

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 15, 2011

3:31 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Donald Olson, Chair  
Senator Thomas Wagoner  
Senator Albert Kookesh  
Senator Linda Menard

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Johnny Ellis

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 65

"An Act making regional Native housing authorities eligible to receive grants through the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation from the senior citizens housing development fund."

- MOVED HB 65 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 96

"An Act relating to the Village Safe Water Act."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 65

SHORT TITLE: SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING DEV. FUND GRANTS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) EDGMON, HERRON, FOSTER, JOULE

01/18/11	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/7/11
01/18/11	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/11	(H)	CRA, FIN
02/01/11	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/01/11	(H)	Heard & Held
02/01/11	(H)	MINUTE(CRA)
02/03/11	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/03/11	(H)	Moved Out of Committee
02/03/11	(H)	MINUTE(CRA)
02/04/11	(H)	CRA RPT 7DP

02/04/11 (H) DP: AUSTERMAN, DICK, SADDLER, FOSTER,  
GARDNER, CISSNA, MUNOZ  
02/16/11 (H) FIN AT 1:30 PM HOUSE FINANCE 519  
02/16/11 (H) Moved Out of Committee  
02/16/11 (H) MINUTE(FIN)  
02/18/11 (H) FIN RPT 11DP  
02/18/11 (H) DP: FAIRCLOUGH, T.WILSON, GUTTENBERG,  
GARA, JOULE, EDGMON, NEUMAN, DOOGAN,  
02/18/11 (H) COSTELLO, STOLTZE, THOMAS  
02/23/11 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)  
02/23/11 (H) VERSION: HB 65  
02/24/11 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
02/24/11 (S) CRA, FIN  
03/08/11 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)  
03/08/11 (S) Heard & Held  
03/08/11 (S) MINUTE(CRA)  
03/15/11 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SB 96

SHORT TITLE: APPLICATION OF VILLAGE SAFE WATER ACT

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) KOOKESH

03/09/11 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
03/09/11 (S) CRA, FIN  
03/15/11 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

**WITNESS REGISTER**

TIM CLARK, Staff  
Representative Bryce Edgmon  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Introduced HB 65 on behalf of the sponsor.

DAVID SCOTT, Staff  
Senator Donny Olson  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Explained how CSSB 96( ), version I, differs from the original bill.

RALPH WOLFE, Intern  
Senator Albert Kookesh  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Introduced SB 96 on behalf of the sponsor.

## **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:31:25 PM](#)

**CHAIR DONALD OLSON** called the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Wagoner, Menard, Kookesh, and Chair Olson.

### **HB 65-SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING DEV. FUND GRANTS**

[3:32:04 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON announced the consideration of HB 65.

[3:32:16 PM](#)

TIM CLARK, Staff to Representative Bryce Edgmon, sponsor of HB 65, said this bill will make the 14 regional housing authorities across the state eligible for grants through the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's (AHFC) senior citizen housing development fund. He explained that, currently, the fund is open only to municipalities and 501 c(3) and 501 c(4) non-profits. He noted that there are some housing authorities that have gone through the process of forming these non-profits, however, it can be quite laborious. HB 84 would spare the remaining seven authorities from going through this process and bring forward more senior housing from around the state.

SENATOR MENARD noted that she is very supportive of senior housing.

[3:34:24 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH moved to report HB 65 from the committee with individual recommendations and a zero fiscal note. There being no objection, HB 65 moved from the committee.

[3:34:52 PM](#)

At ease from 3:34 p.m. to 3:36 p.m.

### **SB 96-APPLICATION OF VILLAGE SAFE WATER ACT**

[3:36:40 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON announced the consideration of SB 96.

[3:37:01 PM](#)

DAVID SCOTT, Staff to Senator Donny Olson, said the committee substitute (CS) for SB 96 does two things. First, it raises the threshold for a village from 600 residents to 1,000 residents.

Second, in modifies the definition of what communities are eligible to receive Village Safe Water project funds.

3:37:45 PM

SENATOR KOOKESH moved to adopt CSSB 96 ( ), labeled 27-LS057\I as the working document.

SENATOR WAGONER objected for the purposes of discussion.

3:38:26 PM

RALPH WOLFE, Intern for Senator Albert Kookesh, sponsor of SB 96, said this bill would add home rule language to AS 46.07.080. He explained that this addition would allow home rule cities with a population between 25 and 600 residents to be eligible for grants under the Village Safe Water Act. He explained that this would help get the program to the villages it was intended to help. Under the current language of the statute home rule cities are excluded from this act, while being eligible through most of the other requirements. He noted that many villages in Alaska lack a safe source of drinking water or safe means of sewage disposal, which the Village Safe Water program was enacted to provide. This program provides technical and financial support to Alaska's smallest communities in order to design and construct water and wastewater systems.

SENATOR KOOKESH clarified that the CS would change the population requirement from 600 to 1,000 residents, which would include five to six more villages. He asked for confirmation that this is correct.

MR. SCOTT replied that there are several more villages that would be eligible under the increase.

SENATOR KOOKESH said the intention of the change found in the CS was to make sure that all of the villages in Alaska that are needy would be eligible under the program. He noted that the Village Safe Water program is funded primarily by the federal government. There are a lot of villages that do not have running water and the intention of the bill is to make sure that those villages would be eligible to apply for these grants.

3:41:08 PM

SENATOR WAGONER referred to the handout from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) which gave a brief history on the funding for the Village Safe Water program [included in the document packet]. He said the efforts to improve sanitation conditions in rural and Native Alaska began in the 1960's and

1970's by the Indian Health Service. Following this, in 1972, the state of Alaska became involved, and now provides 25 percent of the funding for the Village Safe Water program. He said that the way he reads this, it makes the program a rural-Native village program. He asked if this is correct.

SENATOR KOOKESH replied that this program is based on villages and there can be villages that are made up of individuals who are not Native. He said that the federal government funds 75 percent of the grant, with a 25 percent state match.

SENATOR WAGONER said he wanted to make sure that this was the case because all of these small villages need clean water and sewage.

[3:42:58 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON announced he would hold SB 96 in committee.

[3:43:16 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 3:43 p.m.