

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 10, 2009

1:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Peggy Wilson, Chair
Representative Craig Johnson, Vice Chair
Representative Kyle Johansen
Representative Cathy Engstrom Munoz
Representative Mike Doogan
Representative Max Gruenberg

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative John Harris

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 100

"An Act relating to the Joseph C. Williams, Sr., Coastal Trail."

- MOVED OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 100

SHORT TITLE: JOSEPH C WILLIAMS, SR., COASTAL TRAIL

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) JOHANSEN

01/30/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/30/09	(H)	TRA
02/10/09	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 17

WITNESS REGISTER

SONIA CHRISTENSEN, Staff
to Representative Kyle Johansen
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 100 on behalf of the prime sponsor, Representative Kyle Johansen.

MARY SIROKY, Legislative Liaison
Office of the Commissioner

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified and answered questions during the discussion of HB 100.

DAN WILLIAMS, Mayor
City of Saxman
Saxman, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the discussion of HB 100.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:04:09 PM](#)

CHAIR PEGGY WILSON called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Representatives Johnson, Johansen, Munoz, and Wilson were present at the call to order. Representative Gruenberg arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 100-JOSEPH C WILLIAMS, SR., COASTAL TRAIL

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CHAIR WILSON announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 100, "An Act relating to the Joseph C. Williams, Sr., Coastal Trail."

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SONIA CHRISTENSEN, Staff, to Representative Kyle Johansen, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, began by explaining that a beautiful trail runs along the coast of the South Tongass Highway in Ketchikan. She offered that recent construction was completed, along with an extension of the bike path. She stated that the trail was named Joseph C. Williams, Sr. Coastal Trail. However, under the current statute, AS 35.40.053, the bike path is listed as being between Ketchikan and Saxman. She related that HB 100 would delete that language and rename the entire coastal trail after Joseph C. Williams, Sr. In response to Chair Wilson, Ms. Christensen answered that she was not aware of any objections to HB 100.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN, in response to Chair Wilson, recalled that the original bill that created the trail passed the

legislature several years ago with a zero fiscal note attached. He further recalled that the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) listed in the description portion of its zero fiscal note that the cost of constructing a sign to rename the trail would run between \$2,000 and \$2,500. He opined that the DOT&PF could currently either absorb the cost or simply not erect a sign at one end of the trail. He opined that if the DOT&PF could put up a sign a few years ago without charge, that it should be able to absorb the cost now.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN, in response to Representative Johnson, explained that HB 100 currently does not have a referral to the House Finance Committee.

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MARY SIROKY, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), explained that the DOT&PF's policy in the past few years, with respect to signage, is to attach a fiscal note when for the installation of all new signs when they are required through legislation. However, she related that the DOT&PF will absorb the long-term maintenance of the signs. Thus, if any damage is sustained, the DOT&PF will replace the sign without projecting the cost in the fiscal note. She added that the DOT&PF is frequently asked to add signs and the cost of the additional signage is frequently from its maintenance and operations (M&O) budget. She opined that the DOT&PF believes it is appropriate to inform the legislature of the actual cost to erect a sign.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG responded and acknowledged that the committee has been informed.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN, in response to Representative Johnson, answered that a sign is currently at the head of the trail, but the trail could use an additional sign. He suggested that the DOT&PF could decide whether to add the sign and absorb the cost. In response to Representative Johnson, Representative Johansen explained that the existing sign is relatively new and is in good shape.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN, in response to Chair Wilson, explained that the road continues to Mountain Point, approximately 5 or 6 miles. In further response to Chair Wilson, Representative Johansen offered that the road is paved to Herring Cove, and past that point the road is not paved. He stated that the distance is probably 9 or 10 miles to Beaver Falls, which is at the end of the road.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN explained that the Chair prepared a House Transportation Standing Committee zero fiscal note. He offered that one option for the committee is to adopt the zero fiscal note and not adopt the DOT&PF fiscal note.

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CHAIR WILSON stated for the record that the explanation previously given to her was not quite the same.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON stated that he would move the House Transportation Standing Committee's fiscal note at the time the bill is reported from the committee.

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DAN WILLIAMS, Mayor, City of Saxman, began his testimony by explaining that he is the godson of the late Joseph C. Williams, who served as a leader and the Mayor of the City of Saxman for over 35 years. He related that the senior Mr. Williams was a fisherman, a provider for the community, and also served as Grand President of the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) Grand Camp for many years. Mr. Williams, Sr. died in 1982, he noted. He stated that naming the trail after Joseph C. Williams, Sr. is a great honor for the City of Saxman and for his family. He concluded his testimony by saying in Tlingit "Gunalcheesh," which translates as thank you.

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MR. WILLIAMS, in response to Representative Gruenberg, explained that he recently returned as mayor of the City of Saxman after a three-year break. Thus, while he appreciates Representative Gruenberg's interest in knowing his transportation priorities, that he will first need to study and review the current transportation needs of his community. He thanked the committee

for its generosity in passing this bill. He commented that the trail is frequently used by residents and tourists.

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CHAIR WILSON explained that the committee would like to move the bill to the floor for action. Thus, the committee would like to take action on a zero fiscal note. She explained that if the coastal trail is expanded in the future, that the name of the trail would remain the same as the "Joseph C. Williams, Sr., Coastal Trail."

MR. WILLIAMS, in response to Chair Wilson, stated that moving one sign to the other end of the coastal trail would be acceptable to him. He stated that the coastal trail currently has two signs, one near the U.S. Coast Guard base, and one in the City of Saxman near the Ketchikan Gateway Borough bus stop.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN expressed his displeasure that DOT&PF might not absorb the cost of relocating the sign on the coastal trail from its M&O budget.

CHAIR WILSON commented that she thought the DOT&PF was willing to move the sign.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN applauded the Williams family. He offered that Mr. William's brother previously served in the legislature, that their father was a great leader for the area. Additionally another brother served as the mayor of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and currently serves on the city council. His nephew was also on the city council, he stated. He said, "The whole family is so engaged in our community. It's just great, so thank you for your service."

MR. WILLIAMS, in response to Chair Wilson, explained that his father has two daughters and two sons from his first marriage and two sons and a daughter from his second marriage.

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CHAIR WILSON, after first determining that no one else wished to testify, closed the public testimony on HB 100.

[1:19:41 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE Johnson moved to report HB 100, version 26-LS0428\A, out of committee with individual recommendations and

the accompanying zero fiscal note prepared by the House Transportation Standing Committee.

There being no objection, HB 100 was reported from the House Transportation Standing Committee.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.