

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TOURISM**

March 10, 2003

5:36 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Cheryll Heinze, Chair
Representative Lesil McGuire, Vice Chair
Representative Nancy Dahlstrom
Representative Vic Kohring
Representative Sharon Cissna (via teleconference)
Representative Harry Crawford

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Pete Kott

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

OVERVIEW: INSTITUTE OF THE NORTH, BY DR. JOHN TICHOTSKY

[For the regular meeting minutes, see the 5:10 p.m. minutes for this date.]

TAPES

03-4, SIDES(S) A & B

CHAIR CHERYLL HEINZE called the meeting of the House Special Committee on Economic Development, International Trade and Tourism back to order at 5:36 p.m. Representatives Heinze, McGuire, Kohring, Dahlstrom, and Crawford were present at the call back to order. Representative Cissna (via teleconference) joined the meeting as it was in progress.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

JOHN TICHOTSKY, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Institute of the North; and Advisor to the Governor of Chukotka, presented a background briefing for the visit of the Russian Federation Duma members scheduled for April 13-18, 2003.

DR. TICHOTSKY showed a map of Russia, pointing out the proximity of Chukotka to Alaska. He described the region's similarities to Alaska. It is located far from the capital of Russia, being

8,635 kilometers and nine time zones from Moscow. It is an area of immense size. At 737,700 square kilometers, it is twice the size of Japan. Like Alaska, it has a population that is small, and its approximately 75,000 people are dispersed widely throughout the region. The capital and largest city in Chukotka is Anadyr, with a population of 13,200.

DR. TICHOTSKY went on to describe some pertinent history of this area of Russia. Prior to the year 2000, Chukotka was led by Governor Nazarov, whose isolationist, restrictive policies he said kept Chukotka in poverty. Chukotkans were not allowed to travel. Their infrastructure was primitive, and the citizens were starving.

DR. TICHOTSKY reported that since December 2000, with the election of Governor Roman Abramovich, changes toward progress have occurred. The wealth of the area instantly increased with the establishment of residency in Chukotka by Governor Abramovich, one of the world's wealthiest men. Because of Governor Abramovich, he said, the natural resources have begun to be developed in Chukotka. Gold, timber, oil and gas, and fish are some of the industries important to the area. Tourism is another burgeoning area in Chukotka. West Tours, a cruise line active in Alaska, will provide two tours this year to the area.

DR. TICHOTSKY told members that Chukotka has a history of association with Alaska. Alaska Natives have helped to revive some of the traditional practices related to a subsistence existence and traditional whaling practices. Currently, they are learning from Alaskans techniques in food preservation, processing, and marketing. Indian Valley Meats from Anchorage has been instrumental in this.

DR. TICHOTSKY went on to provide an introduction of the representatives from Chukotka who will be here in April and to relate some of the issues of importance to them with their visit. The delegation will comprise the following: Mrs. Valentina Nikolaevna Pivnenko from Karelia; Mr. Victor Petrovich Voitenko from Chita; Mr. Vladimir Mikhailovich Etylin from Chukotka; Mr. Nikolai Leonidovich Piskun from the Komi Republic; Mr. Valery Petrovich Markov from Taimir, Dolgano-Nenets; Mr. Petr Alexandrovich Yakhmenev; and Ms. Veronika Alexandrovna Kalganova. They will be interested in learning more about the Alaskan model for export and state and federal-state relations, and about the municipal model and understanding the power of Alaska municipalities. They are impressed with the success

Alaska has had in incorporating its Native population into society, viewing Alaska's success as a model for them with their Native people.

DR. TICHOTSKY said the Duma also hopes to meet with representatives from the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Office of the Governor, the oil industry, AIDEA [Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority], the Institute of the North, and others. Linda Shafer from Governor Murkowski's office in Anchorage will be coordinating this trip along with the office of Chair Heinze in Juneau.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The committee took no action.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Economic Development, International Trade and Tourism meeting was adjourned at 6:20 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-Third Alaska State Legislature this information may be obtained by contacting the Legislative Reference Library at (907) 465-3808.