

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

March 11, 2013

3:29 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senator Fred Dyson, Vice Chair
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lesil McGuire
Senator Anna Fairclough

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Hollis French

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 54

"An Act extending the termination date of the authority of the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission to maintain a vessel-based limited entry fisheries system for the weathervane scallop and Bering Sea hair crab fisheries; and providing for an effective date by amending the effective date under sec. 28, ch. 137, SLA 2002."

- MOVED CSSB 54(RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 36

"An Act exempting certain federal agencies or military services firing or using munitions on active ranges from prior authorization requirements of the Department of Environmental Conservation."

- MOVED HB 36 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

Relating to the establishment and operation of a state food resource development working group.

- MOVED SCR 1 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 54

SHORT TITLE: EXTEND HAIR CRAB & SCALLOP LIMITED ENTRY
SPONSOR(s): RESOURCES

02/13/13 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/13/13 (S) RES
03/04/13 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/04/13 (S) Heard & Held
03/04/13 (S) MINUTE(RES)
03/11/13 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 36

SHORT TITLE: EXEMPT DISCHARGES FROM USE OF MUNITIONS
SPONSOR(s): T.WILSON

01/16/13 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/7/13
01/16/13 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/13 (H) RES
01/28/13 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
01/28/13 (H) Moved Out of Committee
01/28/13 (H) MINUTE(RES)
01/30/13 (H) RES RPT 7DP 2NR
01/30/13 (H) DP: JOHNSON, HAWKER, P.WILSON, OLSON,
SEATON, FEIGE, SADDLER
01/30/13 (H) NR: TUCK, TARR
02/04/13 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
02/04/13 (H) VERSION: HB 36
02/06/13 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/06/13 (S) RES
03/04/13 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/04/13 (S) Heard & Held
03/04/13 (S) MINUTE(RES)
03/11/13 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SCR 1

SHORT TITLE: STATE FOOD RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT GROUP
SPONSOR(s): BISHOP

02/11/13 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/11/13 (S) RES
03/11/13 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

BENJAMIN BROWN, Commissioner
Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC)
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SB 4.

BRITTANY HUTCHISON
Staff to Senator Bishop
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on SCR 1 for the sponsor.

RANDI SWEET
United Way of Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

ARNI THOMSON, Executive Director
Alaska Salmon Alliance (ASA)
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

DELENA JOHNSON, Mayor
City of Palmer
Palmer, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

NICK MOE, Board Member
Food Policy Council (FPC)
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

PAIGE KRICHBAUM, high school student
Alaska Youth for Environmental Action
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

JUSTICE SKY, President
Homer Chapter, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action
Homer, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

JAMES SULLIVAN
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC)
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

DARREN SNYDER, Cooperative Extension Agent
University of Alaska Fairbanks
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

ED FOGELS, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Juneau, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCR 1.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:29:51 PM](#)

CHAIR CATHY GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:29 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Bishop, Dyson, Micciche, and Chair Giessel.

SB 54-EXTEND HAIR CRAB & SCALLOP LIMITED ENTRY

[3:31:18 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced SB 54 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR DYSON moved conceptual Amendment 1 to change the sunset date to 2018 on page 1, line 9.

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for discussion purposes.

[3:32:00 PM](#)

BENJAMIN BROWN, Commissioner, Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC), said this amendment changes the extension of the life of this program from a 10 year extension to a 5 year extension. It's a compromise; some people don't like vessel-based limited entry and expressed concerns over this program and a 5 year sunset date will simply allow the issue to be revisited in half the time as a 10 year sunset extension, during which time the dialogue can continue to alleviate concerns of those who don't like some aspects of the program.

SENATOR DYSON said they received a letter saying the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) had considered this issue but it wasn't an agenda item and it had no opportunity for public comment.

MR. BROWN said the letter's assertion was correct, because he attended the NPFMC meeting in Portland and saw that it was taken up under "staff tasking" that occurs at every NPFMC meeting staff is asked to do things.

[3:33:43 PM](#)

SENATOR MCGUIRE joined the meeting.

SENATOR DYSON wondered if it was good public policy for an issue that affects so many other people to only come before the staff with no opportunity for stakeholders to either know of it or weigh in on it.

MR. BROWN replied the NPFMC and the Magnuson Stevens Act are entities that govern federal fisheries management and are much more complex than what they do at the state level. He explained that the letter was from the federal managers in support of continuing the state program, because there is some overlap in the management regime of the fisheries. There would have been an opportunity for the public to comment if the NPFMC were going to be taking action on the federal side of things and not just writing a letter in support of the state side of things. That being said, it wasn't the best public process and if he had stayed around through staff tasking he would probably not have been prevented from commenting during the open comment period, but he didn't know.

SENATOR DYSON said it had been awhile, but that decision which is part of the basis for this bill affects the businesses of the Kodiak and Cook Inlet areas, and he wondered when they had an opportunity to weigh in on it.

MR. BROWN said he couldn't tell him that; but he could tell him that the NPFMC supported extending the sunset 5 years ago and he didn't think they had changed their position on the viability of the Alaska's vessel-based limited entry program. The NPFMC has a "three meeting outlook" meetings are publicly noticed; there is and they are held in various locations around Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. He would have to look at meeting minutes to discover what the public comment was.

SENATOR DYSON asked if they can be assured that this issue was in the notice that went out three times to let people know that the board was going to take actions to respond to staff initiated action.

MR. BROWN answered that he could say with confidence that when they created the federal management plan there would have been a public comment period, and the gentleman was right that there was no notice about this letter at the most recent meeting in Portland. However, he would be very surprised if this issue had no public notice when the substantive policy was put in place and a significant chunk of time set aside for it.

He also mentioned that the NPFMC has a Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and an Advisory Panel (AP), both of which meet for several days prior to the actual council meetings and the public can have input there on decisions that will be forwarded to the full council for action.

[3:39:33 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL remarked they were asking questions of Mr. Brown that he can't answer about a process in a meeting that he didn't run and, finding no further questions, withdrew her objection.

SENATOR MICCICHE said he supported the amendment. He also had concerns, but it's a difficult fishery and this seems like the most efficient way to get Alaskan scallops to market; and the 5 years gives concerned folks time to come forward and plead a case.

CHAIR GIESSEL, finding no further objection to the motion, said that conceptual Amendment 1 was adopted.

SENATOR DYSON associated himself with Senator Micciche's remarks and commented that he doesn't like limited entry but it allows management of the fisheries.

[3:43:42 PM](#)

SENATOR DYSON moved to report SB 54, as conceptually amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

CHAIR GIESSEL announced that, without objection, CSSB 54(RES) moved from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[3:44:44 PM](#)

At ease from 3:44 to 3:46 p.m.

HB 36-EXEMPT DISCHARGES FROM USE OF MUNITIONS

[3:46:14 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced HB 36 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR DYSON moved to report HB 36, version \A, from committee with attached fiscal note(s) and individual recommendations.

CHAIR GIESSEL announced that, without objection, HB 36 moved from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[3:47:38 PM](#)

At ease from 3:47 to 3:48 p.m.

SCR 1-STATE FOOD RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

[3:48:56 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL reconvened the meeting and announced SCR 1, labeled 28-LS0387\U, to be up for consideration.

[3:49:22 PM](#)

BRITTANY HUTCHISON, staff to Senator Bishop, sponsor of SCR 1, explained that this urges the governor to establish a state food resource development working group, which would work together with eight different state agencies, the Alaska Food Policy Counsel, Native Villages and corporations throughout the state, Alaska cattle ranchers, farmers, fishermen, and shell fish growers to increase local production, distribution and consumption of food items. This resolution would allow for a stronger more sustainable and healthier food system in Alaska.

She said there are three reasons this is needed: it would provide for healthier Alaskan communities, a healthier Alaskan economy and stronger food security. The reason healthier communities are needed is that three out of the top ten leading causes of death in Alaska are diet-related: heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Alaskans who are 2 to 19 years old are currently 20 percent overweight and 20 percent obese. Teachers are noticing that students are performing more poorly due to their lack of food or else they are filling up on empty calories such as junk food, and everyone knows that junk food is cheaper than healthy food. In 2009 the USDA reported that 13 percent of Alaskans were unable to supply the food that is needed to feed their entire families.

As of 2010, 40 percent of Alaskan adults were overweight and 27 percent were obese, a total of 67 percent; 77 percent are not getting the five daily servings of fruits and vegetables required and it is estimated that Alaska spends \$477 million annually in medical costs directly related to obesity. It's obvious that Alaska can use healthier communities.

[3:51:50 PM](#)

How would this help with healthier economies in Alaska? In the 1950s she said 50 percent of Alaska's food was produced locally; currently it's only 5 percent. The remaining 95 percent is imported for an estimated \$1.5 billion that could stay here. If Alaska went from 5 percent of its own food production to 35 percent, that would represent almost a \$500 million increase in

additional sales and \$2 billion of increased economic activity to the state.

Lastly, food security is a huge issue in Alaska and it is one of the Governor's priorities. This legislation will help that priority by strengthening the local distribution system in the amount of food available in case of an emergency. This would therefore, establish stronger food security and more local reliance.

MS. HUTCHISON said there were letters of support from all around the state.

[3:53:06 PM](#)

SENATOR DYSON said he had never seen a resolution that has more resolves than whereases by a count of 17 to 9. He asked why they not already doing this and how they can do it all without a fiscal note.

MS. HUTCHISON said she didn't know why this wasn't being done already, and that was the reason for the resolution. She added that it would have a fiscal note once the working group is established.

SENATOR MICCICHE commented that this resolution is about the spirit of Alaska than many knew as young people. The state had changed significantly and this would encourage us to get back to self-reliance and independence. Being a big supporter of 4-H programs, he sees the results of agriculture and fisheries programs and how getting involved in those industries encourages us to grow our foods closest to home, puts lots of people to work and gives a lot of confidence to young people.

[3:54:56 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public comment.

[3:55:14 PM](#)

RANDI SWEET, United Way of Anchorage, Anchorage, Alaska, supported SCR 1. She supported Ms. Hutchison's comments about a strong secure Alaska food system being essential to the health and wellness of Alaskans. The resolution creates a framework to create the cross-sector collaboration, integration of resources and entrepreneurship that in turn can help with delivering a strong and secure food system than can provide jobs, support healthy communities, increase food security, feed the hungry and insulate us from potential disruption along the food supply chain. Their existing group would work with the Alaska Food

Policy Counsel with over 200 Alaskans from the farming, fishing, business, food banking, anti-hunger network, health and environmental, conservation sectors of the state to provide nutritious and affordable local foods that are part of the solution can promote healthy weights and disease prevention.

She explained that once students are distracted by hunger they are unable to focus or stay and succeed in school and their goal is to graduate 90 percent of Alaskan students on time by the year 2020. This resolution would help support students in their academic endeavors and, additionally, if they are able to bend the cost curve on healthy food, families won't have to choose between paying for food or heat.

[3:57:49 PM](#)

ARNI THOMSON, Executive Director, Alaska Salmon Alliance (ASA), Anchorage, Alaska, supported SCR 1. He said they support the governor's endeavors to improve food security, self-sufficiency in food production and creating a reserve of food supplies in case of food distribution disruption. There is room for a great deal of improvement if Alaskans are to become self-sufficient in food production he said.

It is a known fact that retail food supplies will last less than a week if the transportation links are cut off by some sort of mishap or disaster. That is the reason the governor initiated food warehousing across the state. The Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED)'s mission is to work with the state food resource development working group to develop marketing and promotional programs to enhance and identify new and expanded opportunities for residents of the state in food production, food processing and food distribution services.

[3:58:59 PM](#)

SENATOR FAIRCLOUGH joined the committee.

[3:59:32 PM](#)

MR. THOMSON said he had a lot of experience with the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute and was well aware that there are ex-officio members from the legislature who are very cognizant of the institute's marketing efforts and have encouraged their collaboration with Alaskan grown agricultural products. They would like to see more of that kind of cooperation develop with the new Alaska State Work Group.

[4:00:21 PM](#)

DELENA JOHNSON, Mayor, City of Palmer, Palmer, Alaska, supported SCR 1. He said Palmer is an agricultural area; 2015 will mark 100 years for the Palmer agricultural station. He would like to see local foods and fish in schools.

[4:03:42 PM](#)

NICK MOE, Board Member, Food Policy Council (FPC), Anchorage, Alaska, supported SCR 1. He said the FPC has met with hundreds of food experts, farmers and fishermen to learn about this important issue and is working towards the same goals. The reason this resolution is so exciting is because it really strengthens the bond between the FPC and the state to help shape better food policies.

[4:06:20 PM](#)

PAIGE KRICHBAUM, high school student, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, Anchorage, Alaska, said she works with food every day as a baker at Paris Bakery and Café' and supports SCR 1. It's important that food is good and that it is good for you. "Whereas access to fresh and nutritious local food would promote and contribute to healthier life styles for residents of the state," was the phrase that impressed her most.

SENATOR MCGUIRE asked when they are having their BBQ.

MS. KRICHBAUM replied Thursday at noon and it will be wild salmon.

[4:08:10 PM](#)

JUSTICE SKY, President, Homer Chapter, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, said everyone likes locally grown food, but it's expensive and not everyone can get it. He supported SCR 1, because it covers a lot of the benefits of growing food locally. He urged them to make food issues in Alaska a priority.

[4:09:28 PM](#)

JAMES SULLIVAN, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC), Juneau, Alaska, supported SCR 1. He said food security and promoting healthy food is a good thing.

[4:10:24 PM](#)

DARREN SNYDER, Cooperative Extension Agent, University of Alaska Fairbanks, said he serves on the governing board of the Alaska Food Policy Counsel, and supported SCR 1. He said the extension service has many co-joining goals relating to this issue and of the many issues and challenges facing Alaskans he is continually reminded of food's central role in the stability and success of

Alaskan communities. Some of the Extension Services' strategic planning goals are to promoting safe and healthy foods that will assist in increasing Alaska's food security and decrease imported foods, enhance agriculture opportunities in Alaska, promote healthy food choices among Alaskans, and increase Alaskans access to agricultural activities.

In response to Senator Dyson's question about why this hasn't been done already, he said they are seeing a grass roots upwelling of interest in the whole local foods movement with groups such as Slow Foods and through authors such as Michael Pollen.

[4:13:19 PM](#)

SENATOR MCGUIRE said Alaska is the leader in so many bad areas and asked how it compares to other jurisdictions in this instance. She would like to see more Alaska foods in the school lunch program and the Division of Corrections and more exporting of salmon and halibut.

MR. SNYDER said Alaska has major challenges in producing more agricultural products compared to other states and increasing local production is not going to be an easy task. The goal is to create efficiencies so healthy food is affordable and available.

SENATOR MCGUIRE said she and Senator Dyson had worked on creating more demand in terms of renewable energy by asking the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) to consider compressed natural gas when they look at new purchases.

[4:18:57 PM](#)

MR. SNYDER said they are looking at a system-wide emphasis and that is why it is important to have momentum and a good comprehensive plan moving forward.

[4:19:23 PM](#)

ED FOGELS, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), supported SCR 1 saying a healthy food industry is vital to our state's food security. He oversees the Division of Agriculture in outreaching to the farming community in Alaska to find out what it is that they can do better to foster a stronger agricultural industry here. In conversation with the Alaska Farm Bureau and other interagency groups the agricultural industry almost always floats to the top as one of the big issues; it is linked to almost every department in state government. Progress has been made by tightening up collaboration with other agencies, whether it's with DEC on pesticide regulation or ADF&G

looking at how to mitigate impacts from bison on the farming community or better control invasive weed spreads, or with the University of Alaska Fairbanks in trying to figure out how to focus agricultural research more on Alaska issues. They look forward to strengthening this collaboration; this resolution will go a long way to strengthen relations with other state and federal agencies as well as other stakeholders.

[4:21:42 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL, finding no further questions, closed public testimony.

SENATOR BISHOP thanked his staff for the presentation and the three young people who testified.

[4:24:26 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL said as a nurse practitioner she studied nutrition and weight management and thought it was a wonderful resolution.

SENATOR DYSON moved to report SCR 1 from committee to the next committee of referral with accompanying fiscal note and individual recommendations.

CHAIR GIESSEL announced that, without objection, SCR 1 passed from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[4:25:40 PM](#)

At ease from 4:25 to 4:27 p.m.

[4:27:13 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Giessel adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 4:27 p.m.