

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

January 28, 2008
8:43 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Paul Seaton, Chair
Representative Kyle Johansen
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Lindsey Holmes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Craig Johnson
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
Representative Peggy Wilson

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 289

"An Act exempting employers from paying unemployment tax for crewmembers on fishing vessels that respond or prepare to respond to, or that prepare for or engage in an emergency or practice drill response to, an oil spill; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 289(FSH) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 289

SHORT TITLE: EMPLOYMENT TAX EXEMPTION: SPILL RESPONSE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) HARRIS, SEATON

01/04/08	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/4/08
01/15/08	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/15/08	(H)	FSH, L&C
01/23/08	(H)	FSH AT 8:30 AM BARNES 124
01/23/08	(H)	Heard & Held
01/23/08	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)
01/28/08	(H)	FSH AT 8:30 AM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

PAULA SCAVERA, Special Assistant
Office of the Commissioner

Department of Labor & Workforce Development (DLWD)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified with official support for CSHB 289.

TOM COLBY, Marine Team Leader
Alaska Tanker Company (ATC)
Valdez, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 289.

BETTY SCHORR, Program Manager
Industry Preparedness & Pipeline Program
Division of Spill Prevention & Response
Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: During hearing on HB 289, responded to questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CHAIR PAUL SEATON called the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting to order at [8:43:44 AM](#). Representatives Seaton, Johansen, Holmes, and Edgmon were present at the call to order.

HB 289-EMPLOYMENT TAX EXEMPTION: SPILL RESPONSE

CHAIR SEATON announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 289, "An Act exempting employers from paying unemployment tax for crewmembers on fishing vessels that respond or prepare to respond to, or that prepare for or engage in an emergency or practice drill response to, an oil spill; and providing for an effective date."

[8:44:05 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON explained the changes found in the committee substitute (CS): incorporation of the amendment adopted at the previous hearing (1/23/08), which restricts applicability to only fishing vessels that engage in harvesting aquatic life, in [paragraph] (17), page 5 lines 12-20; and adds a new definition for the term "temporary," as "a period of less than seven continuous days," in [paragraph] (22), page 6 line 23; and includes the necessary title change.

PAULA SCAVERA, Special Assistant, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Labor & Workforce Development (DLWD), said she had

reviewed the proposed CS, and stated official DLWD support for HB 289, as amended.

TOM COLBY, Marine Team Leader, Alaska Tanker Company (ATC), provided support for HB 289, on behalf of ATC. He said that the fishing vessel contracts are very important to maintain compliance with the [oil spill response] contingency plan. He stressed that using fishing vessels, in the case of a spill, is good for all affected entities, and results in a more robust response.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLMES asked if he deems the definition for "temporary services," to be adequate, and providing a sufficient time span for short term spill response.

MR. COLBY offered that the training and drills do not exceed seven days, which is what the legislation is intended to address. In the case of an actual spill, the vessels may be employed for months, and the exemption is not intended to cover that activity.

CHAIR SEATON agreed.

BETTY SCHORR, Program Manager, Industry Preparedness & Pipeline Program, Division of Spill Prevention & Response, Department of Environmental Conservation, concurred that the seven day parameter would be sufficient for training/drills. To a follow-up question she said that there do not appear to be any outstanding questions or concerns regarding the proposed legislation.

[8:50:56 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN moved to adopt CSHB 289, Version 25-LS1182\M, Wayne, 1/25/08, as the working document.

There being no objection, Version M was before the committee.

CHAIR SEATON closed public testimony.

[8:51:29 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN moved to report CSHB 289, Version 25-LS1182\M, Wayne, 1/25/08, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection CSHB 289(FSH) was moved out the House Special Committee on Fisheries.

8:51:59 AM

CHAIR SEATON announced future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting was adjourned at 8:52 a.m.