

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 11, 2005

1:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jay Ramras, Co-Chair
Representative Ralph Samuels, Co-Chair
Representative Jim Elkins
Representative Carl Gatto
Representative Kurt Olson
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Harry Crawford

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
Representative Mary Kapsner

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 256

"An Act naming the Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery in Fairbanks."

- MOVED HB 256 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 25

"An Act relating to labeling and identification of genetically modified fish and fish products."

- MOVED SB 25 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 251

"An Act authorizing the Board of Fisheries to adopt regulations regarding fishing by a person who holds two entry permits for a salmon fishery."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 256

SHORT TITLE: RUTH BURNETT SPORT FISH HATCHERY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) RAMRAS

04/06/05 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/06/05 (H) FSH, RES
04/11/05 (H) FSH AT 8:30 AM CAPITOL 124
04/11/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124

BILL: SB 25

SHORT TITLE: GENETICALLY MODIFIED FISH
SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) ELTON, STEVENS G

01/11/05 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 12/30/04
01/11/05 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/11/05 (S) L&C, RES
02/01/05 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 211
02/01/05 (S) -- Meeting Rescheduled to 02/08/05 --
02/08/05 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 211
02/08/05 (S) Moved SB 25 Out of Committee
02/08/05 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
02/09/05 (S) L&C RPT 4DP 1NR
02/09/05 (S) NR: BUNDE
02/09/05 (S) DP: ELLIS, DAVIS, SEEKINS, STEVENS B
02/23/05 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/23/05 (S) Moved SB 25 Out of Committee
02/23/05 (S) MINUTE(RES)
02/24/05 (S) RES RPT 4DP
02/24/05 (S) DP: WAGONER, DYSON, STEDMAN, ELTON
03/07/05 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
03/07/05 (S) VERSION: SB 25
03/09/05 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/09/05 (H) FSH, L&C, RES
03/16/05 (H) FSH AT 8:30 AM CAPITOL 124
03/16/05 (H) Moved Out of Committee
03/16/05 (H) MINUTE(FSH)
03/17/05 (H) FSH RPT 5DP
03/17/05 (H) DP: ELKINS, KAPSNER, WILSON, LEDOUX,
THOMAS
04/04/05 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM CAPITOL 17
04/04/05 (H) Moved Out of Committee
04/04/05 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
04/05/05 (H) L&C RPT 4DP 2NR
04/05/05 (H) DP: CRAWFORD, LEDOUX, GUTTENBERG,
ANDERSON;
04/05/05 (H) NR: KOTT, ROKEBERG
04/11/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124

WITNESS REGISTER

JIM POUND, Staff

to Representative Jay Ramras
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 256 on behalf of
Representative Ramras, sponsor

PAULA CADIENTE, Staff
to Senator Kim Elton
Alaska State Legislature

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 25 on behalf of Senator Elton,
Sponsor.

ALICE OTTOSON-MCKEEN, Middle School Student
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 25.

JERRY MCCUNE
United Fisherman of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on SB 25.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CO-CHAIR RALPH SAMUELS called the House Resources Standing
Committee meeting to order at [1:05:51 PM](#). Representatives
Ramras, Samuels, Elkins, Crawford, Seaton, and Gatto were
present at the call to order. Representative Olson arrived as
the meeting was in progress.

HB 256-RUTH BURNETT SPORT FISH HATCHERY

CO-CHAIR SAMUELS announced that the first order of business
would be HOUSE BILL NO. 256 "An Act naming the Ruth Burnett
Sport Fish Hatchery in Fairbanks."

[1:06:35 PM](#)

JIM POUND, Staff to Representative Jay Ramras, Alaska State
Legislature, said HB 256 names a fish hatchery in Fairbanks
after former Mayor Ruth Burnett, who was key in getting funds
for the hatchery. She once worked for Senator Ted Stevens, so
through her connections she was able to secure \$10 million in
federal funding for a sport fish hatchery.

CO-CHAIR RAMRAS said the fish hatchery in Fairbanks meets many
of the city's economic development goals and improves the
quality of life. It will provide facilities for research for

the University of Alaska and a tourist destination. He said he knew Ruth Burnett, who recently passed away.

[1:09:28 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR RAMRAS moved to report HB 256 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 256 was passed out of the House Resources Standing Committee.

SB 25-GENETICALLY MODIFIED FISH

CO-CHAIR SAMUELS announced that the final order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 25 "An Act relating to labeling and identification of genetically modified fish and fish products."

PAULA CADIENTE, Staff to Senator Kim Elton, Alaska State Legislature, presented SB 25 on behalf of Senator Elton and Senator Gary Stevens, co-sponsors. She said the bill requires modified finfish or shellfish sold in Alaska to be identified on the label at the retail level. These fish are also called "FrankenFish," she noted. Currently, a glow-in-the-dark aquarium fish is the only genetically modified fish allowed to be sold in the United States, she said, but an application is pending before the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for genetically farmed fish for human consumption.

MS. CADIENTE said Atlantic salmon are expected to be the first species slated for genetic modification, she noted, and others would likely follow. A United States and Canadian firm wants to introduce a genetically modified salmon to be sold worldwide.

The allure of fast growing fish is economically enticing, she stated, and it is important for Alaska consumers to make informed choices. Required labeling allows marketers of Alaska seafood to "draw a bright line" between natural, wild fish and industrial fish.

[1:12:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO asked about page 4, line 5, of SB 25. He said he understands the intent, but the term "not possible" should be exchanged with "highly unlikely." A court case may find a single case of it occurring in nature.

MS. CADIENTE answered, "I think that 'not possible under natural conditions' just means not done in the laboratory."

ALICE OTTOSON-MCKEEN, Middle-School Student, Juneau, said she was in favor of SB 25. She declared that she wants to know what she is eating. Genetically-modified fish have high levels of mercury and don't taste good, she added. The FDA's failure to require labeling of genetically modified foods is effectively restricting Americans from exercising a right, and subjects individuals to foods they have sound reasons to avoid. "Why not label them?" she asked. She said everyone wants to know what is in their food.

[1:16:08 PM](#)

JERRY MCCUNE, United Fisherman of Alaska, Juneau, noted today's Anchorage Daily News and New York Times, which reported that retailers and distributors don't know the difference between farmed and wild fish. He said it is in the consumer's interest to have labeling laws, so people know what they are buying.

[1:17:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON moved to report SB 25 out of committee with individual recommendations and accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SB 25 was reported out of the House Resources Standing Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Resources Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at [1:17:55 PM](#).