

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2012

1:03 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Albert Kookesh, Chair  
Senator Joe Thomas, Vice Chair  
Senator Linda Menard  
Senator Charlie Huggins

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Dennis Egan

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 246(FIN)  
"An Act naming certain bridges and airports."

- MOVED CSHB 246(FIN) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 271(TRA)am  
"An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle requirements."

- MOVED CSHB 271(TRA)am OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 246

SHORT TITLE: NAMING CERTAIN BRIDGES

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) THOMAS

01/17/12	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/6/12
01/17/12	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/17/12	(H)	TRA, FIN
02/02/12	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 17
02/02/12	(H)	Moved Out of Committee
02/02/12	(H)	MINUTE(TRA)
02/03/12	(H)	TRA RPT 6DP 1NR
02/03/12	(H)	DP: JOHNSON, FEIGE, PRUITT, MUNOZ, PETERSEN, P.WILSON
02/03/12	(H)	NR: GRUENBERG
02/13/12	(H)	FIN AT 1:30 PM HOUSE FINANCE 519
02/13/12	(H)	Moved CSHB 246(FIN) Out of Committee
02/13/12	(H)	MINUTE(FIN)

02/15/12 (H) FIN RPT CS(FIN) NT 7DP  
 02/15/12 (H) DP: GUTTENBERG, COSTELLO, GARA, NEUMAN,  
 DOOGAN, STOLTZE, THOMAS  
 03/05/12 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)  
 03/05/12 (H) VERSION: CSHB 246(FIN)  
 03/06/12 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 03/06/12 (S) TRA, FIN  
 03/20/12 (S) TRA AT 1:00 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 271

SHORT TITLE: COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KELLER, PRUITT

01/17/12 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/13/12  
 01/17/12 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 01/17/12 (H) TRA  
 02/21/12 (H) TRA AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 17  
 02/21/12 (H) Moved CSHB 271(TRA) Out of Committee  
 02/21/12 (H) MINUTE(TRA)  
 02/22/12 (H) TRA RPT CS(TRA) NT 5DP 1NR  
 02/22/12 (H) DP: PRUITT, MUNOZ, PETERSEN, GRUENBERG,  
 P.WILSON  
 02/22/12 (H) NR: FEIGE  
 03/02/12 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)  
 03/02/12 (H) VERSION: CSHB 271(TRA) AM  
 03/05/12 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 03/05/12 (S) TRA, STA  
 03/20/12 (S) TRA AT 1:00 PM BUTROVICH 205

**WITNESS REGISTER**

RACHEL KALLANDER, Staff  
 Representative Bill Thomas  
 Alaska State Legislature  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Explained HB 246 on behalf of the sponsor.

CYNTHIA ERICKSON, Staff  
 Representative Alan Dick  
 Alaska State Legislature  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented information related to HB 246.

JERRY MCCUNE, President  
 Cordova Fishermen United  
 Cordova, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 246.

JIM POUND, Staff  
Representative Wes Keller  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Explained HB 271 on behalf of the sponsor.

AVES THOMPSON, Executive Director  
Alaska Trucking Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 271.

DAN BREEDEN, Director  
Division of Measurement Standards & Commercial Vehicle  
Enforcement  
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions related to HB 271.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:03:06 PM](#)

**CHAIR ALBERT KOOKESH** called the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Thomas, Menard, and Chair Kookesh. Senator Huggins arrived shortly thereafter.

#### **HB 246-NAMING CERTAIN BRIDGES**

[1:03:47 PM](#)

**CHAIR KOOKESH** announced that the first bill before the committee would be CSHB 246(FIN).

**RACHEL KALLANDER**, Staff, Representative Bill Thomas, explained HB 246 on behalf of the sponsor. The bill would name fifteen bridges and two airports after prominent Alaskans. She read from the following sponsor statement:

Cordova is located in the Copper River Valley and its residents have a strong sense of duty, duty to country and duty to their people. It is that sense of duty that has spurred the people of Cordova to serve in every major war of the 20th century. It is also that sense of duty that compelled an Eyak elder to nearly singlehandedly preserve the Eyak language for future generations. It is also this sense of duty that prompted the City of Cordova to ask the state to name

15 of its unnamed Cordova-area bridges after some of their finest residents.

In honor of the brave young men who served and made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, the City of Cordova has requested that 14 of their unnamed bridges be named for each of the sons that they have lost. They are:

World War I

James Bennet  
William M. Jones  
Steve Green  
Lucian Platt  
Matthew Anderson  
W.H. Mumby  
John W. Jones

World War II

Patrick B. Burchett  
Norman D. Osbourne  
Leonard F. Olson

Vietnam

David Henry Elisovsky  
David Allen Lape  
Warren Allen Paulsen  
Michael Dean Banta

The City of Cordova has also requested that the bridge over the Eyak River be named after Marie Smith Jones. Marie Smith Jones was an Eyak elder who worked tirelessly to preserve the Eyak language. She left behind one of the most comprehensive records of any aboriginal language that exists today.

[1:05:56 PM](#)

CYNTHIA ERICKSON, staff, Representative Alan Dick, presented information related to HB 246. She related information about the Koyukuk Station Veterans' Airport and the Minto-Al Wright Airport. The Koyukuk Airport is located on the Yukon River thirty miles west of Galena and 290 air miles from Fairbanks. The original village of Koyukuk, primarily all Koyukon Athabascan Indians, was established around 1867. It used to be

called Koyukuk Station, because a military telegraph line was constructed along the North side of the Yukon, and Koyukuk became the site of the telegraph station. In naming the airport, the residents also wish to honor the many Native military veterans who have served their country.

She related that the Minto-Al Wright Airport is named after an Athabaskan aviator born in 1925 and raised in the Minto Flats. Al Wright joined the army and afterwards obtained his pilot's license with the G.I. Bill. She related her experience last year interviewing Al Wright who is 86 and still flying.

[1:08:27 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH asked if there was any opposition to the bill.

MS. KALLANDER said no.

JERRY MCCUNE, President, Cordova Fishermen United, testified in support of HB 246. He called the legislation a good approach to honor fallen veterans and Ms. Jones.

SENATOR KOOKESH closed public testimony.

[1:09:55 PM](#)

SENATOR MENARD moved to report CSHB 246, version M, from committee with individual recommendations and the attached fiscal note.

CHAIR KOOKESH announced that without objection, CSSB 246(FIN) was reported from the Senate Transportation Standing Committee.

At ease to sign papers.

### **HB 271-COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS**

[1:11:11 PM](#)

SENATOR KOOKESH announced the consideration of CSHB 271(TRA)am.

REPRESENTATIVE WES KELLER, sponsor of HB 271 introduced the bill.

[1:12:11 PM](#)

JIM POUND, staff, Representative Wes Keller, sponsor of HB 271, explained the bill. He said HB 271 will make doing business in Alaska a little bit less costly. Transportation of goods in pickup trucks or small step vans is classified as commercial

transport today, and HB 271 proposes to change that by changing vehicle weight restrictions from 10,000 pounds to 14,000 pounds. Trucks were smaller when the legislation first originated in 1999. He gave an example of an on-site welding business that carries the welder in the back of the truck and is required to have a commercial registration. The costs associated with that are for a commercial driver's license, additional insurance, registration fees, and a medical examination. Changing the language from 10,000 pounds to 14,000 pounds makes the average one-ton pickup non-commercial. The same rule applies to pilot vehicles.

[1:13:56 PM](#)

SENATOR MENARD asked if there was any opposition to the bill.

MR. POUND said no. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Alaska Truckers Association have worked together on the bill to ensure that everyone is happy with it.

SENATOR THOMAS suggested that vehicles are safer now and do not present a danger even though they weigh more.

MR. POUND agreed.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER added that less maintenance is needed to maintain safe vehicles.

[1:15:25 PM](#)

AVES THOMPSON, Executive Director, Alaska Trucking Association (ATA), testified in support of HB 271. He said one of ATA's legislative priorities is to change the definition of an intra-state commercial vehicle to reduce the regulatory burden on small businesses. As vehicles have gotten larger and heavier, many now fall into the commercial category ensuing additional costs to the owners. He noted that the legislation would not change the commercial status of intra-state vehicles for purposes of registration with DMV and therefore there is no fiscal impact on the state. He urged favorable action on the bill.

[1:19:43 PM](#)

SENATOR MENARD asked if there would be a fiscal loss to the state.

DAN BREEDEN, Director, Division of Measurement Standards & Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, addressed Senator Menard's question and said

that the law would apply only to intra-state operations and would not change registration requirements.

1:21:19 PM

SENATOR MENARD moved to report CS for HB 271, version D, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

CHAIR KOOKESH announced that without objection, CSHB 271(TRA)am moved from the Senate Transportation Standing Committee.

1:21:44 PM

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