

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

April 9, 2012

9:05 a.m.

9:05:14 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stoltze called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair
Representative Bill Thomas Jr., Co-Chair
Representative Anna Fairclough, Vice-Chair
Representative Mia Costello
Representative Mike Doogan
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Les Gara
Representative David Guttenberg
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Mark Neuman
Representative Tammie Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

James Armstrong, Staff, Representative Bill Stoltze; Angela Rodell, Deputy Commissioner, Treasury Division, Department of Revenue; Denise Michels, Mayor, City of Nome; Dana Owen, Staff, Senator Dennis Egan; David Logan, Legislative Chair, Alaska Dental Society; Don Habeger, Director, Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development; Joe Michel, Staff, Representative Bill Stoltze.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Christine Klein, Chief Operating Officer, Calista Corporation; Gail Walden, Member, Alaska State Dental Hygienists' Association, Wasilla; Daisy-May Barrera, University of Alaska Fairbanks Student, Bethel; Ukallaysaaq

Okleasik, Planning Director, Northwest Arctic Borough,
Kotzebue; Crystal Rogers, University of Alaska Southeast
Student, Juneau.

SUMMARY

HB 286 G.O. BONDS FOR PORTS

HB 286 was HEARD and HELD in Committee for
further consideration.

HCS CSSB 92(FIN)
DENTISTS/DENTAL HYGIENISTS/ASSISTANTS

HCS CSSB 92(FIN) was REPORTED out of committee
with a "do pass" recommendation and with
previously published fiscal impact note: FN3
(CED).

HCS CSSB 130(STA)
ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE COUNCIL

HCS CSSB 130(FIN) was REPORTED out of committee
with a "do pass" recommendation and with
previously published fiscal impact note: FN2
(CED).

#hb286

HOUSE BILL NO. 286

"An Act providing for and relating to the issuance of
general obligation bonds for the purpose of paying the
cost of municipal port projects; and providing for an
effective date."

9:06:30 AM

Vice-chair Fairclough MOVED to ADOPT proposed committee
substitute (CS) for HB 286, Work Draft 27-GH2769\B (Kirsch,
4/6/12).

Co-Chair Stoltze OBJECTED for discussion.

JAMES ARMSTRONG, STAFF, REPRESENTATIVE BILL STOLTZE,
discussed that the CS would issue \$453,499,200 in
transportation general obligation (G.O.) bonds across the
state. He remarked that the House and Senate had worked

together to develop a balanced package. Projects included in the bill were shown in the capital budget for appropriation authority. He recommended a technical amendment that would replace the word "reconstruction" with the word "construction" in relation to a Katlian Bay Road item (page 3, line 16).

Co-Chair Stoltze noted that the change would be substantive and not technical and that the issue would be addressed in the amendment process. Mr. Armstrong remarked that committee members had been in possession of the CS for a couple of days and he was not aware of any other changes that needed to occur.

Co-Chair Stoltze clarified that there had been suggestions made regarding the appropriate titles and project descriptions in the CS. He asked for a description of the bill and the Department of Revenue's (DOR) role in the bond process.

ANGELA RODELL, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, TREASURY DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, explained that the bill provided for the issuance of \$453,499,200 in G.O. bonds. The state's debt was managed by DOR and the issuance would be conducted out of its office. The debt would be issued piecemeal as the projects were ready to be funded to ensure that items were not prefunded prior to being "shovel" ready. The department believed it was appropriate to issue debt for the projects that were long-term; the current market conditions made it very affordable to issue debt and the issuance would allow the state to use its cash for other purposes and to pay down its higher cost debt. She relayed that the projects in the CS were significantly different than the ones proposed by the governor, but all of the projects included were appropriate for debt issuance.

[9:10:22 AM](#)

Representative Doogan wondered whether all of the projects proposed by the governor were incorporated into the CS. Mr. Armstrong replied that the Senate Transportation Committee had added two projects.

Representative Doogan clarified that he wanted to know whether all of the governor's original items were included in the bill. Mr. Armstrong responded that all of the items were included albeit in smaller amounts.

Co-Chair Stoltze commented on the size of the bond package.

Mr. Armstrong added that funding for a Ward Cove project was removed from HB 286 and had been included in the proposed capital budget.

Representative Gara queried what the public's annual payment cost would be and how long it would last when the full bond was issued. Co-Chair Stoltze answered that the amount was listed in the fiscal note.

Mr. Armstrong referred to the Office of Management and Budget fiscal note. The total cost would be \$36,392,000 beginning in FY 17 for a period of 20 years.

Representative Gara asked for an estimate of annual payments made resulting from a bond that had passed two years earlier. He was interested to know how much the bill would add on to existing future debt. Co-Chair Stoltze was interested in the amount that had been paid down on debt as well.

Mr. Armstrong replied that the education bond was \$29,772,000 for a \$397,300,000 package that had been developed two years earlier.

Ms. Rodell added that there was \$197 million of the past authorization that DOR had not issued because the need for the funds had not surfaced as of yet; the department expected to issue the amount during FY 13. She relayed that a refunding had been done in January 2012 that provided approximately \$27 million in all-in savings, which equaled about \$3 million per year.

[9:14:00 AM](#)

Vice-chair Fairclough pointed to the fiscal note and asked for an explanation of the difference between the terms "tax-exempt" and "tax exempt" listed in the bill. Ms. Rodell replied that tax-exempt meant completely tax exempt. The non-hyphenated term "tax exempt" referred to tax exempt subject to the alternative minimum tax, which was a federal tax code related to the nature of projects. She elaborated that in the case of private activity projects (most port projects fell into the category because they were leased to private industry) tax exempt income on a bond was subject

to the alternative minimum tax if the taxpayer had to pay an alternative minimum tax.

Co-Chair Thomas discussed that G.O. bond money had been appropriated for a Cordova bridge a couple of years earlier; however, the bridge had been washed out and was closed indefinitely. He would talk with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT) to determine the appropriate course of action, given that G.O. bonds could not be reappropriated. He reported that his office would research the issue and follow up with DOR.

Representative Guttenberg wondered whether there were restrictions on conducting project work before the bond issuance in February 2013. He assumed that projects included on the list would be shovel-ready at the time the bonds were issued.

Mr. Armstrong replied that DOT planned to add some money to its accelerated capital fund account in order for preliminary work on some of the projects to begin. He relayed that the capital budget included \$4 million to \$5 million and that there was a request to increase it by \$3 million.

Representative Guttenberg wondered whether the amount would be included in the capital budget. Mr. Armstrong replied that funding was in the governor's proposed capital budget and that he would provide the detailed information to the committee.

Representative Guttenberg queried the state's total outstanding bond obligation and its overall maximum bond issuance level. Ms. Rodell replied that the state's current debt obligation was approximately \$650 million to \$660 million. Markets and rating agencies would look to the state's overall debt including the unfunded pension liability, and any moral and lease obligation debt. The amount was well within the limits of the state's ability to withstand debt; Alaska currently had tremendous financial reserves, which created flexibility around financing infrastructure projects.

Representative Doogan asked about the location of Mertarvik, Alaska (page 2, line 26 of the legislation). Representative Joule replied that Mertarvik was the new site chosen for the move from Newtok.

9:18:37 AM

Co-Chair Thomas noted that the bill would come before the committee again following public testimony.

Co-Chair Stoltze WITHDREW his OBJECTION to the adoption of the CS. There being NO further OBJECTION, Work Draft 27-GH2769\B was ADOPTED.

9:19:29 AM

DENISE MICHELS, MAYOR, CITY OF NOME, thanked the committee for considering Nome's initial request. She requested the inclusion of an additional \$40 million for a total of \$50 million. She communicated that the city had been working on becoming the deep-draft Arctic port for the nation. There was a 35 percent design showing that the port could get to minus 35 percent to support all vessels going up for Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) leases; the city's data showed that Port of Nome numbers had gone up with increased drilling. She furthered that annual dockings had increased from 30 in 1988 to 304 at present. The city was looking at a partnership with the state to support the industry, job and economic development creation, and to ensure that enforcement existed. She noted the funding tied in with the Northern Waters Task Force Report, the 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Report, and other state planning documents (Road to Resources and road to Nome).

Representative Gara wondered how people would feel about dredging in an area where people mined for gold. Ms. Michels replied that Nome was working with all users to prevent any user conflict. She relayed that dredging had increased significantly since 1990; there were 51 permits in the current year. The state had received \$9 million in revenue on increased lease sales.

CHRISTINE KLEIN, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CALISTA CORPORATION (via teleconference), thanked the committee for its time. She pointed out that funding for the Port of Emmonak had been dropped from the legislation. She shared that the \$16.5 million project was shovel ready. Currently there was no existing port on the lower Yukon River; there was a fishery that was very important to the region. She requested that the project be reinserted into the bond package.

Co-Chair Stoltze CLOSED public testimony.

Mr. Armstrong referenced an earlier question from Representative Guttenberg and pointed to information on a Project Acceleration Account on page 84 of the CS.

Representative Gara asked whether the Port of Emmonak was included in the capital budget. Co-Chair Stoltze did not know. He would relay the concern to Senator Lyman Hoffman. Representative Edgmon clarified that the district was Senator Olson's.

HB 286 was HEARD and HELD in Committee for further consideration.

[9:25:22 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:31:00 AM](#)

RECONVENED

#sb92

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 92(FIN)

"An Act relating to dental hygienists, dentists, dental assistants, dental hygiene, and dentistry."

[9:31:35 AM](#)

DANA OWEN, STAFF, SENATOR DENNIS EGAN, discussed that the proposal for the legislation had been brought to the sponsor by a committee of dentists and dental hygienists. He explained that the related statutes had not been reviewed or revised in over 20 years; during that time there had been significant changes in dentist practices and regulation. He relayed that Dr. David Logan, former president of the dental board was present to provide detail. He furthered that due to the bill's high level of detail it had been amended in each committee of referral.

Co-Chair Stoltze asked for a general overview of the legislation.

Mr. Owen observed that it was unusual to have two groups such as dentists and hygienists come together on a single

bill; groups that overlapped in their practice were frequently at odds over their scope of practice.

Co-Chair Stoltze had detected some tension between the dentists and hygienists on prior iterations of the legislation; both groups would have a chance to testify during the meeting.

DAVID LOGAN, LEGISLATIVE CHAIR, ALASKA DENTAL SOCIETY, thanked the sponsor's office for all of its work on the legislation. He shared that the society had reached out to the Alaska State Dental Hygienists' Association (ASDHA) in recognition that the bill affected both groups of professions. He relayed that a substantial amount of time had gone into the development of the legislation, given the numerous necessary changes. He explained that under the legislation the dental board investigator position would be increased from part-time to full-time, which would result in an increase of licensure fees for license holders. The legislation accomplished multiple items including, the determination of who was eligible to own a dental practice, the ability for a practice to transition out following the death of a practitioner, and significant language cleanup.

[9:36:31 AM](#)

Representative Wilson asked what the increase in licensure fees would be. Mr. Logan responded that the fee increase would be determined by the Division of Corporations, Businesses and Professional Licensing (CBPL). He had heard estimates of a potential \$100 increase.

Representative Guttenberg referred to a former constituent who had been licensed and practiced dentistry in New Zealand for 10 years; the individual had not been able to obtain a license to practice in Alaska. He wondered whether the legislation would address the issue. Mr. Logan responded that the bill revised the section on qualifications for licensure and the ability to obtain a license through a credentialing process based on a dentist's previous practice and history. He observed that there were dentists credentialing in frequently from other countries. He deferred the question to the director of CPBL for additional detail.

Representative Guttenberg replied that the individual had been told that he would need to go back to school in order

to obtain a license in the state. He would discuss the matter with the CBPL director.

Vice-chair Fairclough asked whether the bill altered past legislation that allowed dental hygienists to travel and work in rural areas without the supervision of a dentist. Mr. Logan replied that there was one section clarifying allowed procedures, but that no substantial change had been made.

Vice-chair Fairclough asked for the specific section in the legislation. Mr. Logan pointed to Section 13, page 8. He expounded that the bill would insert the word "licensed" in front of the words "dental hygienist."

[9:39:27 AM](#)

Representative Doogan surmised that the bill would allow other entities to own dental practices including municipalities and higher education facilities. Mr. Logan responded in the affirmative; Section 37.08.367 defined who could own a dental practice.

Representative Doogan wondered why the ability to own a dental practice would be expanded to other entities. Mr. Logan replied that an entity may want to own a facility to provide care for poor people.

Co-Chair Stoltze surmised that examples would include neighborhood health clinics or the Department of Corrections. Mr. Logan replied in the affirmative.

Representative Doogan believed the provision opened the door for multiple dentists to take a share in a larger facility and to expand the number of people licensed in a particular place.

[9:41:23 AM](#)

Mr. Logan replied that there was currently no size restriction on the number of dentists or hygienists allowed to work in one practice.

Representative Doogan asked whether the bill would set up a situation in which a number of dentists could create a "Crowns R Us" practice. Mr. Logan replied that the bill

would not limit the ability for dentists to open a "Crowns R Us" practice.

Representative Neuman asked whether the bill strengthened or weakened hygiene requirements. Mr. Logan responded that the bill would only clean up any antiquated language related to dental hygienist requirements. He furthered that current statute referred to a state exam; however, the exam had not been conducted for approximately 20 years. Qualifications remained the same and included graduation from hygiene school, passing a national written test, and a regional practical board.

9:43:40 AM

GAIL WALDEN, MEMBER, ALASKA STATE DENTAL HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION, WASILLA (via teleconference), supported the bill. She was on the committee that had worked to review, update, and condense the Dental Practice Act that was addressed in the legislation before the committee. She stated that the bill maintained the current high dental hygiene standards, licensure, and practice. She added that the bill updated a significant amount of outdated information in statute.

Co-Chair Stoltze believed that the process that had gone into developing the legislation was notably better than in prior attempts because dentists and hygienists had worked together.

Representative Neuman pointed to Section 3 related to dental hygienist qualifications. He asked for verification that the bill only provided cleanup language and did not hinder the ability of existing hygienists to practice in Alaska. Ms. Walden responded that ASDHA felt strongly that the language would not make changes that would affect dental hygienists or impact care. She emphasized the association's support for the wording included in the bill.

Representative Guttenberg asked about the goal of proposed language in Section 21: "the board may delegate the board's power to act here and decide matters." Mr. Logan replied that the mechanism allowed the board to delegate some of the administrative capacities to the division. The day-to-day paperwork would be virtually impossible for the practicing professionals on the board.

9:46:42 AM

Representative Guttenberg asked for verification that the bill would give some of the board's responsibility to the department. Mr. Logan replied that the board was assigned certain powers under the central statutes and it was necessary to have the ability to delegate items to the division from a practical standpoint; decisions would still be made by the board.

Ms. Walden thanked the committee for hearing the bill.

Co-Chair Stoltze CLOSED public testimony.

Representative Wilson asked about current licensure fees and how much they would increase under the proposed legislation.

DON HABEGER, DIRECTOR, CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, replied that currently a dental license fee renewal cost approximately \$290 to \$300; renewal for a dental hygienist license was \$120. There were a number of factors included in the determination of a new fee; a new position would be created to meet the mandate of the legislation. There was currently a part-time dental investigator; the work would be shifted and other professions would pick up the 30 percent to 50 percent cost. Professionals would not pick up the entire cost; on the high-end the increase would be approximately \$80 on top of the current price. He did not believe the analysis would show the high-end increase because the board had a \$100,000 roll-forward that may be used. A discussion and decision on the fees would take place with the board and once determined the detail would be set in regulation.

Vice-chair Fairclough asked whether the increase would be proportionately raised between the dentist and dental hygienist licensees. Mr. Habeger answered that CBPL was required to have the discussion with the board prior to setting the fees; therefore, he did not know whether the increase would be directly proportional or equal.

Vice-chair Fairclough wondered who was sitting on the board in order to determine how the fees would be allocated between the two groups.

[9:51:17 AM](#)

Ms. Walden replied that ASDHA understood that the fees would be up for discussion. She believed the board would factor in that there were more investigations related to dentistry than dental hygiene.

Representative Doogan noted that the initial fiscal note of \$113,000 was reduced to \$107,000 [in subsequent fiscal years]. He wondered whether the remainder represented the leftover cost after the fee increase. He asked whether the fiscal note would be zeroed out. Mr. Habeger responded that the initial \$113,000 recognized necessary startup costs for items such as office equipment; because those items would not be needed in subsequent years the cost had been reduced [after FY 13].

Representative Doogan asked whether the note should be zero [after FY 13]. Mr. Habeger replied that the startup costs would be reduced to zero in subsequent years.

Representative Doogan pointed to the annual \$107,000 cost that extended out beyond the first year. Mr. Habeger replied that certain costs would continue and were factored into the \$107,000 including, the investigator salary, transportation costs of approximately \$2,000 per year, contractual costs such as the involvement of the Department of Law if an investigation went to a hearing, and other.

Representative Doogan surmised that the additional cost was related to law enforcement and not salary. Mr. Habeger replied in the affirmative. He specified that costs included in the \$107,000 subsequent to FY 13 would be for the investigator, and support services (including telephone and internet).

Representative Doogan thought that the fiscal increase resulting from the legislation would be covered by dentists and dental hygienists; he no longer believed that was the case.

Co-Chair Stoltze noted that Representative Doogan's initial understanding was correct.

[9:55:29 AM](#)

Vice-chair Fairclough pointed to the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development Fiscal Note 3. She explained that for personnel services, costs would be funded by receipts received by professionals. The fiscal note included funds for travel, services, and commodities. Commodities began at \$6,000 in FY 13 and were reduced to \$1,000 from FY 14 to FY 18. The department was requesting \$112,900 in FY 13 from receipts collected from dental and dental hygiene licensing; the figure was reduced to \$107,000 annually from FY 14 through FY 18. There was one full-time position that would be hired in perpetuity to be supported by licensing fees.

Co-Chair Stoltze MOVED to ADOPT Amendment 1 (by request of the sponsor):

Page 15, following line 27:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* Sec. 30. AS 08.36.234 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(d) A dentist applying for licensure without examination shall be interviewed in person by the board or by a member of the board before a license is issued. The interview must be recorded. If the application is denied on the basis of the interview, the denial shall be stated in writing, with the reasons for it, and the record shall be preserved."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Co-Chair Thomas OBJECTED for discussion.

Mr. Owen explained that the amendment addressed an item that had been overlooked earlier in the bill process. He asked Dr. Logan to explain the intent of the amendment.

Mr. Logan communicated that dentists and hygienists could obtain a license by taking an exam at one of the regional boards or hygienists could use their past five years of practice history as a basis. He furthered that the board felt that there were not really any meaningful questions to ask during the hygienist licensure process; similarly there was not much to ask dentists coming out of school because they had no practice experience or track record. He detailed that the amendment would make it mandatory for

dentists who were credentialing into the state to interview with the board because they did have a past track history.

Representative Costello asked about the decision to include the language "or by a member of the board." She believed that the responsibility for the people applying for licensure in the state should be taken on by the entire board. Mr. Logan replied that the decision had been made by Legislative Legal Services with the goal of giving the board flexibility. He was agreeable to the change that would include the board in its entirety.

Representative Costello MOVED to AMEND Amendment 1 on line 5 to delete "or by a member of the board."

Representative Guttenberg OBJECTED for discussion. He asked whether a decision by one member of the board would have to be ratified by the entire board. Mr. Logan replied that each application for credentialing was ratified by the majority of the board.

Representative Guttenberg asked for verification that Amendment 1 would allow the examination of a dentist credentialing into the state to be conducted by a single board member and the change under the amendment to Amendment 1 would require the examination to be conducted by the entire board. Mr. Logan responded in the affirmative.

Representative Gara agreed that all of the board members should have the opportunity to ask questions during an examination of a dentist credentialing into the state. He asked for verification that his understanding was the intention of the amendment to Amendment 1.

Representative Costello replied in the affirmative.

Co-Chair Stoltze observed that there may be occasions when the board was not able to get together for a couple of months, which could delay an interview. He did not want to cripple the board's ability to conduct interviews.

Vice-chair Fairclough wondered how the change would impact a dentist who moved to an isolated location for service; the person may be required to travel to a board meeting. She asked how often the board met. Mr. Logan replied that the board met quarterly. He relayed that jurisprudence

examinations occurred at board meetings; therefore, interviewees would be required to attend a meeting for their interview.

[10:02:52 AM](#)

Representative Joule wondered whether the amendment to Amendment 1 would require all members of the board to be present at the board meeting to conduct an interview. Mr. Owen replied that the quorum to do business would be sufficient.

[10:04:55 AM](#)

RECESSED

[2:21:11 PM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Stoltze indicated that an amendment to Amendment 1 had been discussed earlier in the morning. He asked if there were any amendments to Amendment 1.

Representative Edgmon asked whether the earlier contemplated amendment was no longer part of Amendment 1. Co-Chair Stoltze indicated there were no amendments to Amendment 1.

Co-Chair Thomas WITHDREW objection. There being NO further OBJECTION Amendment 1 was adopted.

Co-Chair Thomas MOVED to report HCS CSSB 92(FIN) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note. There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

HCS CSSB 92(FIN) was REPORTED out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation and with previously published fiscal impact note: FN3 (CED).

[2:23:45 PM](#)

AT EASE

[2:26:40 PM](#)

RECONVENED

#sb130

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 130(STA)

"An Act establishing the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council and relating to the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Alaska Native languages."

Co-Chair Stoltze turned over the gavel to Vice-chair Fairclough.

Representative Wilson MOVED to ADOPT proposed committee substitute (CS) for CSSB 130(FIN) Work Draft 27-LS0779\R, (Mischel, 4/9/12) as a working document.

Representative Doogan OBJECTED for discussion.

JOE MICHEL, STAFF, REPRESENTATIVE BILL STOLTZE, communicated that the only change included in the CS was the addition of Section (f) on page 2, line 26, that read "the department shall provide staff as needed to support the council; the staff must demonstrate competency in an Alaska Native language."

Representative Doogan WITHDREW his objection. There being NO further OBJECTION, the CS was ADOPTED.

Vice-chair Fairclough read the bill title for the committee. She OPENED public testimony.

DAISY-MAY BARRERA, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS STUDENT, BETHEL (via teleconference), provided opening testimony in her native Yupik language. She voiced her support for the bill. She believed the bill was very important for future generations. She recommended the appointment of an elder to the council; elders were viewed as the foundation and backbone of their cultural ideas and traditions. The elder would serve as a guide and mentor in the establishment of a very important program. Additionally, she advised the appointment of a young person to serve on the council as a role model for Alaskan youths. She believed the appointment would send a powerful message that indigenous languages were part of Alaska's heritage and needed to be protected. She believed that the involvement of multiple parties would help to rebuild relationships and to repair differing worlds. The leadership of the legislature joining with the 12 regions would develop the healthiest approach to identify the need of each language to be protected for the

future. She closed her testimony in Yupik and thanked the committee for its time.

UKALLAYSAAQ OKLEASIK, PLANNING DIRECTOR, NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH, KOTZEBUE (via teleconference), testified in support of the bill. The borough supported the Alaska Native Language Advisory Council and believed it was long overdue. He encouraged the passage of the bill in order to preserve and advance the state's proud cultural heritage. Linguists around the world considered Alaska Native languages to be endangered. He stated that the disappearance of the languages had huge social implications that included depression, self-destructive behaviors, and community shame. The council would be a positive step towards putting healthy communities forward. Within the Northwest Arctic region the Inupaiq language was in serious decline. Studies indicated that only 18 percent of the population could understand the language and only 14 percent could speak it fluently. He stressed that immediate action was needed in order to strengthen the languages. Borough resolutions had been passed recognizing the importance of the native language; the language could increase cultural heritage, support sustainable communities, and encourage collaboration among generations. He reiterated the borough's support of the bill.

CRYSTAL ROGERS, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST STUDENT, JUNEAU (via teleconference), offered a younger generation perspective. She began her testimony in her native language. She highlighted that there were more young people studying their native languages than may be realized. She stated that there were many youths committed to learning their native languages and that help was needed from the legislature and the governor. She supported the passage of the bill and thanked the committee for its time.

[2:39:22 PM](#)

Vice-chair Fairclough CLOSED public testimony.

Representative Wilson reviewed the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development fiscal note. The request was \$240,200 for FY 13 and \$216,200 for outlying years from FY 14 through FY 18. Funding would pay for two new full-time positions.

Representative Guttenberg asked whether there were any amendments. Vice-chair Fairclough replied that an amendment by Co-Chair Thomas had been rolled into the CS.

Representative Wilson asked for verification that there was only one fiscal note. Vice-chair Fairclough answered in the affirmative.

2:41:03 PM

Representative Doogan expressed strong support for the bill.

Representative Joule MOVED to report HCS for CSSB 130(FIN) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note. There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

HCS CSSB 130(FIN) was REPORTED out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation and with previously published fiscal impact note: FN2 (CED).

ADJOURNMENT

2:46:01 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.