

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
March 15, 2013  
9:36 a.m.

[9:36:13 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Meyer called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Pete Kelly, Co-Chair  
Senator Kevin Meyer, Co-Chair  
Senator Click Bishop  
Senator Mike Dunleavy  
Senator Donny Olson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Anna Fairclough, Vice-Chair  
Senator Lyman Hoffman

ALSO PRESENT

Doug Letch, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Joe Bailor, Kodiak Chamber of Commerce, Kodiak

SUMMARY

SB 24 MARINE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

SB 24 was REPORTED out of committee with "no recommendation" and with previously published fiscal note: FN1: (DOT).

#sb24

SENATE BILL NO. 24

"An Act relating to the Alaska Marine Transportation Advisory Board."

[9:36:51 AM](#)

DOUG LETCH, STAFF, SENATOR GARY STEVENS, explained SB 24. He stated that SB 24 altered the makeup of the Alaska Marine Transportation Advisory Board by adding a twelfth seat designated for a representative from Southcentral Alaska. While not guaranteeing a position on the board to a resident of a particular Kodiak Island or Kachemak Bay community, it would afford them a better opportunity to have representation than currently available in the larger Southwest district. The addition of Gustavus to northern Southeast Alaska district would have the same effect. He stated that SB 24 was straightforward legislation intended to help communities who rely on the Alaska Marine Highway System service obtain a seat at the table and a chance for their voices to be heard. He shared that there was a fiscal note for \$3,000 that would cover the cost of the meeting. He felt that there was low fiscal impact.

Senator Olson wondered how many times a year the board meets. Mr. Letch replied that meetings were held quarterly.

Senator Olson wondered what business was conducted at the meetings. Mr. Letch responded that the members discuss the schedule and various issues related to the Alaska Marine Highway System. He shared that the most important issue the board addressed was scheduling.

Senator Olson noted that Metlakatla and Ketchikan were not represented on the board. Mr. Letch replied that he did not know why those communities did not have representation, and agreed to provide more information.

[9:40:50 AM](#)

JOE BAILOR, KODIAK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, KODIAK (via teleconference), testified in support of SB 24. He referenced a letter of support from the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce (copy on file). He stressed that representation on the Marine Advisory Board was essential to economic development. The Kodiak region relied on the Alaska Marine Highway System to supply some of its basic needs. He stressed that the only other transportation option was through air. He remarked that there was a constant scramble to keep the shipping costs low among the small outlying villages. He added that there were many youth activity and sport groups that used the Marine Highway System. He stressed that the Alaska Marine Highway System was an

economic transportation option. He felt that the Southcentral Alaska region support was vital Alaska's economic future.

[9:44:02 AM](#)

Senator Olson remarked that his district did not have access to the ferry system. He wondered if Alaska Airlines operated out of Kodiak, providing northern transportation. Mr. Bailor replied that Kodiak did have access to air travel.

Senator Olson stressed that Alaska Airlines flew to Anchorage. Mr. Bailor agreed.

Senator Olson felt that time was wasted away from school when youth were using the ferry system. He wondered if the school athletes regularly traveled by ferry or by plane. Mr. Bailor responded that the school athletes used the ferry, because the cost of the Alaska Marine Highway System was substantially less than the cost of airfare.

Co-Chair Meyer CLOSED public testimony.

Co-Chair Meyer agreed that representation from Ketchikan and Metlakatla was important for the board.

Senator Olson remarked that there was a statute that allowed for representation from Ketchikan on the Marine Transportation Advisory Board.

Senator Olson MOVED to REPORT SB 24 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal impact note. There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

SB 24 was REPORTED out of committee with "no recommendation" and with previously published fiscal note: FN1: (DOT).

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ADJOURNMENT

[9:48:35 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.