. Senate and House resolutions as well as four other state's resolutions supporting Taiwan in the WHO.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT noted there was also a letter from President Bush to Senator Frank Murkowski urging the United States to find opportunities for Taiwan's voice to be heard in international organizations.

SENATOR PHILLIPS asked why the committee was involved with the bill.

MR. BREWSTER replied friends from the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office contacted Speaker Brian Porter's office and asked if there would be anyone willing to write a resolution for their participation. Speaker Porter contacted Representative McGuire because she chairs the Economic Development Trade and Tourism Committee.

SENATOR PHILLIPS asked if it was the federal government.

SENATOR STEVENS suggested he read the last two pages in the packet.

MR. BREWSTER said the U.S. House passed a resolution in 2001 and the U.S. Senate passed a similar resolution in 2002.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT said the federal government expressed support and the Taiwanese are going to others in the Pacific Rim for similar support.

SENATOR PHILLIPS didn't think Alaska should be involved.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT said the resolution is to convince WHO not the U.S. Congress.

MR. BREWSTER said we would be showing our support to the WHO for Taiwan to be increased to the level of observer. Currently they aren't allowed in any of the hearings.

Several years ago, over 80 people died in Taiwan because of an epidemic. If Taiwan had been a member those people probably wouldn't have died.

SENATOR PHILLIPS asked how Alaska is directly or indirectly affected by the resolution.

MR. BREWSTER replied Alaska isn't affected beyond expressing its support.

SENATOR PHILLIPS thought this was more appropriate for the U.S. Congress and not an appropriate role for the Alaska State Legislature. He thought this was a federal issue and he didn't support passing the resolution.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT commented it is simply expressing support for one of our largest trading partners.

There was no prepared CS and there were no amendments offered. There was one zero fiscal note.

He asked for the will of the committee.

SENATOR DAVIS made a motion to move SJR 50 and attached fiscal note from committee with individual recommendations.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT called a brief at ease at 11:47 a.m. before members voted.

He called the meeting back to order at 11:49 a.m. Senator Bettye Davis made a motion to move HJR 50 and attached fiscal note from committee with individual recommendations.

SENATOR PHILLIPS objected.

CHAIRMAN THERRIAULT asked for a roll call vote.

Senators Davis, Stevens, Halford and Chairman Therriault voted yes and Senator Phillips voted no.

HJR 50 moved from committee with attached fiscal note and individual recommendations.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the Senate State Affairs Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.