

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON WORLD TRADE, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION**

March 25, 2009
12:25 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lesil McGuire, Chair
Senator Bill Wielechowski
Senator Hollis French
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Gary Stevens

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Senator Fred Dyson

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Overview by Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER): Making the 2010 Olympics a Regional Success

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record.

WITNESS REGISTER

IAN BURKHEIMER, Program Manager
2010 Tourism Initiative - Pavilion Opportunities Presenter
Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)
POSITION STATEMENT: Delivered presentation on 2010 Tourism Initiative.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[12:25:02 PM](#)

CHAIR LESIL MCGUIRE called the Senate Special Committee on World Trade, Technology and Innovation meeting to order at 12:25 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Hoffman, French, and McGuire. Senators Stevens, Wielechowski, and Hoffman arrived during the course of the meeting.

Overview: Making the 2010 Olympics a Regional Success

CHAIR MCGUIRE announced the business before the committee is to hear a presentation on making the 2010 Olympics a regional success.

[12:26:22 PM](#)

IAN BURKHEIMER, Program Manager, 2010 Tourism Initiative, Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), delivered a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the opportunity PNWER has put together, particularly with the provincial government of Saskatchewan and the state of Oregon, to have a location at the 2010 Olympics to showcase tourism and innovation opportunities and to share information about the diversity and sustainability of the Pacific Northwest region.

He noted that the 2010 Olympics will happen in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in less than a year and will be watched by about three billion people. About 250,000 visitors and 55,000 athletes will come to the games from outside the B.C. marketplace. PNWER realizes that the 18,000 media that will attend will provide an opportunity for sharing stories about Alaska and other partners within the Pacific Northwest region. Interest is high with ticket preorders amounting to \$345,000,000.

MR. BURKHEIMER displayed a number of slides showing the Olympic grounds and related that through partnerships, particularly with Saskatchewan, PNWER has been able to secure the best location at the games to do outreach with visitors and the media. He estimated that about 1.5 million visitors will pass by the PNWER site during the course of the games. He noted that displays of imagery as well as marks and brands of public entities, such as the State of Alaska, are not restricted like they are for private entities.

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SENATOR DYSON joined the committee.

CHAIR MCGUIRE noted that Alaska has budgeted \$250,000 for this and asked what this will get for the state.

MR. BURKHEIMER referenced a proposal with in-depth information that had been distributed to members. He continued with the presentation and explained the opportunity to do business-to-business outreach within the pavilion and to have an Alaska day

to showcase the state. He suggested that might be a day to bring down governors, political and business leaders and to embrace state athletes that are taking part in the games.

SENATOR FRENCH commented that most members would be happy to visit and accommodate an Alaska day if something can be done about the ticket situation.

SENATOR MCGUIRE noted that a number of Alaska day proposals have been reviewed in the last several years and the idea of a regional pavilion came together through Mr. Burkheimer's leadership. This concept is affordable. She asked if there is a staging area to bring in some Native dancing.

[12:36:05 PM](#)

MR. BURKHEIMER said absolutely; depending on the number of partners they will have both a dome and a sphere to provide a performance and hospitality area.

CHAIR MCGUIRE said this may be an opportunity for the Legislature to take a leadership role in highlighting the different regions of the state.

MR. BURKHEIMER said this Olympics has two important components that are very different from Olympics in the past. Aborigines and First Nations are for the first time full partners in the Olympics and one of goals is to highlight aboriginal culture. PNWER believes that Alaska has a unique opportunity and value to the region to help showcase this area. The second component is sustainability. For the first time the three pillars of the games are sports, culture and sustainability.

MR. BURKHEIMER said they want to talk about not only tourism but also about opportunities for investors, innovation, resources, ideas, and solutions. The message might not get to all three billion people, but it could reach several hundred million, he said. He confirmed that each individual investment is \$250,000, but the location is prime.

[12:41:33 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI joined the committee.

SENATOR HOFFMAN asked the deadline for making the decision to participate and spend the \$250,000.

MR. BURKHEIMER replied PNWER has to exercise its land option in April. Currently the option is for 20,000 square feet, but they

will likely go with a smaller implementation due to the current market. Responding to a question he said the Olympics start on February 12, 2010 and run for 17 days. The Paralympics start on March 12, 2010 and run for 10 days. PNWER will start operations on February 1.

CHAIR MCGUIRE said the committee will meet before the end of session to discuss the coming year, but one idea she has had is to take a delegation to the Olympics. If Alaska does partner in the dome, they would attend during the Alaska day. She added that it's in a line item from her office right now.

SENATOR FRENCH asked Mr. Burkheimer what communication or level of interest he is getting from the governor's office and the administration.

MR. BURKHEIMER replied he has met with Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development (DCCED) personnel including Mike Black, Joe Austerman, Odin Brudie, Shelly James, and Caryl McConkie and they mentioned that they are interested with helping with contacts within the governor's office. He offered to meet via phone and email with whomever the committee might suggest.

CHAIR MCGUIRE suggested the Legislature might want to take a leadership role in this regard and continue to welcome participation from the governor's office.

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There being nothing further to come before the Senate Special committee on World Trade, Technology and Innovation, Chair McGuire adjourned the meeting at 12:46 pm.