

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

February 6, 2014

3:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Peter Micciche, Chair
Senator Cathy Giessel, Vice Chair
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Click Bishop

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 123

"An Act authorizing a municipality to adopt an ordinance prohibiting the use of cellular telephones while driving in school zones or on school property."

- MOVED SB 123 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 123

SHORT TITLE: PROHIBIT USE OF CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) MEYER

01/22/14	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/14	(S)	CRA
02/04/14	(S)	CRA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/04/14	(S)	Heard & Held
02/04/14	(S)	MINUTE(CRA)
02/06/14	(S)	CRA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

EDRA MORLEDGE
Staff to Senator Meyer
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on SB 123 for the sponsor.

DAVID WIGHT, representing himself

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SB 123.

ED GRAFF, Superintendent
Anchorage School District
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SB 123.

ERNIE HALL, Chairman
Anchorage Assembly
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SB 123.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:31:37 PM](#)

CHAIR PETER MICCICHE 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 Giessel, Egan, and Chair Micciche.

SB 123-PROHIBIT USE OF CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING

[3:32:40 PM](#)

CHAIR MICCICHE announced SB 123 to be up for consideration.

[3:32:58 PM](#)

EDRA MORLEDGE, Staff to Senator Meyer, sponsor of SB 123, said this is an authorizing bill to allow municipalities, if they so choose, to pass an ordinance to prohibit cell phone use within school zones or on school property. A constituent had approached the Municipality of Anchorage well over three years ago and worked with the chair to get an ordinance passed, but found the state needed to pass enabling legislation because traffic laws need to be uniform across the state.

[3:33:44 PM](#)

SENATOR BISHOP joined the meeting.

[3:34:16 PM](#)

CHAIR MICCICHE noted letters of support from Anchorage Mayor Dan Sullivan and David White. He asked if anyone wished to testify on SB 123.

[3:35:25 PM](#)

DAVID WIGHT, representing himself, Anchorage, Alaska, supported SB 123. He said he had worked with two separate principals, the

chairs of the PTA, and e had done public service announcements through school media asking drivers to put their cell phones away. He noted consistent cell phone use by 25-30 percent of drivers who take the position that what they are doing is important, that they are safe, and that it's not illegal. He said there is a substantial body of evidence and concern by the administration, volunteers and crossing guards that it's the single biggest safety hazard in the school zones.

[3:37:33 PM](#)

SENATOR BISHOP said he was proud that Mr. White was continuing "safety first and nobody gets hurt" in the private sector.

[3:38:16 PM](#)

ED GRAFF, Superintendent, Anchorage School District, Anchorage, Alaska, supported SB 123. He said mixing a distracted driver with hundreds of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles in school zones and areas on a daily basis is just too great a potential for an accident or injury to happen. He also thanked Mr. White for his advocacy and the support he had provided to the schools.

[3:39:53 PM](#)

ERNIE HALL, Chairman, Anchorage Assembly, Anchorage, Alaska, supported SB 123. He sponsored the resolution before the body that got this put into the legislative package and that was entirely at the urging of David White. He looked forward to working on municipal code that will prevent the use of cell phones within school zones.

[3:41:42 PM](#)

CHAIR MICCICHE closed public testimony.

[3:42:43 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL moved to report SB 123, version \A, from committee to the next committee of referral with individual recommendations and attached zero fiscal note. There were no objections, and it was so ordered.

[3:43:24 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Micciche adjourned the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee at 3:43 p.m.