

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
March 18, 2010  
5:08 p.m.

5:08:38 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stedman called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

SUMMARY

SB 230-BUDGET: CAPITAL, SUPP. & OTHER APPROPS

SB 253-APPROP: DEFERRED MAINTENANCE/REPLACEMENT

#sb230

#sb253

SENATE BILL NO. 230

"An Act making and amending appropriations, including capital appropriations, supplemental appropriations, and other appropriations; making appropriations to capitalize funds; and providing for an effective date."

SENATE BILL NO. 253

"An Act making capital appropriations for deferred maintenance projects, equipment replacement, and emergency repairs; and providing for an effective date."

[5:10:52 PM](#)

~David Ongley, President of Alaska Library Association, Barrow{ testified in support of public library construction major expansion matching grant program. He supported the request of \$14.25 million for the program. He spoke to the many benefits of libraries.

[5:13:20 PM](#)

~Fred Parady, Chief Operating Officer North Slope Borough School District, Barrow { testified in support of funding for school construction and maintenance projects.

[5:15:20 PM](#)

~Lee M. Foley, Bethel City Manager{ testified in support of the Denali Commission Federal/State Partnership. He hoped that projects for Bethel would remain in the budget and receive the upmost consideration as they move through the legislative process.

[5:16:47 PM](#)

~Eric Middlebrook, Vice Mayor of Bethel{ testified in support of public safety projects for Bethel and the surrounding area.

[5:18:29 PM](#)

~Mike Jenkins, Gakona Community Fire Chief{ testified in support of projects submitted for the Gakona volunteer fire department for a total of \$250 thousand to construct a training center and community building. He supported the upgrade of the community's fire trucks. He spoke in support of a capital grant to replace the roof on the senior center.

[5:21:22 PM](#)

~Keith Zamudio, Cordova School District{ testified in support of the \$5 million proposed for inclusion on behalf of the consortium of digital learning. He supported the funding expansion to \$10 million for the digital learning program.

[5:23:49 PM](#)

~Ed Zastrow, Ketchikan, Vice President Ketchikan Senior Citizen Services{ testified in support of a state grant of \$300 thousand to assist in the completion of the access road to the senior housing complex.

[5:26:00 PM](#)

~Timothy Rooney, Manager, City and Borough of Wrangell{ testified in support of upgrades to the cruise ship dock in Wrangell. The upgrades are vital to the economic sustainability of the community.

[5:26:44 PM](#)

~John Stein, Executive Director, Sitka Sound Science Center{ testified in support of funding to open the hatchery training facility.

[5:29:16 PM](#)

~Jeff Tucker, President, Alaska Fire Chiefs Association{ testified in support of a training program for land based fire fighting training programs. He spoke in support of the Alaska Fire Conference in Fairbanks which trains firefighters throughout the state and will help support the training program for 400 firefighters.

[5:30:55 PM](#)

~Dr. Alex Hills, Alaska Hills Association{ commented on the proposed engineering building for the University of Alaska Anchorage. He pointed out the difficulty recruiting new engineers due to the issue of the space scarcity. The School of Engineering dramatically increased enrollments and programs and are all accredited.

[5:33:09 PM](#)

~Don Kashevaroff, CEO Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium{ testified in support of constructing a long term care facility, which would ultimately save state Medicaid dollars.

[5:35:52 PM](#)

~Paul Brown, North Pole Economic Development Corporation, North Pole{ testified in support of the waste water treatment plant in North Pole. He noted that the city infrastructure required upgrades.

~Simeon Swetzof Jr., Mayor, City of St. Paul{ testified in support of the St. Paul harbor project. He noted that the main industry of the island includes the Bering Sea. The local sponsor worked in the Federal Government to construct a harbor.

[5:40:18 PM](#)

~David Boggs, Morganthaler Company, Principal Engineer, Anchorage{ testified in support of the University's engineering center. He opined that the existing facility at UAA is substandard. The program has grown and he supports a new building.

[5:42:39 PM](#)

~John Aho, self, Anchorage{ testified in support of the engineering facility for the University of Anchorage. He stated that the class and office spaces are inadequate.

[5:44:09 PM](#)

~Jennifer Beckman, Executive Director, Central Area Rural Transit System, Kenai{ testified in support of funding for public transportation. The funds would provide long term stability for the important public transit system.

[5:45:45 PM](#)

~Davis Levy, Director, Alaska Building Corporation{ testified in support of a community and public transportation partnership that would provide capital and operating funds for public and community transportation systems throughout the state.

[5:46:34 PM](#)

~Jim Dodson, Economic Development President, Anchorage{ testified in support of funding for the rail and vehicle bridge across the Tanana River.

[5:48:42 PM](#)

~LaMarr Anderson, Interim Executive Director, MatSu Community Transit{ testified in support of the request for \$3 million in funding for public transportation capital and operating match fund program.

[5:51:30 PM](#)

~Lee Ryan, Board Member for Arctic Winter Games{ testified in support of the Alaska Winter Games Team Alaska grant in the budget.

[5:52:45 PM](#)

~Ron Gherman, Executive Director of Instructional Technology, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District{ testified in support of funding for digital education.

[5:54:19 PM](#)

~Jaime Stack, Superintendent Pribilof School District, St. Paul Island{ testified on behalf of SB 230. She spoke in support of funding an expanded major maintenance list for projects in the St. Paul school district. One project is a sprinkler system in the St. Paul school.

[5:55:53 PM](#)

~Kenneth Anderson, President, Palmer Senior Center{ testified in support of the Palmer senior center in Palmer. He stressed the need for a larger and safer center for seniors in the Palmer area.

[5:57:40 PM](#)

~Tim Swezey, President, Meadow Lakes{ testified in support of the onetime grant for a community sports field in Meadow Lakes. He noted that current recreational capabilities require travel out of town.

[5:58:33 PM](#)

~Karen Nugen-Logan, Executive Director, Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla{ testified in support of \$500 thousand from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to relocate the facility. She noted that the funding will help secure funding from other sources.

[6:00:05 PM](#)

~Julie Starr, Meadow Lakes{ testified in support of a recreation center for Meadow Lakes community. Soccer and softball fields allow safe participation in sports.

[6:00:56 PM](#)

~Donnita Burks, Meadow Lakes Community Council{ testified in support of the recreation center in Meadow Lakes. She added that the Meadow Lakes community council is asking for the help as it supports the long term commitment to the community's youth and their families.

[6:01:42 PM](#)

~Dave Hanson, Economic Development Director, MatSu Borough{ testified in support of the combined community library, auditorium, and paramedics classroom addition project at the MatSu college. He expressed support of funding for the third phase of the Alaska rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port McKensie.

[6:03:22 PM](#)

~Stephen Price, Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council{ testified in support of funding for the purchase of a flatbed truck and a pickup truck to increase the capacity and efficiency of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council.

[6:05:24 PM](#)

~Steve Crouch, Deputy Fire Chief, North Star Volunteer Fire Department, Fairbanks{ testified in support of a grant request for a new fire engine for the North Star Volunteer Fire Department.

[6:06:22 PM](#)

~Tracy Antonovich, Vice President, Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services/Nugen's Ranch{ testified in support of funding for the facility's location change. She spoke to the necessity of the \$500 thousand to help leverage the additional funding needed to move when the state takes the current location.

[6:07:41 PM](#)

~Kathy Mayo, Morris Thompson and Cultural Visitors Center, Fairbanks{ testified in support of funding for the Morris Thompson Cultural Center project. These funds will be used to complete the exhibits.

[6:08:56 PM](#)

~Bob Howard, self, Fairbanks{ requested limited support for the community and economic development facility which serves seniors in the Fairbanks area known as the Raven Landing Senior Community.

[6:10:34 PM](#)

~Shawna Hilderbrand, college student, University of Alaska Fairbanks{ testified in support of the Chena small track sidewalk project.

[6:11:24 PM](#)

~Mary Binkley, self, Fairbanks{ testified on behalf of the Raven Landing Housing Project to help complete the community hall.

[6:12:04 PM](#)

~Jeff Jacobson, Chief of Staff, North Star Fairbanks Borough{ spoke in support of five separate requests. The requests include Tanana River training, the Carlson Activity Center Phase Two, Town Lakes recreation area, regional library roof project, and road service area funding.

[6:13:35 PM](#)

~Lidan Setterberg, Executive Director, Joel's Place Youth Center{ spoke in support of funding for special projects for the Joel's Place Youth Center.

[6:14:31 PM](#)

~Natsha Ruppert, Woodriver PTA, Fairbanks{ stressed the need for funding to bus of small children in her area.

[6:15:59 PM](#)

~Ron Inouye, Senior Community Center, Fairbanks{ testified in support of funding projects to support seniors.

[6:17:52 PM](#)

~Mary Richards, All Season Inn, Fairbanks{ referred to the Cultural Center and the \$500,000 needed to finish the exhibit.

[6:19:03 PM](#)

~Sandy Jamieson, Fairbanks{ observed that he has worked on a project to restore a log house in Fairbanks funded by the Rotary Club.

[6:20:20 PM](#)

~Bill Butler, City of North Pole{ testified in support of water and sewer projects for the Interior region of Alaska. He noted the focus of waste water treatment plants.

[6:21:26 PM](#)

~Karen Parr, Fairbanks{ testified in support of a senior center and services in the Fairbanks area.

~Nancy Jones, Fairbanks{ testified in support of a senior center with services.

[6:22:44 PM](#)

~Cindy Schumaker, Fairbanks, Morris Thompson Center{ testified in support of funding for completion of the exhibit known as the gateway in the Morris Thompson Center.

[6:24:30 PM](#)

~Jack Wilbur, President, Design Alaska, Fairbanks{ testified in support of the Life Sciences Facility in Anchorage, the University of Fairbanks engineering

facility, and the deferred maintenance projects in the governors amended budget.

[6:26:56 PM](#)

~David Leone, Public Transportation Manager, Fairbanks{ testified in support of public transit in Fairbanks. Demand for service outweighs ability. The proposed funding addresses//.

[6:28:08 PM](#)

~Deb Hickok, Fairbanks Visitor Bureau{ testified in support of funding for the Morris Thompson Center. She commented on the services provided by the center. She testified in support of the visitors // program.

[6:29:27 PM](#)

~Jeffrey Mann, Woodriver Elementary{ testified in support of funding for safe passage for the Chena Small Tracts Sidewalk.

[6:31:24 PM](#)

~Billy Brown, Fairbanks{ testified in support of University of Fairbanks Life Sciences Building and the deferred maintenance cost in the governors capital budget.

[6:32:45 PM](#)

~Edith Hildebrand, Fairbanks{ testified in support of the Chena Small Tracts Sidewalk. The sidewalk would enhance the safety of travel for residents.

[6:34:04 PM](#)

~Amy Geiger, Community Development Director Downtown Association, Fairbanks{ testified in support of the Morris Thompson Center and the sign in system for visitors seeking navigation around Fairbanks.

[6:35:48 PM](#)

~Ron Dixon, Chair, Tanana Valley Campus, Fairbanks{ testified in favor of the renovation project on the Campus center at UAF.

[6:37:14 PM](#)

~Anna Ramsburgh, self, Fairbanks{ testified in favor of the Life Sciences Building in Anchorage. She noted that the condition of the current buildings hampers learning.

[6:38:44 PM](#)

~Jon Zasada, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center{ spoke in support of the Life Sciences Building in Anchorage. He explained that the health center currently accepts new Medicaid patients. He noted that the center did not receive federal funding for the project.

[6:40:54 PM](#)

~Lora Rembold, Eagle River{ testified in support of bleachers for Eagle River high school which has to compete with larger schools in Anchorage for funding.

[6:43:07 PM](#)

~Rob Jordan, Alaska Craftsman Home Program, Anchorage{ testified support for consumer based education for AHFC and the energy rebate program.

[6:44:43 PM](#)

~Holly Norwood, Nikiski, Apex Wind Energy{ testified in support of hardware for the Kenai wind project. A physical barrier stands in the way of progress.

[6:47:21 PM](#)

~Leslie Simmons, UAA School of Engineering{ testified in support of the UAA school of Engineering. She spoke of the benefits of the school of engineering.

[6:48:26 PM](#)

~Alex Bergeron, Anchorage, UAA School of Engineering{ testified in support of funding for the UAA School of Engineering.

[6:49:33 PM](#)

~Tessa Kara, Anchorage, UAA School of Engineering{ testified in support of the UAA School of Engineering. She noted the value of the investment for the state.

[6:50:45 PM](#)

~John Fisher, Anchorage, UAA School of Engineering{ testified in support of the UAA school of Engineering. He pointed out the increased need for engineers in Alaska.

[6:52:00 PM](#)

~Cheyenne Alabanzas, UAA School of Engineering{ testified in support of the UAA school of engineering. She spoke of the challenges of learning in the current facility.

[6:53:18 PM](#)

~Jody Karcz, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Anchorage{ testified in support of statewide funding for public transit. She spoke of the many benefits of public transportation.

[6:55:24 PM](#)

~Marilyn Kasmar, AK Primary Care{ testified for the facility renovation repair and equipment for the health facility. The request will benefit the sites providing//.

~Cheryl Bobo, Anchorage{ testified in support of //.

[6:59:31 PM](#)

~Tom Dalrymple, Kenai Peninsula College, Soldatna{ testified in support of the //.

[7:00:04 PM](#)

~Nancy St. John-Smith, Peninsula Community Health Services{ supports capital money for \$308 thousand matched with funding from other sources.

[7:01:42 PM](#)

~Buzz Otis, Executive Director, North Pole{ testified in support of the funding for the sewer and water project in North Pole. He pointed out the positive impact for the

state. He noted support of the Life Sciences building at UAF.

[7:03:49 PM](#)

~Jay Nulfe, MatSu borough{ testified in support of replacing the rail extension for the MatSu borough. She noted that the construction of the rail extension. She noted the benefit for the community.

[7:06:03 PM](#)

~Carl Rose, Alaska Association of School Boards{ testified in support of alternative funding sources such as a general obligation bond to meet the needs of schools across the state. It's been eight years since the passage of Proposition 8, when the state of Alaska invested in rural school construction. There is currently \$800 million in major maintenance and construction needs. The grant program has not been able to meet the needs of the state. He spoke in support of the debt reimbursement, but stressed that maintenance and replacement needs must be expanded.

[7:09:53 PM](#)

~Andy Story, Member, Juneau School Board{ recognized the increases in education funding, but emphasized the need for maintenance funding. She observed that \$24 million in maintenance funding will not go far when some schools need as much as \$14 million. She emphasized the need to support digital learning. She stressed successes in the Juneau alternative high school.

[7:12:54 PM](#)

~Eric Mohrmann, Fire Chief, Alaska Fire Chiefs Association{ spoke in support of fire fighting equipment.

[7:14:16 PM](#)

~Ed Page, Executive Director, Marine Exchange of Alaska{ testified in support of first response emergency and search equipment and felt that the cruise tax would be an appropriate funding source.

[7:17:21 PM](#)

~Darroll Hargraves, Wasilla{ spoke in support of the Nenana School District and expansion of the major maintenance school list.

#

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 PM.