

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE TRANSPORTATION STANANDING COMMITTEE

March 24, 2011

1:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Albert Kookesh, Chair
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Linda Menard
Senator Charlie Huggins

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Joe Thomas, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE CALENANDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 95

"An Act naming the ferry terminal located at Auke Bay in Juneau the Frank Palmer Ferry Terminal."

- MOVED SB 95 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 95

SHORT TITLE: FRANK PALMER FERRY TERMINAL

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) EGAN

03/07/11	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/07/11	(S)	TRA, FIN
03/21/11	(S)	TRA WAIVEAND PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE, RULE 23
03/22/11	(S)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/22/11	(S)	<Bill Hearing Moved to March 24>
03/22/11	(S)	MINUTE(TRA)
03/24/11	(S)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

CHESTER CARSON, Staff to Senator Egan
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 95 for sponsor, Senator Egan.

ANNE GRISHAM SCHULTZ, representing herself

Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 95.

ERIC BADGER

Lynden Trucking

Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in Support of SB 95.

KATHY HILDRE, representing herself

Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 95.

KATE BECKER, representing herself

Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 95.

SANANDY DARNELL, representing herself

Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 95.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:04:20 PM](#)

CHAIR ALBERT KOOKESH called the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Senators Egan, Huggins, Menard, and Kookesh were present at the call to order.

SB 95-FRANK PALMER FERRY TERMINAL

[1:04:35 PM](#)

CHAIR KOOKESH announced the consideration of SB 95.

SENATOR EGAN, sponsor of SB 95, said this is a simple piece of legislation that will make the people in the Juneau community feel very good. The bill names the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal after Frank Palmer, a life-long Juneauite who passed away last year in a tragic accident.

[1:05:51 PM](#)

CHESTER CARSON, staff to Senator Egan, read the following sponsor statement into the record:

Frank Palmer was an icon who worked for nearly five decades at the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal. Palmer, who died last year at the age of 69, first began pulling trailers off the Alaska Marine Highway System's ferries in 1962, the year service from Prince Rupert

started. Since then, Palmer drove trucks and met ferries for Lynden Incorporated, Orme Transfer, Douglas Trucking (of which he was also a co-owner), and Alaska Marine Trucking. No matter which company he was working for, Palmer's reliable presence at the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal was a constant.

He was well known as a man who could skillfully get large vehicles on and off of ferries with ease. Although most of them are completely unaware, the list of Alaskans whose lives were touched indirectly by Palmer as he helped move their goods on and off of ferries is long.

Frank Palmer grew up in Auke Bay and for the entirety of his working life (47 years) he was a staple at the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal. Through his decades of work loading and unloading ferries, he was an integral part of the Marine Highway system that serves as the road that connects the communities of Southeast Alaska.

It would be a fitting and appropriate tribute to a man so intertwined with the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal to rename it the Frank Palmer Ferry Terminal.

SENATOR MENARD noted the fiscal note was \$1,200 and asked what material would be used to make the sign.

SENATOR EGAN responded the cost seems high, but he doesn't know what the material will be.

CHAIR KOOKESH noted that the sign at the Juneau Airport is wooden, which is appropriate for Southeast Alaska.

SENATOR HUGGINS commented that he supports making the sign from wood and he hopes a road will be built to bring the wood out of the forest.

SENATOR EGAN said he tends to agree.

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ANNE GRISHAM SCHULTZ, representing herself, said she and Mr. Palmer went through school together in Juneau. His infectious grin is still with us and there is no more fitting name for the terminal, she stated.

[1:10:19 PM](#)

ERIC BADGER, Alaska Lynden Transport, Inc. and Alaska Marine Trucking, LLC, said the Alaska Marine Highway is the road system in Southeast Alaska and Frank Palmer pulled more trailers on and off the ferries than any person in the history of the system. Regular marine service began in 1967 and fresh eggs and meat was delivered to communities for the first time. Frank Palmer changed lives by being the guy who was always there transferring trailers regardless of the hour. Renaming the ferry terminal is a very fitting tribute.

SENATOR MENARD asked if a ceremony is being planned that his company could sponsor.

MR. BADGER explained that a year ago this week a parade of 22 trucks gathered at the Chapel by the Lake in his honor. He assured the members that if the bill were to pass, the owner of the company would fly to Juneau and speak at the ceremony.

SENATOR HUGGINS said he would like to thank Lynden for noting the importance of this and supporting the effort by sending a representative to speak to the committee.

SENATOR EGAN echoed the comments. He noted that Mr. Badger, his coworkers, and competitors of Lynden suggested renaming the ferry terminal in Mr. Palmer's honor. The support for this in the Juneau community has been overwhelming.

CHAIR KOOKESH commented on the importance of the Alaska Marine Highway in bringing fresh food to Southeast Alaska.

[1:14:32 PM](#)

KATHY HILDRE, representing herself, Juneau, AK, read the following into the record:

Frank Palmer and my brother Pat Orme, also deceased, were partners in Douglas Trucking for many years. They had the contract with most of the companies that put their vans on the ferries and Frank was the main person, with the talent, to load and unload any size van.

He had the personality and the talent to make things happen. Backing a van down the ramp and around the inside of the ferry was one of his specialties. He did that many times, which made loading and unloading, with Frank at the wheel, take less time. The terminal

and the personal on the ferry could always count on Frank if it was difficult.

He had a great rapport with the terminal personnel; they could call him at the last minute to let him know that the ferry was early or going to be late. He didn't mind, he just knew what he had to do.

I would hope that this committee wouldn't think twice about making the ferry terminal in Auke Bay the Frank Palmer Ferry Terminal. No one better than Frank deserves this and I know that his family and friends would be very proud and happy.

Thanks for the opportunity to give this committee my total support.

[1:16:03 PM](#)

KATE BECKER, speaking on behalf of Patricia Palmer and herself, said Frank Palmer was her stepfather and the two most important things in his life were his family and meeting the ferries. He loved his work and was similarly dedicated to his family. This was his purpose and he lived it very well. To have something named after him would be an appropriate honor for him and the family.

[1:18:54 PM](#)

SANDY DARNELL, representing herself, said the Palmers were family friends. She related that Frank Palmer's wife Patti just this morning told her about a time several years ago when Frank became very agitated when he was in a hospital recovery room. In fact, he had to be restrained because he thought he was late to meet and unload vans from the ferry. There could be no better tribute than to name the ferry terminal after Frank Palmer, she stated.

CHAIR KOOKESH closed public testimony and asked for a motion.

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SENATOR MENARD moved to report SB 95 from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). There being no objection, SB 95 moved from the Senate Transportation Standing Committee.

[1:21:14 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Kookesh adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.