

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 20, 2004

1:37 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Jim Holm, Chair  
Representative Beverly Masek  
Representative Vic Kohring  
Representative Dan Ogg  
Representative Nick Stepovich

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Mary Kapsner  
Representative Albert Kookesh

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

Requesting the Federal Aviation Administration to fully staff and maintain flight service stations in Alaska.

- MOVED SJR 14 OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SJR 14

SHORT TITLE: FAA FLIGHT SERVICE STATIONS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) OLSON

03/24/03	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/24/03	(S)	TRA, CRA
04/10/03	(H)	TRA AT 1:30 PM CAPITOL 17
04/10/03	(H)	-- Meeting Canceled --
04/11/03	(S)	TRA RPT 3DP
04/11/03	(S)	DP: COWDERY, WAGONER, OLSON
04/23/03	(S)	CRA AT 1:30 PM FAHRENKAMP 203
04/23/03	(S)	Moved Out of Committee
04/23/03	(S)	MINUTE(CRA)
04/24/03	(S)	CRA RPT 4DP
04/24/03	(S)	DP: WAGONER, LINCOLN, ELTON, TAYLOR
03/19/04	(S)	TRANSMITTED TO (H)
03/19/04	(S)	VERSION: SJR 14
03/22/04	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/22/04	(H)	TRA, CRA

04/20/04

(H)

TRA AT 1:30 PM CAPITOL 17

**WITNESS REGISTER**

HAVEN HARRIS, Staff  
to Senator Donald Olson  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SJR 14 on behalf of the sponsor,  
Senator Olson.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

**TAPE 04-14, SIDE A**

Number 0001

**CHAIR JIM HOLM** called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. Representatives Holm, Masek, Stepovich, Kohring, and Ogg were present at the call to order.

SJR 14-FAA FLIGHT SERVICE STATIONS

CHAIR HOLM announced that the only order of business would be SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14, Requesting the Federal Aviation Administration to fully staff and maintain flight service stations in Alaska.

Number 0034

HAVEN HARRIS, Staff to Senator Donald Olson, Alaska State Legislature, presented SJR 14 on behalf of the sponsor, Senator Olson. He paraphrased from the following written sponsor statement [original punctuation provided]:

SJR 14 is a resolution requesting the Federal Aviation Administration to fully staff and maintain its flight service stations in Alaska.

Alaska is a vast state that relies on air transportation for much of its commerce and connectivity. A substantial portion of the State of Alaska does not have the road infrastructure to facilitate the transport of freight and the movement of people. Furthermore, coastal and river communities in Western, Central, and Northern Alaska lose their

marine transportation alternative during the 5 to 8 months of winter ice conditions. These communities then are solely dependent on air transportation for travel, goods and emergency services for a substantial part of the year.

Furthermore, there is a large number of Alaskans that own and fly airplanes. Indeed, Alaska has the highest percentage of general aviation users per capita in the United States. General aviation users depend on FAA flight service stations to inform them of runway closures and conflicting runway traffic.

FAA flight service stations are essential for the continued safety and dependability of Alaska's vital air transportation network. Both commercial and private pilots are totally reliant on the expertise and competence of FAA's flight service personnel. The state of Alaska has over 180 airports that depend on flight service stations for weather updates, runway conditions, and assistance with safe air travel.

I respectfully urge your support for this resolution, helping to ensure the safety of air travel in Alaska.

Number 0179

REPRESENTATIVE MASEK inquired as to why SJR 14 was introduced. She asked if the FAA is planning on closing some of the flight service stations in Alaska.

MR. HARRIS noted that over the years a few flight service stations have been closed. An individual, Phil Brown (ph), affiliated with the FAA flight service stations contacted Senator Olson and informed him that there is the potential for cuts.

Number 0256

CHAIR HOLM related his understanding that there are discussions regarding combining some airports. Therefore, he inquired as to how [the flight service stations] would enter into that dialogue.

MR. HARRIS clarified that flight service stations aren't at every airport, rather they are centrally organized. For example, much of western Alaska is coordinated through a flight service station in Kenai. Mr. Harris related that the concern

isn't necessarily the maintenance of each runway, but rather merely maintaining the services. One of the great services these flight service stations provide is the ability for pilots to call in and find out runway conditions. In further response to Chair Holm, Mr. Harris explained that a flight service station isn't necessarily a runway or airport landing, but rather a building staffed with individuals who track the conditions of all the runways.

Number 0415

REPRESENTATIVE STEPOVICH asked if the flight service stations have satellite correspondence to track weather.

MR. HARRIS answered that he believes the flight service stations would have the same access as anyone would through the Internet. He explained that when there is construction on a runway, the construction company has to file daily plans and announcements with the flight service station regarding construction and runway damage.

Number 0498

REPRESENTATIVE KOHRING moved to report SJR 14 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SJR 14 was reported from the House Transportation Standing Committee.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.