

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 5, 2013

1:03 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Peggy Wilson, Chair  
Representative Doug Isaacson, Vice Chair  
Representative Lynn Gattis  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative Bob Lynn  
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Eric Feige

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 31

"An Act naming the runway at the state-owned airport in Akhiok the Jim Andie and Robin Starrett Memorial Runway."

- MOVED SB 31 OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 31

SHORT TITLE: NAMING AKHIOK RUNWAY

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) STEVENS

01/22/13	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/13	(S)	TRA
02/07/13	(S)	TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/07/13	(S)	Moved SB 31 Out of Committee
02/07/13	(S)	MINUTE(TRA)
02/08/13	(S)	TRA RPT 5DP
02/08/13	(S)	DP: EGAN, FAIRCLOUGH, DYSON, FRENCH, BISHOP
02/20/13	(S)	TRANSMITTED TO (H)
02/20/13	(S)	VERSION: SB 31
02/22/13	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/22/13	(H)	TRA
03/05/13	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

## **WITNESS REGISTER**

DOUG LETCH, Staff  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified on behalf of Senator Gary Stevens, the sponsor of SB 31.

## **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:03:15 PM](#)

**CHAIR PEGGY WILSON** called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Representatives Gattis, Johnson, Kreiss-Tomkins, Isaacson, and P. Wilson were present at the call to order. Representative Lynn arrived as the meeting was in progress.

### **SB 31-NAMING AKHIOK RUNWAY**

[1:03:45 PM](#)

CHAIR P. WILSON announced that the only order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 31, "An Act naming the runway at the state-owned airport in Akhiok the Jim Andie and Robin Starrett Memorial Runway."

[1:04:34 PM](#)

DOUG LETCH, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of the sponsor, stated that SB 31 is an important bill to the people of Akhiok, who live on the south end of Kodiak Island. He said that the residents asked Senator Stevens to honor Jim Andie and Robin Starrett, who were two bush pilots who lost their lives. The bill would ask that the landing strip be named the Jim Andie and Robin Starrett Memorial Runway. This bill has a zero fiscal note since the community will provide its own sign. If this bill passes, the community plans to hold a big celebration and invite the survivors of the two pilots who lost their lives. The bill would not change the official designations of the runway, but would merely give the community the authority to place a sign to honor the pilots. He characterized SB 31 as a feel good bill, but it would make a lot of people very happy.

[1:06:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ISAACSON offered his deepest sympathies to the community and families of the two pilots. He recalled a field at Fort Wainwright was renamed Ladd Field, which changed the designation on maps. He asked whether it would change maps, although he did not think it would be a state expense.

MR. LETCH related his understanding in speaking with the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) that for official purposes the landing strip would remain the Akhiok landing strip. He pointed out that this is a community of 100 people. Even if it were to be known as the Jim Andie and Robin Starrett Memorial Runway, pilots would continue to refer to it as the Akhiok landing strip. He confessed it has been some time since he has been there, but he recalled the facility consists of a landing strip, a grader, and maybe a snowplow in the winter.

[1:07:44 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS, speaking as a pilot, asked whether it will change the four letter designation for the runway. She suggested that this might be a question for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rather than the DOT&PF. She suggested that there is some merit in the question in terms of requiring a long involved radio [transmission.] She acknowledged that Akhiok is an uncontrolled runway.

MR. LETCH said he was unsure. He said that DOT&PF has no problems with the bill, but he'd be happy to research this and respond back to the committee.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON clarified that this is just the name of the runway and not the airport. He recalled that the four letter designation refers to an airport. He said the bill clearly states the community is naming the runway. He characterized this as an honorary situation, but the airport itself would remain as the Akhiok airport.

MR. LETCH agreed. He reiterated he would ask the FAA and report to the committee.

[1:09:24 PM](#)

CHAIR P. WILSON related the runway is named after two people.

MR. LETCH clarified that both of the pilots died in plane crashes. He said that Mr. Robin Starrett was a U.S. Coast Guard pilot for many years and well known in the Kodiak community. He said he only knew Mr. Jim Andie by reputation. He reported that both of these people spent considerable time traveling to the six villages on Kodiak Island, which has a limited road system. Specifically, bush pilots in Alaska get to know people in the communities and these residents strongly supported efforts to honor the pilots who brought in their mail and supplies, and transported them to Kodiak for transportation elsewhere. He emphasized that this bill means a lot to the community.

[1:10:49 PM](#)

CHAIR P. WILSON, after first determining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony on SB 31.

[1:10:59 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ISAACSON moved to report SB 31 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection, SB 31 was reported from the House Transportation Standing Committee.

[1:12:05 PM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.