

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 20, 2006

8:05 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Paul Seaton, Chair
Representative Carl Gatto, Vice Chair
Representative Jim Elkins
Representative Bob Lynn
Representative Jay Ramras
Representative Berta Gardner
Representative Max Gruenberg

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

OVERVIEW(S): DIVISION OF ELECTIONS, ELECTRONIC VOTING

- HEARD

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Alaska Public Offices Commission

Claire VanSciver Hall - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

WHITNEY H. BREWSTER, Director
Division of Elections
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented an overview of the touch-screen voting machines.

SHELLY GROWDEN, Elections Supervisor

Central Region
Division of Elections
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the overview by the Division of Elections.

ELLEN KELLY, HAVA Systems Manager
Division of Elections
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Demonstrated the voting machines during the overview by the Division of Elections.

CLAIRE VanSCIVER HALL, Appointee
to the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As appointee to APOC, provided background and answered questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CHAIR PAUL SEATON called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at [8:05:52 AM](#). Representatives Gatto, Elkins, Gardner, and Seaton were present at the call to order. Representatives Lynn, Ramras, and Gruenberg arrived as the meeting was in progress.

OVERVIEW

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS, ELECTRONIC VOTING

[8:06:59 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON announced that the first order of business was the overview by the Division of Elections regarding electronic voting.

[8:07:00 AM](#)

WHITNEY H. BREWSTER, Director, Division of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, presented an overview of the touch screen voting machines. She said the division is currently developing its procedures on how it will begin implementing the touch screen voting machines, and she will provide a copy of those provisions when they are completed.

[8:09:03 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER offered a background on what happens before, during, and after election day. She noted that the State of Alaska has used the Diebold Global Election Management System and Accuvote optical scan machines to collect and tally votes since 1998. Five recounts have taken place during that time, which she said have verified the accuracy of the electronic voting machines. She said the Accuvote system is used by local jurisdictions, most recently by the Municipality of Anchorage.

MS. BREWSTER reviewed the basis of the focus on the 2004 general election results. She said there are two reports generated on election day: the statement of votes cast report, which shows a breakdown of the results, and the summary report, which shows the total counts. In response to a request from Chair Seaton, she said she would provide copies of the reports to the committee, and she noted that they can also be obtained off of the Division of Election's web site. The reason the statement of votes cast report total is different than the statewide summary, she explained, is that it totaled early voters by region for the top four races and ballot measures - in each district. She offered an example. She stated:

The early voting results are only reported once in this summary. However, in the statement of votes cast report, the result for each House district are skewed, because that regional total is listed in each of those House districts.

MS. BREWSTER said the regional numbers are correct, but they are, throughout the report, listed in each House district as a regional result, which makes the report extremely difficult to read. In the 2004 election, she noted, the division programmed the early voting memory cards by region, and staff was unaware that creating the memory cards in that fashion would prohibit the individual vote totals for U.S. President, U.S. Senate, and state Senate candidates, and ballot measures to be broken down by individual House district. She said the vote totals for each region appear on each individual district's report. She indicated that the problem that occurred was not a software or hardware problem, but was an oversight of the division.

[8:15:19 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to Chair Seaton, confirmed that the summary report is "the official vote."

[8:15:29 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER addressed the issue of early voting. She said the old method was to have the individual go to the early voting site, vote the ballot, and place it in an absentee voting ballot envelop, which would be counted after the polls close on election day. Using the new method implemented in 2004, a voter who was properly registered in the correct House district and in the correct region to vote early, would walk into the regional office, cast a ballot, and the ballot would be scanned in at that very moment. She indicated that in order to allow that instant vote, "the programming of the memory cards for those regional offices ... combined the early votes for races higher than a House district." In House district 16-32, she reported, some of the precincts show more than 100 percent voter turnout. She explained, "This is because the State of Alaska held a special election for the Municipality of Anchorage concurrently with the general election, and ... in these districts 16-32 there were two ballots." She offered further details.

[8:18:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked, "So, if you know how many municipal ballots were cast, you could deduct that number from the total, and then it should be correct?"

[8:18:20 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER deferred the question to her election supervisor.

[8:18:35 AM](#)

SHELLY GROWDEN, Elections Supervisor, Central Region, Division of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, confirmed Representative Gardner's supposition. She offered further details. She concluded, "So, you can clearly see on our statement of votes cast, the total number of ballots that went through the Accuvote unit for those districts that included both the state ballot and the municipal ballot."

[8:20:31 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON asked, "Then if you subtract the number of municipal ballots that were cast from the total, you do end up with the number of ballots that were cast for statewide race. Is that correct?"

[8:20:52 AM](#)

MS. GROWDEN confirmed that's correct.

[8:21:06 AM](#)

MS. GROWDEN, in response to a question from Representative Gatto, said municipal and state ballots are tracked separately. She offered further details.

[8:22:12 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to questions from Chair Seaton, said the information and explanations appear on the division's web site. She confirmed that the problems associated with regional elections have been solved. She emphasized that all of the ballots from the 2004 general election were counted again for the U.S. Senate race, and that recount confirmed the original election results reported and certified by the state review board. She relayed that the division is looking for ways to improve reporting, and it will be reaching out to interested political groups, parties, and individuals to explain how to read the reports. She added, "Because if you can't read the reports, what's the point of having them available to the public to look at?" In response to a question from Chair Seaton, she confirmed that early voting will be handled within each individual House district, and she said there will not be a repeat of what happened in 2004.

[8:25:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO said Ms. Brewster's statement that the recount vote in 2004 resulted in an unchanged count is believable. However, after mentioning the comparison of a visual count to that of the optical scanner used back then, he asked if the vote count was merely unchanged or was actually "exactly correct."

[8:25:57 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER replied that there was a change of 0.3 percent, due primarily to the requirement of the division to count, in a recount, those absentee, by-mail ballots that come in after election day.

[8:26:44 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN asked how the 0.3 percent translates into actual votes.

[8:27:10 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER deferred the question to Ms. Growden.

[8:27:25 AM](#)

MS. GROWDEN confirmed Ms. Brewster's statements regarding the 0.3 percent difference between the actual certified election results and the certified recount results. She said that is not an unusual difference. She stated that another reason votes change is because people sometimes do not fill in the oval completely on the ballot, and the division's policy is that if for any reason a mark cannot be detected, a determination is made whether or not the voter's intent was clear.

[8:29:44 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN asked again how many votes equal 0.3 percent.

[8:29:50 AM](#)

MS. GROWDEN said she doesn't remember, but the number is posted on the division's web site.

[8:30:49 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said the media has mistakenly reported that touch screens were somehow involved in the recount issue, but she stated for the record that touch screens were not used anywhere, statewide, in the 2004 general election.

[8:31:08 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON confirmed, "I think the legislature had said that until you have the paper backup, you couldn't use the machines that ... you had in your possession."

[8:31:13 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER reported that the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires that in each polling place there be a voting unit accessible to the visually impaired and disabled voters. She said House Bill 320, which passed out of the legislature in

2002, directed the division to provide balloting equipment to the visually impaired and disabled voters, so that they would have an opportunity to vote an independent ballot. House Bill 459, which passed in 2004, required the voting units to be capable of providing a paper record that can be reviewed and corrected at the time the voter casts his/her ballot, as well as required that the paper receipt be available for a recount. Another bill, HB 94, [which passed in 2005], directs the Division of Elections to do a hand count in one precinct in each of the 40 House districts before certifying an election. She added, "That will be new this year." Although it does not relate directly to electronic voting, [HB 94] allows for one additional check by the division. Furthermore, she said, HB 94 also allows for the director to approve a voting system and software that is certified by the federal election commission.

MS. BREWSTER explained that the touch screen units that the state has purchased were chosen because they meet the requirements of HAVA, as well as state law. Furthermore, the units have been certified, with all their components, by the federal election commission. She explained that federal certification means that that system meets certain functional requirements, performance characteristics, documentation requirements, and test evaluation criteria. Ms. Brewster related that the touch screen units are compatible with the division's current system, which has also been certified by the Federal Election Commission.

MS. BREWSTER stated that although the touch screen machines are provided for the visually impaired and disabled voter, no voter will be turned away who requests to use them. She announced that the Division of Elections will hold demonstrations across the state for the blind and disabled community, so that they can become familiar with the machines. The division will use this opportunity to listen to feedback, particularly with regard to how the division can train its poll workers to best assist the disabled community to use the machines. She said there will also be a poster by the touch screen unit, with instructions listed on it.

[8:35:28 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said the state has purchased 505 touch screen units. She emphasized that the machines will not be replacing Alaska's current system of voting; the optical scan and the paper ballot "in those hand count precincts" will still be available. As per state law, there will be one touch screen

unit in each of Alaska's 439 polling places, she said. The units were purchased, using HAVA funds. Each unit alone costs \$3,150. Each unit is equipped with a printer, to allow for a paper trail, and that component adds an additional \$350 to the unit.

[8:36:28 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER outlined the process of security and testing done before an election. She stated that the process is designed in such a way that no single group or person can tamper with the results or the system. The state of Alaska uses an instate printer to produce the ballots, rather than using the Accuvote software vendor. A printout of each voter's selection will be made available to him/her for review. At that point, she explained, the voter can either accept the ballot, reject it and vote again, or reject it and choose another option available for voting in the polling place.

MS. BREWSTER relayed that each touch screen machine uses a memory card, which is programmed by a Division of Elections employee. At no time during the programming of the memory cards is the unit connected to the Internet or "land" - it is a stand-alone computer that programs the cards, she said. Once the cards are programmed, they are tested by a bipartisan state review board. The test results are printed from both the optical scan and touch screen machines, and compared to the actual test ballots for the optical scan and the paper ballots produced by the touch screen machines. The tested and certified memory cards are then sent to the appropriate regional supervisors, where a separate test is done by a bipartisan regional Accuvote review board to certify that the results match those results certified by the state review board.

MS. BREWSTER said each optical scan and touch screen unit also undergoes a functionality test within the regional offices. She said the board seals the memory card into the unit and records the seal and serial number of the units, at which point the units are ready to be sent to the polling place. The final test, she stated, is completed on election day by the bipartisan election board, who prints out a "zero totals report" on the unit to ensure that no ballots or results have been registered on the machine. Those zero totals reports are then secured into the unit, she concluded.

[8:41:34 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER asked for volunteers to come test the two voting machines.

[8:43:07 AM](#)

ELLEN KELLY, HAVA Systems Manager, Division of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, demonstrated the voting machines, using committee member volunteers.

[The entire committee approached the two voting machines and were coached through the voting process by Ms. Kelly. Although no one was near the microphones, the recording was not stopped. At the end of the demonstration, the committee members took their seats.]

[8:50:48 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to a question from Representative Gardner, reiterated that there will be one machine in every polling place, including the smaller precincts, and she said concerns about keeping the ballot secret when there are only a handful of voters using the touch screen machine is a valid one. She stated that the division will encourage its poll workers "to vote that machine so that there are more votes and more voters using the machine." She stated that there will also be observers allowed in the polling place and, if at any time it appears that someone is tracking how the machine is being used, those observers can watch for that. She continued:

There's no place that the division assigns a number or designates a ballot to a voter during the voting process. There is no number associated with that paper ballot printed on the machine.

[8:53:11 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON noted that poll watchers see how many people go into a voting booth, and in what sequence. He indicated that if there is "a challenge" and "that tape is reviewed by political parties and by everyone else who's reviewing that vote sequence," that could be problematic. Therefore, he said, he has asked the division to have the poll workers intermittently go into the enclosed polling booth, "so that people won't know who voted when." He stated the reason for this is "just so that we get away from any appearance from someone being able to know, 'Okay, you voted number three, and now I can tell how you voted,' if there's a manual recount."

[8:54:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO said when he used the machine during the demonstration time, he was looking for a way to cheat, but could not see a way to do so on the touch screen machine. Regarding the card used, he asked if it would be possible for an information technology (IT) genius to get the information off the card, leave the booth, make 500 cards, and hand them off to a friend who would go in and vote 300 times in different polling places. He indicated that he wants the division to consider any weakest link that may exist.

[8:56:17 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON explained that Representative Gatto is talking about an "encoder that reactivates the key." He asked if it is possible for somebody to buy that encoder on the Internet.

[8:56:28 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said an encoder could be purchased from a vendor; however, the encoder that the division uses is programmed by the division with specific information. She continued, "That individual would have to have access to our global election management computer. That is in a secured room, locked up."

[8:58:00 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to Chair Seaton's restating Representative Gatto's aforementioned scenario, said the division will research the issue in order to address that concern.

[8:58:19 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked if it would be possible for someone to watch a poll worker to find out how the card is renewed, and then "run around and go to all the precincts and vote again."

[8:58:36 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER explained that the decoder will be worn on a lanyard around the poll worker's neck, and it would be very difficult for someone to take it.

[8:59:09 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON asked what kind of backup plan is in place if an encoder "dies."

[8:59:26 AM](#)

MS. KELLY said the card has to be programmed with the encoder. She offered her understanding that some of the larger precincts will have two encoders - one as a backup. She said the encoders are very reliable, because the batteries last for seven years. In response to a remark by Chair Seaton, she agreed that the backup is the current voting system, so there is no risk of people not being able to vote.

[9:00:21 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON asked if the division starts with new rolls of paper backup ballots each time so that the process is not delayed by a poll worker having to reload the paper.

[9:00:40 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said the spool of paper holds 140-180 ballots, depending on the length of ballot and how many are rejected. If the machine is popular and a number of people want to use it, the paper would need to be replaced. She said, "It will remain in the security canister and will be sealed and protected as a paper ballot will be." In response to a question raised by Representative David Guttenberg when he came by previously to view the voting machines, Ms. Brewster said there is a warning screen on the machine that will not allow voting when there is an insufficient amount of paper left, until the canister has been replaced.

[9:02:21 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER reviewed the steps taken once the polls are closed. She said the election board prints a results report on each of the machines before transmitting the results electronically or calling them in to the appropriate division regional office. In response to Chair Seaton, she explained that two reports are run: one that remains with the tape, [and] the other [that] is placed with the memory card after the election, sealed in an envelope, and sent to the state review board. The reports are sent prior to the machine's being connected to upload the results, so that when the comparison is done by the board, it can look at what the machine was recording and what was

uploaded, to ensure those results match. As a result of the passage of HB 94, the board will also be conducting a hand count of one randomly selected precinct in each of the 40 House districts. That precinct must comprise at least 5 percent of the total ballots cast in its House district. She offered examples. If results of a hand count are off by more than 1 percent, the entire House district's votes will be hand counted.

[9:06:55 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said HB 94 mentions results, and she clarified that means both totals, as well as individual races. She opined that this is the best way to address any concerns about vote counting as intended.

[9:08:25 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER stated that compared to the 0.3 percent difference in a statewide race, a 1 percent discrepancy would indicate a serious problem.

[9:08:57 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said she would like Ms. Growden to respond to that observation. In response to a question from Chair Seaton, she listed some of the numbers related to voting in his House district.

[9:10:00 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON figured that in the smallest [precinct] in his district, 1 percent would equal 2 votes, while in the largest [precinct], 1 percent would equal a difference of 10 votes.

MS. BREWSTER confirmed that's correct.

[9:10:37 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER opined, "The tolerances ... should be very small, given that everything is automated and not generally touched by people. So, it should be either right or not right."

[9:10:56 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER responded, "This was the standard set by the legislature."

9:11:09 AM

CHAIR SEATON said he wants to committee to think about what kind of criteria to develop regarding the standard of rejection.

9:12:15 AM

MS. BREWSTER noted, "We're not just looking at total votes cast, ... we're looking at each individual race, as well." She said she thinks that was the legislature's intent in passing HB 94.

9:13:32 AM

MS. BREWSTER, in conclusion of the overview, said once the state review board is confident that the results reported are accurate, it will certify the election.

9:14:08 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER noted that there have been challenges regarding the Diebold voting system. She asked what the process was in choosing Diebold for the State of Alaska.

9:14:33 AM

MS. BREWSTER replied that a request for proposal (RFP) process was used. One of the requirements was that the company had to be bonded. She noted that some of the problems other states have experienced are due to the procedures those states have set up to test and program the machines, which are different than the procedures the State of Alaska use.

9:16:12 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked what the primary difference is in Alaska's procedure.

9:16:25 AM

MS. BREWSTER said the division does its own coding. She said she doesn't know if other states "allow for the vendor to do their programming."

9:16:35 AM

MS. GROWDEN proffered:

There are some jurisdictions that ... have vendors program their elections. The same vendor prints their ballot, ... troubleshoot[s] their election ..., and help[s] with testing of those cards. ... That has been an issue through ... different security measures that the election assistance commission has been looking in best practices. Because when you put all your eggs in one basket like that, that jurisdiction then really gives up control of security over their elections. We have never, in Alaska, allowed that to happen with our election programming. It always had division staff with bi-partisan review boards doing the testing, and a different vendor doing the printing.

[9:18:03 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to questions from Chair Seaton, confirmed that if a card has been sent out to a precinct and is found to have a problem, it has to be sent back to Juneau to be reprogrammed. The precincts outside of Juneau do not even have the equipment to reprogram cards.

[9:18:30 AM](#)

MS. GROWDEN stated that one of the reasons the state chose the Diebold system is that it had already invested in a ballot-counting system for the state, for which procedures and security measures had already been established, and which had been proven to accurately count ballots in Alaska. When looking at the purchase of touch screen voting equipment, to comply with HAVA, one of the requirements was that the system purchased had to be compatible with the existing software in current use. The reason, she explained, was that the division did not want to have two different ballot tabulation systems in the state that did not "talk to each other," and where staff would have to take both sets of results and merge them together in a manual process. She stated that there is not any other vendor whose software is compatible with the global election management system (GEMS) software [produced by Diebold].

[9:20:11 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON clarified that the software used for the state's Accuvote system is made by Diebold, which is why it is compatible with Diebold's touch screen machine.

[9:21:00 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER observed that Diebold already "had a leg up" in compatibility.

[9:21:16 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said she was not involved in the RFP process, so she would get back to Representative Gardner with a response.

[9:22:54 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to a question from Representative Gruenberg, reiterated that the security procedures in Alaska will not allow for some of the things that have happened [in other states].

[9:23:46 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER mentioned \$2 million in the federal budget. She asked if that money has been spent, if it was adequate to meet the needs of the division, and what the projected costs are.

[9:23:59 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said the division has approximately \$16 million HAVA funds in an interest-yielding account. Additionally, the division is looking at other ways to improve elections. For example, the division has opened two satellite offices that function as regional offices to better serve voters in rapidly growing areas. She reported that the division has also moved the absentee office from the director's office and made it a stand-alone office in Anchorage, which should improve the speed at which people receive their absentee ballots and the speed at which the division can process them. She said the use of absentee ballots is a popular method of voting.

[9:25:35 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to a follow-up question from Representative Gardner, confirmed that the division has adequate funds for training and any necessary staff increases. She offered further details.

[9:26:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG said the voters of Anchorage recently turned down some school bonds, and, as a result, the Municipality of Anchorage held a special election at the same time and place as the general election. He indicated that there was a cost to the municipality. He asked Ms. Brewster if she is aware of ways to keep costs down in the future.

[9:26:57 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER responded that the state actually conducted the special election for the municipality in 2004; however, the Municipality did reimburse the state for the cost of holding that special election. She stated, "We will try to work with municipalities as much as possible to try to assist them in their elections, and if there are ways to cut down on costs, by doing what the Division of Elections did in 2004, the lieutenant governor has advised us that we should continue to work with municipalities in that way." In response to a follow-up question from Representative Gruenberg, she said the division has the ability to do that currently, thus, she is not aware of any legislative changes necessary in this regard.

[9:28:04 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON stated his appreciation of the division's willingness to work with the municipalities.

[9:28:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked if there is any method of notifying voters who vote outside of their own district that they do not have the full ballot for their district.

[9:29:08 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER indicated that there is some place to go where the ballots for all 40 House districts are available. She said that information is advertised on the Division of Elections' web site, as well as in the newspaper.

[9:29:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER said she thinks a lot of people don't understand that if they don't vote in their own district, "the vote that they make in their out-of-district area for candidates that are local there won't count, and they don't have the opportunity to vote for their own."

[9:30:10 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER said it is printed on a voter's registration card where he/she is to vote. She welcomed suggestions from the committee regarding how to better communicate with the public as to where they are supposed to or can vote.

CHAIR SEATON encouraged all committee members to speak directly with the division with any suggestions or questions. He announced that the touch screen machines would be set up until 2 p.m. today for anyone to try.

[9:32:13 AM](#)

MS. BREWSTER, in response to a question from Representative Gardner, said the division has made presentations for the blind and disabled community and will be offering demonstrations statewide, beginning in June, specifically so that the targeted users of the machines can try them out and offer their feedback.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)
Alaska Public Offices Commission

[9:33:02 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON announced that the last order of business was the confirmation hearing for the Alaska Public Offices Commission.

[9:33:28 AM](#)

CLAIRE VanSCIVER HALL, Appointee to the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC), offered her background for the committee, relaying that formerly she was a teacher, and currently she is a paralegal and office manager of her husband's law practice. She stated she is interested in APOC because it plays an important role in government oversight - a role in which she said she would like to participate.

[9:34:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS stated that Ms. VanSciver Hall shows integrity and openness and is the most fair and decent person in Fairbanks.

[9:37:21 AM](#)

MS. VanSCIVER HALL, in response to a question from Representative Gruenberg, offered some details about her husband's law practice.

[9:38:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG said he thinks it is a great idea to get people who are involved in family law into the public process.

[9:38:23 AM](#)

MS. VanSCIVER HALL, in response to a remark made by Representative Gruenberg, confirmed that APOC is comprised of an even number of Republicans and Democrats, and although she will be filling a Republican seat, she will be fair to both parties.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG said the folks involved in APOC are overworked and underpaid, and he expressed his support of the commission.

[9:39:48 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON stated that APOC is a commission important to the public, because it verifies that the legislature is fulfilling ethical and reporting standards. He stated that he is happy to hear the personal recommendations from people in Fairbanks who know Ms. VanSciver Hall.

[9:40:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG moved to advance the confirmation of Claire VanSciver Hall to the joint session of the House and Senate. There being no objection, the nomination of Claire VanSciver Hall to the Alaska Public Offices Commission was advanced.

[9:41:14 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON announced that an executive session would take place next week. In response to a question from Representative Gardner, he said staff will not be allowed at the executive session.

[9:42:37 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG talked about signing confidentiality forms, which would show the gravity of the situation and remind those who sign it of the confidentiality.

[9:43:38 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON said he would check with Legislative Legal and Research Services on that issue. He said he would like to let those from the Department of Homeland Security know ahead of the executive session which issues the committee would like addressed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at [9:44:40 AM](#).