

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS
STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 6, 2003
8:05 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Carl Morgan, Chair
Representative Kelly Wolf, Vice Chair
Representative Tom Anderson
Representative Ralph Samuels
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Albert Kookesh

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Mike Chenault

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 5
Establishing a task force to make recommendations regarding a
new design for the official seal of the State of Alaska.

- MOVED HCR 5 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS ACTION

BILL: HCR 5

SHORT TITLE: LEGIS. TASK FORCE ON DESIGN OF STATE SEAL
SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) JOULE

Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
02/03/03	0118	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/03/03	0118	(H)	CRA, STA, FIN
03/06/03		(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 124

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE REGGIE JOULE
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Spoke as the sponsor of HCR 5.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 03-7, SIDE A

Number 0001

CHAIR CARL MORGAN called the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. Representatives Morgan, Wolf, Samuels, Cissna, and Kookesh were present at the call to order. Representative Anderson arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HCR 5-LEGIS. TASK FORCE ON DESIGN OF STATE SEAL

CHAIR MORGAN announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 5, Establishing a task force to make recommendations regarding a new design for the official seal of the State of Alaska.

Number 0070

REPRESENTATIVE REGGIE JOULE, Alaska State Legislature, speaking as the sponsor of HCR 5, presented a slide presentation which was accompanied by the following testimony:

slide 1: The case for modernization.

When it comes to symbols of Alaska, none is older than our official seal. A question that arises from that fact is: Is it time to modernize our state seal? I believe the answer is yes.

slide 2: Introduction to HCR 5

The vehicle for modernizing the seal is HCR 5. It creates a task force of eight citizens to provide a focal point for public involvement in designing a new seal. The task force will report back to the legislature and the legislature will make a decision whether to adopt a new design and commission its engraving.

slide 3: Alaska's First Seal

Most Alaskans probably aren't aware that the seal in use today is the second one to represent the government of Alaska. In 1885, the first appointed governor of Alaska, John Kincaid, designed a seal for the military district of Alaska. Kincaid's design

depicted the northern lights, icebergs, and an Alaska Native or two amongst other things.

Slide 4: District Seal

Here is a slide of that first state seal. What we would probably interpret as the sunlight is the northern lights. You can see a fellow with a harpoon there on the bottom ... and also an Alaska Native in a kayak. Now this is the seal of the military district of Alaska. It was in use for about 25 years. Today, the only place that we're aware of where the ... district seal still is in use is on the mantel of the fireplace at the Governor's mansion. When the House was restored in the 1980's the district seal was uncovered from under many, many layers of paint.

Slide 5: Territorial Seal

One of the first men to live in that house, Governor Walter Clark, decided in 1910 that the district seal was inappropriate for several reasons, including its depiction of icebergs, northern lights, and Alaska Natives. So Clark hired a draftsman in Juneau, a man named William Rugg, to draw a rough sketch based on his directions to include more modern developments in Alaska.

Slide 6: Official Seal of Alaska

What we see in this slide is basically what Governor Clark sent to Washington, D.C., for approval in 1910. The first Alaska civil code of 1900 required that any official acts of the military district be approved by the Interior Department and the Attorney General. The rough sketch sent by Governor Clark for the new seal was approved by Attorney General Fowler on July 25, 1910. But sometime between then and November 10, 1910, somebody in the Interior Department commissioned a more refined drawing and sent that back to Alaska. Governor Clark then commissioned an engraver to cast the new seal; it was delivered to the Secretary of Alaska February 25, 1911. Two years later, in 1913, the seal was changed again when the word "district" was changed to "territory." At statehood, this seal became the official state seal and remains so today as part of statute, AS 44.08.

slide 7: Elements of the seal

Now I'd like to turn to the individual elements of the seal and why the Governor [Clark] chose these symbols. While we don't have any extensive written documentation, there was an article that came out in April 1911 in an edition of the "Alaska Yukon Magazine" which described the [new] seal in this way:

"The Territory of Alaska will not permit anyone to forget that development and industrial progress are its chief concern. Not even will public documents, bearing the signature of the territorial chief executive, be permitted longer to convey ... the ancient conception of the country as a land of arctic temperature and the home of an unique race of aborigines.

"Governor Walter [E.] Clark has had prepared a new official seal for the territory that will typify modern Alaska, as he conceives it ... The center of the seal shows a range of mountains in the distance, above which appears the rising sun, typifying in this instance the dawn of the commercial and industrial era in Alaska. In the middle distance on the left is a large ore mill and a wharf, with a train of ore carts and a spur track leading toward the mill.

"In the harbor adjacent is a large steamship, typifying commerce, and in another part of the harbor is a fishing vessel, representing one of the great industries. The forests also appear in the middle distance on the left, to represent the lumber industry and resources, and there is a harvest scene to typify agriculture. Around the circumference of the seal [are] a salmon [and] a fur seal in place of the conventional stars that are employed for this purpose."

And these were the words from that article in 1911 that explained why the official seal of Alaska looks the way that it does today.

slide 8: Why change the seal?

Today, however, Alaska is a far different place. And that brings us to the question, again: Should the official seal of the state be designed to reflect the changes of the last 93 years?

Consider these facts:

In 1910, Anchorage did not exist. Does urban Alaska deserve a place on the seal?

Since 1910, Alaska has grown and outgrown several industries. Does the oil and gas industry deserve a place on the seal, perhaps in place of the fur seal industry? Are the horse and plow the best representation of agriculture in Alaska?

In 1910, the population of Alaska was half Native. But despite that fact, any depiction of them was dropped from the seal by Governor Clark. Can we fix that omission?

In 1885 and in 1910, the idea of public involvement in designing a seal was overlooked. Public involvement through the Alaska Legislature wouldn't happen until 1913. This legislature can fix that oversight and provide a valuable learning experience for residents ... of all ages.

And last but not least, HCR 5 asks us all to use our imaginations. Governor Clark looked out his window in 1910 and saw a dream of Alaska in the future. Can we do the same thing and ask ourselves what might be some of the symbols that not only would reflect the Alaska of today but Alaska of 100 years from now.

slide 9: Fish and Game logos

I will conclude this slide presentation and this testimony with a quick look at some other symbols in use today - inside and outside Alaska.

Here is the logo of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Actually, this slide depicts the logo that was in use from 1962 until about 1977.

slide 10: New logo

Then about 1977 or 78, this black and white logo was developed for Fish and Game. It dropped the totem that was prominent in the first logo.

slide 11: Current logo

The design changed again in 2001. It was altered, the lines were changed and then they added color.

slide 12: H&SS logo

This slide shows the logo used by the Department of Health and Social Services. It was commissioned by the department in the early 1990's after an extensive public involvement.

slide 13: Hawaii seal

Here's an example of another state. ... This slide shows the great seal of Hawaii. On the left side is an image of King Kamehameha. On the right is an image of Liberty holding the Hawaii flag. On the bottom of the seal - in the Native Hawaiian language - are the words: "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." This seal was adopted at the time of statehood.

slide 14: Montana

Here is the seal of Montana. Or rather, this is the latest version of their seal. It has been changed a dozen times since territorial days. The last time it was changed, the engraver decided to reverse the flow of the Missouri River and the Great Falls. He also changed some trees and reshaped the mountains. He obviously didn't care what the legislature thought; and the legislature hasn't changed it since.

slide 15: Idaho

The next one is Idaho. The State of Idaho has the distinction of having the only official seal designed by a woman. Shortly after statehood in 1890, the Idaho legislature sponsored a contest for the best design. The winner was a young woman, Emma Edwards Green, who was given \$100 as a prize. More than 60

years later, in 1957, the Idaho legislature updated the seal by adding symbols of the state's main industries: mining, agriculture, and forestry.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE said that the aforementioned provides a background explaining why HCR 5 was introduced. He noted that there are probably certain things [already included on the seal] that should be maintained. Alaska has evolved over the last 93 years and Representative Joule charged that it's time to show [through the state seal] how Alaska has evolved as well as the state's vision for the future.

Number 1161

REPRESENTATIVE WOLF related the following: "The only way we can know the direction that we're supposed to go and the direction we should go in the future is by remembering our past." Representative Wolf expressed concern with changing Alaska's state seal because it is part of Alaska's history.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE surmised that some of the components of the [current seal] would remain [on an updated seal] due to the heritage aspect. However, there is the opportunity for the people of Alaska to become engaged with Alaska's vision for the next 100 years. He pointed out that much of what is depicted on the [current] seal have come to pass, but there are things in which it is lacking such as [the depiction of] aviation and Alaska Natives. The aforementioned was of concern for some of the Alaska Natives who attended the Tolerance Commission and ultimately [changing the seal] was forwarded as a recommendation.

Number 1496

REPRESENTATIVE CISSNA recalled her time in Washington, D.C., with her family in the late 1970s. She said that she spent most of her time in the national archives where she found Alaska's territorial government records. Those records reflect the period of time, which she characterized as adversarial.

REPRESENTATIVE CISSNA agreed that both seals are part of Alaska's history. However, in order to move forward the [state] must embrace the stages it has passed through and will pass through.

Number 1648

REPRESENTATIVE SAMUELS said, "I support where you're trying to go, Representative Joule. I wholeheartedly agree that the history should be embodied in things we put forward as a state." However, he expressed concern with the fiscal note. He inquired as to the possibility of corporate sponsorship or other options for funding. Representative Samuels offered to give staff time during the interim [to work on this project] in order to reduce the cost.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE acknowledged that the fiscal note was a concern for him as well. Representative Joule characterized [this resolution] as a work in progress for which there will be attempts to find partners [to share the cost].

REPRESENTATIVE SAMUELS offered his assistance.

Number 1800

REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSON said that this [discussion] reminds him of the debate over [HB 45] which added a second verse to the official state song. He noted that although he was a co-sponsor of [HB 45] and voted in favor of its passage, he did believe that the representatives from the Matanuska Susitna Valley did have some meritorious arguments. Representative Anderson said that there is merit to bringing in other elements to the seal, however he cautioned that one can only speculate so far. He inquired as to how many states have changed their seal and added indigenous peoples. Representative Anderson concluded by saying that he wasn't opposed to changing the state seal.

Number 2012

REPRESENTATIVE KOOKESH recalled the debate over adding the second verse to the official state song and noted his amazement that [the legislature] would even have the debate. Representative Kookesh related his belief that subsistence, the second verse of the official state song, and a change in the state seal such that Alaska Natives are depicted would pass if placed before the voters of Alaska. However, these matters have to go through the legislature, which includes people who aren't very sympathetic toward Alaska Natives. Representative Kookesh stressed that he was willing to review the seal and change it even if it doesn't ultimately include an Alaska Native depiction. He also stressed the need for people to realize that no matter what else changes in 100 years Alaska Natives will remain [in Alaska].

CHAIR MORGAN expressed interest in the depiction of the rays of northern lights being changed to represent sun light, which every state has. He pointed out that state seals depict things that are unique and different from the other states.

REPRESENTATIVE KOOKESH turned to the fiscal note and said he was sure that the First Alaskans Institute, with which he is affiliated, is willing to participate in order to reduce the fiscal note.

Number 2221

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE said that he thought of going the [route of garnering support to do this project form the Native organizations. However, in doing so the contributions wouldn't be realized. Therefore, he felt that the discussion of the fiscal note was necessary when forming partnerships. He stressed the need for the State of Alaska to be part of the partnership.

REPRESENTATIVE SAMUELS noted his agreement that the state should be part of this.

REPRESENTATIVE WOLF requested that if HCR 5 passes, that the seal not be divided with corporate support. He indicated his preference to return to the territorial seal of the state. He reiterated the need to know where one has been in order to move forward.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE agreed that Alaska has a rich heritage that should be continued and illustrated to others via the seal [along with the changes the state has seen].

REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSON mentioned that Representative Kookesh's comment that Alaska Natives will always be present has brought him to support [HCR 5]. Representative Anderson urged that some Alaska Native symbolism be placed on the state seal, if this resolution is to pass.

CHAIR MORGAN pointed out that the fiscal note analysis erroneously says that "HCR 5 establishes a six member" task force; it should really refer to eight members.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE agreed and informed the committee that the Alaska Humanities Forum may not be able to participate in this task force and thus the task force may become a six-member group. He noted that as the resolution moves through the

process other players may be considered to participate with the task force.

Number 2580

REPRESENTATIVE ANDERSON moved to report HCR 5 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HCR 5 was reported from the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.