

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE

April 4, 2011

1:34 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Bettye Davis, Chair
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Johnny Ellis
Senator Kevin Meyer

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Fred Dyson

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Pete Petersen

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1(HSS)
Proclaiming November 2011 to be Pancreatic Cancer Awareness
Month.

- MOVED CSHCR 1(HSS) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3(HSS) AM
Relating to promoting the safety and protection of older
Alaskans.

- MOVED CSHCR 3(HSS) AM OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HCR 1

SHORT TITLE: PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) PETERSEN

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|----------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 01/18/11 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 01/18/11 | (H) | HSS |
| 03/10/11 | (H) | HSS AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 106 |
| 03/10/11 | (H) | Moved CSHCR 1(HSS) Out of Committee |
| 03/10/11 | (H) | MINUTE(HSS) |
| 03/11/11 | (H) | HSS RPT CS(HSS) 7DP |

03/11/11 (H) DP: KERTTULA, MILLETT, DICK, SEATON,
MILLER, HERRON, KELLER
03/25/11 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
03/25/11 (H) VERSION: CSHCR 1(HSS)
03/28/11 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/28/11 (S) HSS
04/04/11 (S) HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HCR 3

SHORT TITLE: SENIOR CITIZEN PROTECTIONS
SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MUNOZ

01/24/11 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/24/11 (H) HSS
03/10/11 (H) HSS AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 106
03/10/11 (H) Moved CSHCR 3(HSS) Out of Committee
03/10/11 (H) MINUTE(HSS)
03/11/11 (H) HSS RPT CS(HSS) 7DP
03/11/11 (H) DP: KERTTULA, MILLETT, DICK, SEATON,
MILLER, HERRON, KELLER
03/25/11 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
03/25/11 (H) VERSION: CSHCR 3(HSS) AM
03/28/11 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/28/11 (S) HSS
04/04/11 (S) HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE PETE PETERSEN
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HCR 1.

KENDRA KLOSTER, Staff to Representative Cathy Muñoz
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HCR 3 for Representative Muñoz,
the sponsor.

DENISE DANIELLO& Executive Director
Alaska Commission on Aging
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HCR 3.

DAVID BREMER, Staff to Representative Pete Petersen
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HCR 1 for Representative Petersen, the sponsor.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:34:54 PM](#)

CHAIR BETTYE DAVIS called the Senate Health and Social Services Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Egan, Ellis, Meyer, and Chair Davis.

HCR 1-PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

[1:35:35 PM](#)

CHAIR DAVIS announced the first order of business would be HCR 1, a resolution proclaiming November 2011 as Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. [CSHCR 1(HSS)am was before the committee.]

DAVID BREMER, staff to Representative Pete Petersen, presented HCR 1 on behalf of the sponsor. He said pancreatic cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer death in the US. Three-fourths of pancreatic cancer patients die within one year of diagnosis; this is because there is no effective screening test for early detection and diagnosis. The Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics reported 158 Alaskan deaths from pancreatic cancer during 2006-2008. Increasing awareness will lead to expanded research into locating the disease's causes, enhancing early detection, and developing effective treatments. Raised awareness will also lead to more knowledge about pancreatic cancer among Alaskans and directly enhance the good health and well-being of our state's residents.

REPRESENTATIVE PETE PETERSEN, sponsor of HCR 1, thanked the committee for hearing the resolution. He said it is unfortunate that some forms of cancer are more well-known than others. Pancreatic cancer is one of the most deadly forms but is less known. The resolution proclaims November 2011 as Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. Representative Thompson is co-sponsor of this resolution.

SENATOR EGAN asked if there is any screening test.

MR. BREMER responded early detection is difficult because there are no early signs.

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SENATOR EGAN moved to report CSHCR 1(HSS) from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). There being no objection, it was so ordered.

HCR 3-SENIOR CITIZEN PROTECTIONS

CHAIR DAVIS announced the next order of business would be HCR 3.

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KENDRA KLOSTER, staff to Representative Cathy Muñoz, said there is a devastating problem of rising elder abuse in Alaska. Over the past four years, Adult Protective Services has received an alarming 169 percent increase in the reports of harm. The Ombudsman Office for Long-term Care has seen a corresponding increase in the reports of harm at 200 percent in the past three years. It is important to bring this issue to light. The most common allegations are self-neglect, abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect. Two amendments were adopted during the process.

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DENISE DANIELLO, Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Aging, thanked the committee for hearing the resolution. It speaks to the rise of elder abuse in our state. Data shows that about one in ten older adults in our country is at risk for mistreatment. The rate of abuse is rising in Alaska.

Elder abuse can take many forms: physical, financial, abandonment, self-neglect. Often an older person is reluctant to report. There is an element of embarrassment and shame. Elders who are at risk for abuse includes those with Alzheimer's and related dementia, people with cognitive impairments, and people who are bed-ridden.

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Some people may not recognize the signs of abuse. This resolution aims for increased awareness. We need to educate the public to the signs of abuse and how to report. The Alaska Commission on Aging recommends passage of this resolution to improve recognition of signs of abuse and better response from caregivers, agencies, and first responders. There is a cost to the state but also to the person whose independence and dignity are compromised.

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CHAIR DAVIS said it is a great piece of legislation. Alaska has the fastest growing population of the oldest old, those who are

85 and older. It is a problem because a lot of them depend on family members to care for them. Sometimes families need help. Awareness is the key. She asked if the resolution referred to anyone over 65.

MS. DANIELLO responded it is 60 and over. There is also a lot of abuse directed toward vulnerable adults. She said at some point we need to expand the scope.

CHAIR DAVIS asked does it refer to the month of November.

MS. DANIELLO answered it is just for education and awareness, and does not name a specific month. It would encourage the public to report abuse.

SENATOR MEYER asked why there are no letters of support in the file, and why no one from AARP testified.

MS. KLOSTER said she was not sure why AARP didn't come.

SENATOR MEYER asked if they have been testifying in other committees.

MS. KLOSTER said yes, in the House HSS.

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SENATOR EGAN moved to report CSHCR 3 (HSS)am from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). There being no objection, it was so ordered.

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There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.