

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
April 7, 2009  
9:04 a.m.

9:04:02 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stedman called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair  
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair  
Senator Charlie Huggins, Vice-Chair  
Senator Johnny Ellis  
Senator Donny Olson  
Senator Joe Thomas

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

SUMMARY

- SB 1 "An Act increasing the minimum hourly wage, and creating an annual adjustment to the minimum hourly wage based on the rate of inflation; and providing for an effective date."
- SB 133 "An Act creating a statewide electronic health information exchange system; and providing for an effective date."
- SB 170 "An Act modifying the Alaska unemployment insurance statutes to comply with the requirements of the federal economic stimulus bill by redefining the base period for determining eligibility for unemployment benefits; and providing for an effective date."

#sb1

SENATE BILL NO. 1

"An Act increasing the minimum hourly wage, and creating an annual adjustment to the minimum hourly wage based on the rate of inflation; and providing for an effective date."

[9:04:19 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman discussed SB1.

Co-Chair Hoffman MOVED to ADOPT CSSB LS0006/.

Co-Chair Stedman OBJECTED for discussion.

}Darwin Peterson, Staff to Co-Chair Stedman{

[9:07:33 AM](#)

[9:07:40 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman WITHDREW his OBJECTION .

}Senator Wielechowski{ discussed the legislation. He stated that if the bill is not passed the state of Alaska will be behind the rest of the nation.

Co-Chair Stedman MOVED to ADOPT Amendment 1.

Co-Chair Stedman OBJECTED for discussion purposes. He spoke to the amendment.

[9:10:30 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman asked for a discussion about the effective date.

Co-Chair Stedman WITHDREW his OBJECTION .

Amendment 1 was ADOPTED.

[9:11:43 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman MOVED TO ADOPT CSSB 1 with ///.

Co-Chair Stedman mentioned the zero fiscal note.

[9:13:00 AM](#)

#sb170

SENATE BILL NO. 170

"An Act modifying the Alaska unemployment insurance statutes to comply with the requirements of the federal

economic stimulus bill by redefining the base period for determining eligibility for unemployment benefits; and providing for an effective date."

Senator Ellis addressed the legislation and its importance. He spoke of the strength needed to encourage. He spoke to the changes needed. Straightforward bill with one small change to the //. Everyone realized that it is a one time shot.

Max Hensley, Staff, Senator Ellis{ spoke to the legislation. He discussed the unemployment insurance. The bill allows workers who do not qualify for unemployment insurance//. He stated that the bill offers unemployment insurance who are//. Find the sponsor statement. He suggested that this change will allow the state to qualify for//. If this policy had been in place in calendar year//.

[9:18:07 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman MOVED to ADOPT CSSB 170 (FIN) LS0762/S. Co-Chair Stedman OBJECTED for discussion purposes.

Mr. Peterson addressed the CS and the changes made for the unemployment system. In order to be in compliance with the federal law//. The back up letters (Copy on File) He pointed to a specific letter. The Alaska law does not give the //. He discussed the tribal differences. Federally recongnized tribes listed on page 9 of document on file.

Co-Chair Stedman WITHDREW his OBJECTION. There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

[9:22:57 AM](#)

Senator Ellis MOVED TO ADOPT AMENDMENT 1

Co-Chair Stedman moved to adopt Amendment 1. Amendment 1 was adopted

[9:24:30 AM](#)

Senator Huggins asked

Co-Chair Stedman stated that there was no representation from the administration.

Senator Ellis stated that this is one-time money which stays in the trust fund keeping it healthy.

SB 133 WAS HEARD AND HELD IN COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.

[9:25:51 AM](#) AT EASE

[9:28:22 AM](#) RECONVENED

#sb133

SENATE BILL NO. 133

"An Act creating a statewide electronic health information exchange system; and providing for an effective date."

}Senator Paskavan, Joe{ spoke to the legislation. He discussed the cons of the current system. SB 133 seeks to modernize the healthcare system in the state with Medicaid. This will improve safety and cost effectiveness.   
////SPONSOR STATEMENT INSERT. The push for the health care system began in //. The use of electronic information exchange system is helpful. The /// will all benefit from the new system.

[9:31:55 AM](#)

}Jake Hamburg, Staff, Senator Paskvan{ PowerPoint presentation.

[9:33:42 AM](#)

Mr. Hamburg continued to discuss the presentation. He explained many benefits. Improves patient safety. Improves management costs.

[9:35:38 AM](#)

Patient privacy slide

[9:35:52 AM](#)

Health information Exchanges: Saving money. Slide //.

[9:36:23 AM](#)

Alaska eHealth Network: Slide//.

[9:36:56 AM](#)

Alaska eHealth Network. Slide// graph.

[9:37:15 AM](#)

Slides of examples briefly discussed.

[9:37:35 AM](#)

Board of directors. And progress to date. The design has been awarded to GCI. More money available through the federal stimulus act.

[9:38:29 AM](#)

Next Steps: 2009-2010. Slide///.

Discussed the secure money available toward capital budget projects.

[9:39:22 AM](#)

Sustainability : FY11 cost savings are profound. Hospitals and private insurers.

SB133 Facilitates HIE development: Slide///. The health exchange development.

He stated that this ensures privacy protection.

[9:40:52 AM](#)

Summary recommendations: Slide//.

The outcomes: Slide///.

Co-Chair Hoffman asked about the \$5 billion spent on health care and the ability to reach//. How much is personnel and what is the breakdown between private entities. How much savings to the state of Alaska.

Mr. Hamburg answered that the state savings would be \$10 to \$12 million dollars.

[9:42:46 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman

Mr. Hamburg asked about the duplicate tests for the //. Misdiagnoses come into the cost for the state and will be reduced through the new system.

Senator Paskavan stated that // was available. The fiscal note accepts the consequences that.

Co-Chair Stedman

Senator Paskavan answered.

Co-Chair Stedman asked

Mr. Hamburg added

[9:44:35 AM](#)

Senator Olson stated that the federal stimulus dollars will take longer. What about next year?

Mr. Hamburg stated that the state is the entity to administrate.

Senator Olson commented that ///.

Mr. Hamburg explained that this is a five year plan.

Senator Olson asked if there is a solo practitioner what fee structure will be available for a doctor in the bush.

Mr. Hamburg thought

[9:46:23 AM](#)

Mr. Hamburg stated that the federal stimulus makes it easy.

Senator Olson asked about rural clinics and the participation in the clinics.

Mr. Hamburg answered that there is a native health system.

Senator Thomas understood that there is more than one large depository available. He asked about the need for the //. He noted the fiscal note and the three dollars for every dollar that the state has spent.

Mr. Hamburg answered that it is based off a /// for 2012. If the state were to designate a.

[9:48:48 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman opened testimony

} William Streur, Deputy Commissioner, Medicaid & Health Care Policy, Department of Health and Social Services{

Co-Chair Stedman

Mr. Streur

[9:50:55 AM](#)

}Mr. Trivett, Self{ spoke in support of SB 133. He urged the consideration of moving the legislation forward. Everyone wins. Spend the money to save the money. Huge money spent on medical areas. He relayed a personal story regarding a medical error.

~Pat Luby, Advocacy Director, Alaska Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Anchorage{ spoke in support of SB 133. He stated that it will reduce medical errors in hospitals. Any time there are emergency. Eliminate redundant paperwork and duplicate testing. He stated that eHealth will result on //. Physicians can spend their time on patient care.

[9:54:22 AM](#)

~Rebecca Madison, Alaska Tribal Health Consortium{ she read a statement///. Reported significant savings to Medicaid through health information exchange. Private physicians are in support of the information infrastructure. The twenty two states represented.

Senator Olson asked if the health corporations have weighed in it.

Ms. Madison

[9:56:28 AM](#)

~Shelly Hughes, Alaska Primary Care Associates{ gave appreciation to the Senate Finance Committee. She appreciated Senator Paskavan and his sponsor of the bill. She stated that this is a well thought out bill with many good people working on it. The // appreciates the patient confidentiality.

[9:58:08 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman asked about the issue of the acceptance or not of the stimulus money. He asked if this is time sensitive assuming that the administration accepts the money.

[9:59:10 AM](#)

Mr. Streur answered that the major timeline for the money is //. For 100 percent funding// the majority of the match could be affected regarding the //.

Co-Chair Stedman asked about the six full time position and the capital expenditures of //. He struggled with the timing issue. Does this put us in any // to accept the money.

Co-Chair Hoffman asked what information the administration was waiting for to //.

Mr. Streur stated that they are waiting for the administration to

[10:01:27 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman

Mr. William Streur, Deputy Commissioner, Medicaid & Health Care Policy, Department of Health and Social Services

Co-Chair Hoffman

Mr. STreur stated that he would have the information by the end of the session.

Co-Chair Stedman stated that without federal offsets.. If the funds do not come through the state is in a bad situation.

[10:02:42 AM](#)

Mr. Streur was hopeful that a decision would be made sooner rather than later.

SB 133 was HEARD and HELD in Committee for further consideration.

#  
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 AM.