

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

February 3, 2009

3:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Donald Olson, Chair
Senator Joe Thomas, Vice Chair
Senator Hollis French
Senator Albert Kookesh
Senator Linda Menard

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 85

"An Act relating to limitations on possessing, sending, shipping, transporting, or bringing alcoholic beverages to a local option area and to penalties for violations of those limitations; relating to probation for minor consuming or in possession or control of alcoholic beverages; relating to civil fines for liquor licensees whose agents or employees furnish alcoholic beverages to a person under 21 years of age; and providing for an effective date."

HEARD AND HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 19

"An Act relating to complaints concerning peace officers and village public safety officers and to notification to persons filing complaints concerning peace officers and village public safety officers."

HEARD AND HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 85

SHORT TITLE: ALCOHOL: LOCAL OPTION/LICENSING/MINORS

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/26/09	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/26/09	(S)	CRA, JUD, FIN
02/03/09	(S)	CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 211

BILL: SB 19

SHORT TITLE: COMPLAINTS AGAINST PEACE OFFICERS/VPSOS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) FRENCH

01/21/09	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/09
01/21/09	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/09	(S)	CRA, STA, JUD
02/03/09	(S)	CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 211

WITNESS REGISTER

ANNE CARPENETI, Attorney
Department of Law
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 85.

KEITH MALLARD, Commander
Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement
Alaska State Troopers

POSITION STATEMENT: Spoke in favor of SB 85.

DIANE CASTO, Project Manager
Division of Behavioral Health
Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS)

POSITION STATEMENT: Spoke in favor of SB 85.

DWAYNE PEEPLES, Deputy Commissioner
Administration and Medical Services
Department of Corrections

POSITION STATEMENT: Spoke in favor of SB 85.

GINA APPOLLONI, Director
Village Public Safety Officers (VPSO)
Kawerak, Inc
Nome AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Proposed changes for SB 19.

JOSEPH MASTERS, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety
Anchorage AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Spoke in favor of SB 19, with changes.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:31:51 PM](#)

CHAIR DONALD OLSON called the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Senators French, Thomas, and Olson were present at the call to order. Senators Menard and Kookesh arrived later.

SB 85-ALCOHOL: LOCAL OPTION/LICENSING/MINORS

CHAIR OLSON announced the consideration of SB 85.

ANNE CARPENETI, Criminal Division, Department of Law (DOL), Juneau, thanked the committee for hearing the bill. The governor and the DOL have looked for ways to respond to requests by rural Alaska to help address alcohol problems. The amount of alcohol that a person can possess or take to a damp community is high. Last year legislators in the House Finance Committee asked DOL to change that. The advice of the DOL was to find all references to these amounts in Title IV. SB 85 is the result of that request. Under current law, every month, every adult can bring in or possess 10.5 liters of distilled alcohol in a damp community "without raising the rebuttable presumption that transportation or the possession is for the sale of that alcohol." The amount totals about 14 fifths of hard alcohol per month (or 12 shots every day). Additionally, a person may transport in or possess 32 bottles of wine and 12 gallons of malt liquor, which is over 5 cases of beer for every adult for every month. Many people can say they were having a party, and those cases don't get prosecuted. SB 85 reduces these amounts that give rise to the rebuttable presumption. It allows 3 liters of hard or distilled alcohol per month per adult. These are suggestions she said.

[3:35:37 PM](#)

MS. CARPENETI said SB 85 makes conforming amendments in Title IV to other provisions in that title that refer to these amounts. A few years ago a statewide database was created for people who send alcohol in response to written orders to local option communities. It requires them to keep track of who they send alcohol to so people can't shop at numerous distributors. This would change the amounts that a licensee can send. It also changes the threshold amount after a person has been convicted of bootlegging. Right now the threshold is over 10.5 liters of distilled alcohol for a Class C felony and below that is a Class A misdemeanor. The threshold would change for people who are convicted of bootlegging. If they bootleg more than 3 liters of distilled alcohol it would be considered a felony. Over the years the state has tried to encourage licensees to train employees not to sell to minors. Most licensees are very

responsible, but a few are not. Under current law there is no definite consequence to a licensee if an employee or agent is convicted of furnishing alcohol to minors. SB 85 would propose civil penalties for owners or licensees if their agent or employee is convicted. The first would be a letter of warning, and the second would result in a \$1,000 civil fine.

[3:38:34 PM](#)

MS. CARPENETI said SB 85 makes two corrections to legislation that was adopted last year. Sections 4 and 5 offer a very technical change. It deals with how judges read the changes in the minor consuming bill from last year. The second correction amends the mandatory minimums for bootlegging convictions. "Last year the legislature adopted what we testified and suggested would be the same mandatory minimum penalties for people convicted of bootlegging as the mandatory minimum penalties for people convicted of drunk driving." However, the definition of "prior conviction" in drunk driving is different from the definition for bootlegging. "So we didn't get it right in terms of the mandatory minimums." For drunk driving the prior convictions include the first two misdemeanors, and for bootlegging they do not.

[3:40:17 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH asked how the changes came about. Do they assume there will be less use by minors by these amounts? Are there any statistics to support the changes?

MS. CARPENETI said the focus is to lower the amount of alcohol that gives rise to all the problems of crime.

SENATOR KOOKESH asked about the people who don't contribute to crime. The assumption is that a person from rural Alaska buying alcohol will get in trouble. "I'm a little uncomfortable with that," because there are no statistics.

MS. CARPENETI noted those amounts of distilled alcohol and the harm that it does to an individual's health. The bill simply halves the amount of allowable malt beverage and wine -- down to 16 bottles of wine and 2.5 cases of beer per person per month. For distilled alcohol, she looked at the number of ounces in a bottle and arrived at a number that Senator Kookesh may disagree with. She thought it was a starting point.

[3:42:30 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH said he doesn't want anyone to think he is not supportive, but the bill is aimed at rural Alaska, and people in

the rest of Alaska can buy all the booze they want. He noted that there was a time when non-Natives were allowed to drink as much as they wanted but Natives couldn't. "And you have to come to a point where if next year you come to us and say I want to cut it in half again, and you still don't have statistics, I'm a little uncomfortable with that." He doesn't want to do it simply because it presumes that there aren't people in rural Alaska that can handle their alcohol.

CHAIR OLSON asked how the bill protects responsible drinkers from being unduly inhibited in getting alcohol.

[3:44:01 PM](#)

MS. CARPENETI said that is the problem. These amounts are too high for anyone, responsible or not. She recognizes that most people in rural Alaska do drink responsibly. People agree that the current law is too high, and maybe the bill sets amounts that are too low. There are no statistics that she has seen. There is a study from ISER [Institute of Social and Economic Research] in 1999 that concluded that damp and dry communities have a lot less accidental deaths and homicides, and the conclusion blamed the alcohol.

SENATOR THOMAS said the law is presuming that only one or two individuals are the only ones consuming the alcohol, "but obviously that is probably not the case." He spoke of people having friends or family over for dinner, and the amounts don't look so severe. "I'm assuming that before this would even be pursued with somebody, there would have to be some indication that the person is actually selling the liquor illegally." He wondered if there is a presumption of bootlegging regardless of any other evidence.

[3:46:34 PM](#)

MS. CARPENETI said these are just rebuttable presumptions. People can have parties. Prosecutors don't bring a case unless they feel that they can prove it beyond a reasonable doubt, and it takes more than just an amount of alcohol. According to Captain Mallard, cases are not brought based on that amount.

SENATOR THOMAS asked what penalties Page 2, Section 3 refer to.

MS. CARPENETI said the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Board can take action against a license if a licensee has a pattern of employing people who serve alcohol to minors.

SENATOR THOMAS asked if that would apply if the employee did it and the licensee was not aware of it.

[3:48:48 PM](#)

MS. CARPENETI said Paragraph D refers to additional penalties on the licensee, not the employee. If the ABC board sees a pattern of a licensee allowing violations on his or her premises, the board can suspend the license. That would be the other penalty.

SENATOR KOOKESH said, "You start ramping down the numbers, and ... the bootleggers are always going to get through one way or the other." He said he comes from a dry community and doesn't like bootleggers and is adamant about stopping alcohol abuse. "Doesn't this drive the amount of alcohol per unit up even higher?" Alcohol will be harder to get, so supply and demand will raise the price of bootlegger products.

MS. CARPENETI sees that consequence.

[3:50:28 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH asked the rationale for setting the current amounts.

MS. CARPENETI said she believes it is a volume that is easily shipped for a wedding or enough for the entire year. The bill changes wine from 32 to 16 [bottles]. A case of wine is 12, so neither fits neatly into a case. Beer has the similar issue.

[3:51:57 PM](#)

KEITH MALLARD, Commander, Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement (ABADE), Alaska State Troopers, said the Department of Public Safety (DPS) supports SB 85 because it will reduce the flow of alcohol to rural Alaska, and with that will come a reduction in alcohol-related violent crimes. He has worked in rural Alaska. He told the committee that he has been in law enforcement for 14 years. He has been stationed in Fairbanks, Aniak, and Girdwood. When troopers intercept alcohol bound for local option communities, there is a reduction of violent crimes. Within the troopers, they say, "one bottle -- one felony." About 80 percent of serious crimes are alcohol related. He said he can't point to a study regarding a direct correlation. Three years ago he worked with the University of Alaska to evaluate the effectiveness of the ABADE alcohol interdiction programs in an attempt to draw the correlation between the flow of alcohol and crime. The data pool was too small to draw conclusions. The researchers said that it is impossible to predict the number of crimes that are prevented by

an alcohol seizure. But Mr. Mallard has worked and lived in western Alaska, and he could always tell when a shipment of alcohol made it to one of his dry communities. The calls for service increased exponentially overnight. In 2006, ABADE attempted to infiltrate and disrupt an alcohol and marijuana dealer. The investigation resulted in 14 defendants and the dismantling of the bootleg and drug trafficking. "We'll never know the number of crimes we prevented ... by dismantling this operation; however, the reports from the local chief and from the law-abiding citizens ... were grateful regarding the feelings of safety and peace that they were experiencing as a direct result of our efforts." In 2008 ABADE investigators forwarded 517 alcohol-related charges to the district attorney's office. More than 1,029 gallons of alcohol were seized and that is more than any prior year. That is equivalent to 5,194 750-ml bottles, which has a street value of \$750,000 million, "and that's with only an initial investment of \$51,000."

[3:56:02 PM](#)

MR. MALLARD said alcohol remains the most prolific controlled substance within Alaska. For every dollar invested by a bootlegger, he gets about \$15.00 in return. Cocaine dealers get about \$1.50 for every dollar invested, and a marijuana dealer gets a \$4.00 return.

SENATOR KOOKESH asked if he has compared the statistics with urban Alaska. "I get a little uncomfortable when you say for every bottle you have one felony."

MR. MALLARD said that is just a mantra used within ABADE, because it is not truly predictable. Statistically about 80 percent of violent crimes involve alcohol. It is just a motivator without data to back it up.

[3:57:16 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH said he would not want to live in an urban center; there are more crimes there. He bets there are more murders and violent crimes per capita in urban Alaska. "I don't drink. I never have ... but I live in rural Alaska. Somehow I feel a statistic like myself gets lost in the shuffle of trying to take care of bootleggers." He is uncomfortable getting lumped into "that whole big mass of rural Alaska, and how bad we are out there."

MR. MALLARD said he is rather passionate about what he does. It is not the case that ABADE is lumping in law-abiding citizens. "We're going out there trying to protect people like you for the

violent offenders that victimize people within their community, and alcohol is part of that."

SENATOR KOOKESH said he recognizes that. He thanked him because he sees it every day, but he doesn't want to be lumped in.

[3:58:51 PM](#)

SENATOR FRENCH asked about the distribution system. What percentage of illegal alcohol comes to western Alaska by air?

MR. MALLARD said he thinks most comes in cargo or passenger planes. Last year probably more than 75 percent of the alcohol came through aircraft importation. Initially it may come from an urban center.

SENATOR FRENCH said it may come by snow machine at the end, but how does it initially arrive? It doesn't come by barge to Bethel in the first place?

MR. MALLARD said it comes by airplane.

CHAIR OLSON said Nome gets most of its alcoholic beverages from a barge in the summer.

[4:00:34 PM](#)

SENATOR FRENCH asked if that was the legal or illegal importation. "I think what the captain is saying is that the illegal portion [comes by] airplane."

MR. MALLARD said yes. It likely comes from wet communities or urban centers. "It's going to get to rural Alaska by aircraft; however, often it will be taken into a hub community and then from there, taken out by boat or snow machine."

SENATOR FRENCH said there are certain choke-points, and it is probably going through Bethel. It makes sense. He asked if drug dogs can detect alcohol in a closed container. Are there dogs working at the airports?

MR. MALLARD said dogs can detect alcohol, but there are none working at the airports on that. He said dogs don't distinguish between alcohol and narcotics, so if it were legal to ship alcohol into that community, there may be no legal standing to get a search warrant. "If it was illegal to ship narcotics as well as alcohol into a community, and you had a dog there, then I think you might have a legal stand to get a search warrant." A box could be searched because neither would be legal.

[4:03:13 PM](#)

SENATOR FRENCH surmised that it is the presence of damp communities that complicates the use of drug dogs for alcohol.

MR. MALLARD said he was just referring to the physics of training a dog. If a dry community wanted an alcohol-indicating dog, it would be possible.

SENATOR FRENCH said in a dry community any indication of alcohol is probable cause for a violation.

MR. MALLARD agreed.

SENATOR THOMAS asked if private planes are used.

MR. MALLARD said they are in some cases. There are a number of hub communities that can have alcohol, and it can be brought in by any means. From there it may travel by any means as well.

[4:04:53 PM](#)

SENATOR THOMAS asked if ABADE traces the illegal alcohol back to the stores where it came from and brings it to the attention of the stores. Perhaps the store owners can voluntarily limit the amount of alcohol that is not going to a bar owner. "There is no reason for me to go in and buy 30 cases of one kind of whiskey and 30 cases of a certain vodka, and 30 cases of gin, as well as 100 cases of beer, or something, to make a shipment worthwhile ... to some particular community and sell that. But it must be a relatively large amount to justify flying an airplane out, taking the risk, and making the profit off of that."

MR. MALLARD said the alcohol database created last year by the ABC board is a very useful tool. When persons have multiple shipments, the database identifies them as over the limit. He believes that once a person goes over the limit, it actually restricts the ability to order more. A number of the people that are interdicted are purchasing alcohol themselves and either going to the freight or putting it in their luggage and not claiming it. That is a crime in itself. The alcohol often isn't traced back to where it was originally purchased, mostly because of lack of personnel and time. Most distributors will abide by the regulations and won't overtly avoid the restrictions.

[4:08:05 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON asked about the chances of communities opting out of local option if the alcohol limits get too restrictive.

MR. MALLARD said it is hard to say. The list of local option communities varies all the time. Anecdotally he thinks it will just reinforce a community's desire to stay dry.

4:09:15 PM

SENATOR THOMAS asked Mr. Mallard to repeat what the return on bootlegging is.

MR. MALLARD said for every \$1 that is spent, \$15 comes back.

CHAIR KOOKESH thanked him for all he does in the villages.

4:09:44 PM

DIANE CASTO, Manager, Prevention and Early Intervention Services, Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), supports the bill. DHSS looks at alcohol abuse in the entire state. If it were up to her, Juneau would be damp. SB 85 is only for communities that have made a choice to be damp or dry and limit the amount of alcohol coming in. It is not for communities that do not want those kinds of limitations. What does a "shot" mean and what is heavy drinking? There are federal standards, but everyone reacts to alcohol differently. A person's size, gender, race, and amount of food consumed affect how quickly one gets intoxicated. "Moderate" drinking is no more than one drink per day for women and two for men. "Heavy" drinking for men is more than two drinks per day every day. Women are heavy drinkers if they have over one drink a day. Alaska has high rates of binge drinking, which would mean that on a single occasion, and within two hours, a man would have five drinks and a woman would have four drinks.

4:13:52 PM

MS. CASTO said 10.5 liters of alcohol a month per person is allowed to be shipped now. That amounts to 12 shots of hard liquor per person per day. That is a lot of alcohol. DHSS has been working on the state epidemiological profile on substance use, abuse, and dependency. The project was funded by the federal government to assess alcohol and other drugs "and what it looks like for the state of Alaska - give us a profile." It looks at how much Alaskans are drinking and the consequences including physical impairments like cirrhosis of the liver. It includes deaths, accidents, and arrests as related to alcohol. She will post it on the web soon. The report found that from 2001 to 2004 the leading causes of premature death, including chronic liver disease, homicides, suicides, and unintentional injury were all strongly associated with alcohol use. "Alaskans

consumed approximately 2.66 gallons of alcoholic beverages per 10,000 population, ages of 13 and over. So 2.66 gallons of alcoholic beverages - you know you think about how many people don't drink, and that's a lot of alcohol, and that's per 10,000 population." Hard liquor was consumed in Alaska 1.5 times higher than the national average. A national household phone survey found that at least 50 percent of adults in Alaska use alcohol on a regular basis. People aged 18-34 years do the most binge drinking. About 16 percent of all hospitalized injuries, 23 percent of motor vehicle crashes, and 31 percent of all fatal accidents are associated with alcohol use. These are 2006 figures and they show a decline, but it is significant.

[4:18:33 PM](#)

MS. CASTO said fetal alcohol syndrome is a huge issue in Alaska. DHSS is looking for ways to reduce alcohol problems. Many people have an addiction, and they would prefer not to, so treatment is important. Alcohol impacts all of us. SB 85 is one opportunity to help the communities to enforce their own desires.

SENATOR THOMAS said there are alcohol problems across the state. Prevention, intervention, and education are supposed to be effective. Alaska creates more prisons all the time, "and this seems to be almost the same situation to me, where we're going to catch people and put them in jail," and they will probably go back to what they were doing. "What are we doing to help at the high school age or whatever to educate and intervene and make sure kids understand the severe nature of the problems that arise from abuse of alcohol and drugs?"

[4:21:33 PM](#)

MS. CASTO said that is her passion. "We are doing quite a bit but always could do more." The amount of money Alaska spends on prevention is very small compared to the money spent on treatment and locking people up - the punitive approach. Prevention often gets short changed by immediate needs. The prevention budget for behavioral health is a little over \$2 million statewide. There are programs to work with communities, schools, and youth groups. Prevention programs aimed at younger ages show that alcohol use can be reduced. People who start drinking before the age of 15 are more likely to have an alcohol problem later in life. DHSS also has an alcohol safety action program for first time offenses. It's best to get to people early. There is a program called "prime for life," which teaches youth about alcohol, and such programs can change beliefs and behaviors. After taking "Prime for Life", kids suddenly recognize the dangers, and it may reduce binge drinking and

drunk driving. The grade schools are also targeted since kids are starting to drink at younger ages. DHSS is trying to include more adults in kids' lives. If a child feels connected and supported by parents, teachers, or mentors, he or she is less likely to start drinking. There are 63 community-based grants across the state doing the things referred to by Senator Thomas.

[4:25:19 PM](#)

DWAYNE PEEPLES, Deputy Commissioner, Administration and Medical Services, Department of Corrections, said there is an indeterminate fiscal note, but it should be zero. The reduction in bootlegging will have a concomitant reduction in adjudicated assaults. He spoke of legislation that was passed that made three-time assaults into felonies. Nome, Bethel, and Fairbanks will be impacted by that. Anecdotal information is that a lot of multiple assaults are associated with alcohol. The increase in costs for arrests should be balanced by the decrease in assault prosecutions. The department is in favor of the bill.

SENATOR THOMAS asked how many arrests are made for bootlegging, and what the department does with confiscated liquor.

MR. PEEPLES said he only sees the arrests that are ultimately adjudicated; both questions can be answered by the DPS.

[4:28:22 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH said he has friends who drink and they buy drinks in a quart, fifth, or six-pack. Why does the bill use the liter as a measurement as well as gallon?

MS. CARPENETI said she used it because was in existing law. Bottles come in liters. A fifth is 750 ml.

[4:30:30 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON held the bill over.

[4:31:06 PM](#)

SB 19-COMPLAINTS AGAINST PEACE OFFICERS/VPSOS

CHAIR OLSON announced the consideration of SB 19.

SENATOR FRENCH said he is the prime sponsor of SB 19. It establishes a framework that allows the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to provide investigation status updates to complainants about grievances they file against peace officers. The legislation protects personnel information and the

confidentiality of investigative processes while also allowing the department to provide evidence that a complaint is being taken seriously and getting reviewed for potential disciplinary action. When a citizen files a complaint against a peace officer, the law must balance the confidentiality of the process with the legitimate need to inform the complainant about the status of the department's investigation. In instances where wrong doing has actually occurred, silence by the department may result in greater mistrust of the system, particularly if it lasts for months. This legislation provides citizens with more information about how their government responds to their concerns, without reducing protections on confidential personnel files or hindering the objective of completing unbiased investigation processes.

SENATOR FRENCH said SB 19 is an outgrowth of the Branchflower investigation that took place last summer and fall. Mr. Branchflower recommended two changes in state law. As the project director, Senator French felt it was his duty to fulfill these common sense ideas. This bill is about one of the two recommendations. It provides some feedback to people who have complained against peace officers to let them know how far along the investigation is and if it is being taken seriously. It will also let the person know if the complaint was valid. It is a simple bill.

[4:34:53 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH asked for a definition of a peace officer.

SENATOR FRENCH said the definition is found in the statutes, 01.10.060. It lists six things: state trooper officer; member of a municipal police force; village public safety officer (VPSO); regional public safety officer; United States marshal or deputy marshal; or an officer whose duty it is to enforce and preserve the public peace.

SENATOR KOOKESH asked why do you have "/VPSO" [in the title]? It is already included in the definition of peace officer.

SENATOR FRENCH said he doesn't have a good explanation. The drafters came up with that title.

[4:37:00 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH said it doesn't need to be in the title.

CHAIR OLSON said he doesn't want a separate category for VPSOs.

SENATOR FRENCH said his desire was to see that Mr. Branchflower's recommendations were fulfilled, and he was aiming at state troopers. He said to be careful not to lump in municipal police forces, because each municipality should address it within their own ordinances. He doesn't object to removing it, but he doesn't want to adopt a definition of peace officer that grabbed all six. He can prepare an amendment.

[4:38:23 PM](#)

CHAIR KOOKESH said he is in favor because his village is more of a VPSO village.

SENATOR KOOKESH said he doesn't want to single them out as if they were a problem area.

GINA APPOLLONI, VPSO director, Kawerak, Inc, Nome, said the bill misleads the public to believe that VPSOs are employed by the state, when they are employed by the regional nonprofit. She recommends adding: VPSOs who are employed by the regional nonprofit. Kawerak agrees with having a policy to handle complaints, which is already in their policies and procedures.

[4:39:44 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON asked how many complaints have there been for VPSOs under her direction.

MS. APPOLLONI said there may have been one in the last six months. There are six employees and four of them are at the VPSO academy. Nine are allotted to Kawerak.

[4:40:30 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON asked what Senator French thought.

SENATOR FRENCH said his approach would be to simply remove the VPSO references. Lines 11 and 12 contain what he was trying to get at: peace officers employed by the department. That will be state troopers. He offered to prepare a committee substitute.

CHAIR OLSON said Ms. Appolloni's concern was that there was an implication that the VPSOs were employees of the state.

MS. APPOLLONI said the bill makes VPSOs look like state employees.

SENATOR FRENCH said he thinks they all agree to remove references to VPSOs. Would that alleviate those concerns?

MS. APPOLLONI said yes.

[4:42:54 PM](#)

SENATOR FRENCH offered another amendment. Some complaints are anonymous or just tips, and it seems fair to ask for a written complaint signed by the person complaining in order to get the disclosures.

[4:44:42 PM](#)

JOSEPH MASTERS, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety, Anchorage, said he thinks he is in favor the amendments. The comments on VPSOs are valid. It would be an additional burden for DPS to compel a nonprofit to provide that information.

CHAIR OLSON asked if he had a copy of the amendment.

[4:46:22 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease.

[4:47:03 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON said the bill will be amended at a later date. He wants the commissioner to understand the amendments.

COMMISSIONER MASTERS said he is amenable to the changes, and the DPS will be in favor of the bill.

SENATOR MENARD asked if the cosigners are aware of the amendment.

[4:48:51 PM](#)

SENATOR FRENCH said he will discuss it with the other cosponsors. Sponsors can remove their names if they so choose.

SB 19 was held over.

[4:49:33 PM](#)

There being no further business, the Senate Community and Regional Affairs meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.