

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

February 5, 2015

8:12 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Bob Lynn, Chair
Representative Wes Keller, Vice Chair
Representative David Talerico
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Max Gruenberg
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Liz Vazquez

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 35

"An Act establishing March 27 as Great Alaska Earthquake Remembrance Day."

- MOVED CSHB 35(STA) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 13

"An Act requiring notice of the postage required to mail an absentee ballot on the envelope provided by the division of elections for returning an absentee ballot; and repealing the authority to include certain material from a political party in the election pamphlet."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 35

SHORT TITLE: GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE REMEMBRANCE DAY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MILLETT

01/21/15	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/15
01/21/15	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/15	(H)	STA
02/05/15	(H)	STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 13

SHORT TITLE: ELECTION PAMPHLETS AND ABSENTEE BALLOTS
SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) LYNN, GARA

01/21/15 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/15
01/21/15 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/15 (H) STA
02/05/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE CHARISSE MILLETT
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented HB 35.

CHUCK VOLANTI
Olympia, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Read his testimony in support of HB 35.

RICHARD KOEHLER
Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys (DGGS)
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 35.

ROBERT L. SCHER, PE, Chair
Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission (ASHSC)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 35.

REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As joint prime sponsor, presented HB 13.

PAMELA GOODE
Delta Junction

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 13.

GAIL FENUMIAI, Director
Division of Elections
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 13.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:12:04 AM](#)

CHAIR BOB LYNN called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:12 a.m. Representatives Keller, Stutes, Talerico, Gruenberg, Kreiss-Tomkins, and Lynn were present at the call to order.

[8:12:27 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:12 a.m.

HB 35-GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE REMEMBRANCE DAY

[8:12:46 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that the first order of business was HOUSE BILL NO. 35, "An Act establishing March 27 as Great Alaska Earthquake Remembrance Day."

[8:13:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHARISSE MILLETT, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented HB 35, which addresses the Great Alaska Earthquake. She stated that the earthquake, which occurred on March 27, 1964, leveled many areas of Southcentral Alaska, decimated the City of Valdez, Alaska, resulted in an estimated \$311 million in property damage, and took 128 lives, 15 from the earthquake and another 113 from the tsunami that followed.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLETT said the intent of the proposed legislation is not about remembering the disaster itself, but highlights the brave efforts of people during the disaster, including first responders and entire communities that came together to help. She said HB 35 would increase awareness and hold March 27 as a day of remembrance; it would allow communities to hold awareness events to pay tribute to those lives that were lost.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLETT reminded everyone that the Great Alaska Earthquake struck at 5:36 p.m., lasted about three minutes and was a magnitude 9.2 quake. She said Alaska averages three to four [earthquakes] a day; the Aleutian Islands are especially active. She indicated that those earthquakes typically range between magnitude 1.5 and 5.4. She noted that HB 35 would remind people to be prepared for such an event as the bill makes

mention of the need for safer environments in which people live. She encouraged committee members to support the proposed legislation.

8:15:40 AM

CHAIR LYNN said he thinks HB 35 would make people aware of what they should be doing to be prepared for an earthquake, which could happen at any moment.

8:16:24 AM

CHUCK VOLANTI read his testimony in support of HB 35. He stated that he is a former Alaska Air National Guard flight dispatcher who began "this journey" because of his love of Alaska, its people, his mission with the Alaska Air National Guard, and a flight crew that was tragically lost. He thanked the prime sponsor for bringing HB 35 forward, calling the proposed legislation "history-making" and "time-honored," because it finally would honor past generations represented by thousands of Alaskans who gave selfless sacrifice by placing others before themselves. He indicated that today, history owes much to those people.

MR. VOLANTI said last session the legislature paved the way for HB 35 by sponsoring House Joint Resolution 23, proclaiming March 27, 2014, as "Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day" to honor the fiftieth anniversary of the quake. He recollected that during a House State Affairs Standing Committee hearing on January 28, 2014, it became apparent there was a desire for an annual day of recognition; however, it was not legally possible to set aside a day in perpetuity under a resolution, as it would require a bill. He thanked the committee for pursuing the plea for permanent legislation.

MR. VOLANTI continued reading his testimony, sharing his experience during the earthquake, as follows:

On the evening of March 27, 1964, I was the Alaska Air National Guard's flight dispatcher coordinating flight operations at Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage. We were a small unit, with ten C123-J aircraft and enough flight crews to put them in the air at any given time. The Guard's mission was to mitigate civil emergencies whenever and where ever the mission took us, and very soon we would be severely tested.

The magnitude 9.2 Good Friday Earthquake that struck at 5:36 pm was the largest ever in recorded history. It cast a pall of death and destruction across thousands of square miles of pristine landscapes, lasting close to four minutes where seconds seemed like hours.

I have been asked many times to describe what that experience was like. ... Most of us know what a bull riding contest looks like: A rider desperately doing everything possible to stay the required eight seconds, as he sits atop this massive, jumping, jolting, and twisting beast. That is what it was like and what I experienced, along with countless thousands of Alaskans, as it lasted not eight seconds, but for close to four minutes.

[8:18:43 AM](#)

When it was over, Governor William Egan immediately activated all Guard units. Within the hour, military members were converging on Kulis Air National Guard Base. Without hesitation, we began dispersing troops into neighboring communities to recover casualties, tend to those who were suffering, free those who were trapped in the rubble of their surroundings, and to ensure civil order. Few of us sat around a conference table planning. As pilots and co-pilots began arriving, they were anxious to take to the air to get to those areas and people most in need. Communications were difficult and darkness was upon us. Through the night we gathered what vital information we could and began loading supplies, equipment, and putting necessary personnel on standby as we awaited first light. When dawn finally came, we put our planes in the air.

During those days our administrative flight operations office consisted of ... a flight crew of four personnel. I am the sole surviving member; the others perished three weeks later during a quake-related humanitarian relief mission. That's when their aircraft tragically crashed on takeoff from the City of Valdez. Also lost in this tragedy was the State of Alaska's first ever appointed Alaska National Guard Adjutant General, Major General Thomas P. Carroll.

Because we were a small unit, we operated more like close family than a formal military command. Losing these men was like losing family; they were selfless, dedicated, and committed to duty - patriots all.

The scope of this quake is legendary, and nothing has had more impact on Alaska or its people. All were forever changed. Many towns were destroyed - Valdez, Seward, Portage, Girdwood, Chenega Village - and those towns suffered numerous fatalities. Anchorage sustained unimaginable devastation. The infrastructure was in shambles; the quake destroyed hundreds of dwellings and businesses and created numerous landslides throughout the area. A renowned neighborhood, "Turnagain by the Sea," was decimated when several residential blocks collapsed onto the mudflats of Turnagain Arm and Cook Inlet. So much more could be said but can be seen elsewhere in all forms of written and electronic media.

8:20:56 AM

In the end, as devastating and ravaging as the quake and tsunamis were, ... [they were] not the main focus of this event. The cornerstone is and remains the Alaskan people of the day and how they all rallied together without hesitation. First responders came from all walks of life, beginning with your next door neighbor, firefighters, police officers, [Alaska] State Troopers, members of the Army Corp of Engineers, medics, doctors, nurses, municipal workers, Army and Air National Guard units, and many others too numerous to mention. All these people displayed a strong will of resilience, resolve, tenacity, and self-sacrifice. Like the Phoenix of old, standing shoulder to shoulder they arose from the ashes of death, destruction, and despair to rebuild their lives, cities, towns, villages and communities, so that all those to follow would have a better life.

And again, I say history owes much to these people of yesteryear. What a thriving state of Alaska and its citizens enjoy today is because they stand on the shoulders of those giants of the past. Their selfless sacrifices paid honor to the future. Now it's up to us to pay honor to those of the past. We should never forget, never take for granted, and always honor them.

HB 35 accomplishes that. As a former member of the Alaska Air National Guard, I dedicate my efforts to the memory of all who perished, suffered great loss, and to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, and always remembering the families they left behind.

8:22:22 AM

In closing, I would ask for one consideration that the title of HB 35 be amended to read, "Great Alaska Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day." Good Friday gives recognition to the actual day and holiday on which it occurred, connects the title to the initial legislation HJR 23, entitled, "Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day," and finally, across this great state and nation, is meaningful to all people of faith.

MR. VOLANTI announced that on March 27, at 5:36 p.m., annually and in perpetuity, church bells would ring across Alaska. He explained that he had spoken with the Catholic Archbishop of Alaska, Roger Schwietz, and the [Russian] Orthodox Bishop, David Mahaffey, who committed that their over 200 combined churches would toll the bells "to honor those we have spoken of here today." He thanked the committee for hearing his testimony and offered to answer questions.

8:23:23 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER thanked Mr. Volanti for his service in the Alaska Air National Guard, and he opined that Mr. Volanti's suggestion for changing the name of the day was a good one, because everyone remembers the earthquake by that name.

8:23:56 AM

CHAIR LYNN asked Mr. Volanti what the structural damage was to the runways at Kullis Air National Guard Base or Anchorage International Airport.

MR. VOLANTI answered that there were cracks and crevices in the tarmac but nothing that prevented aircraft from taking off. He added that some hangars were damaged and a huge water tower came out of the ground eight feet. He said the Anchorage International Tower collapsed, resulting in the death of one person and two people being trapped in the rubble. The National Guard rescued the two who were trapped. The loss of the tower interrupted all civilian incoming air traffic. He described the

scene as chaotic and said there were no manuals written to guide people through the ordeal, thus everyone did what he/she thought needed to be done at the time.

MR. VOLANTI continued as follows:

The Army National Guard was getting off duty, after their two weeks of training, and some of those folks were Natives, and I know they were going back to the villages that they came from, and I saw the faces of them as they returned back into that operation room, knowing they had to go back to duty and not knowing the fate of their own families. But they did that.

MR. VOLANTI said the National Guard made "a massive coordination effort" with many civilian entities.

[8:27:42 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN remarked that evidence of the earthquake still remains where the land fell in Girdwood. He related that he had landed in Alaska three days after the earthquake and underwent Arctic training at a military base and there were significant aftershocks at that time. He said he saw the Alaska National Guard guarding buildings from looters on Fourth Avenue in Anchorage. He remarked that the earthquake falls into the same category of other major events in life a person never forgets.

[8:29:32 AM](#)

MR. VOLANTI apologized if his testimony may have rambled, but explained that, to himself, the recounting of the event is still very emotional.

[8:29:49 AM](#)

RICHARD KOEHLER, Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys (DGGS), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), testified that he serves as the state earthquake geologist in the Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) and represents the governor on the Alaska Seismic Hazard Safety Commission (ASHSC). He said the proposed legislation would provide the means to recognize the 1964 earthquake as one of the most powerful ever recorded in the world, as well as to recognize its role in unifying Alaskans in the difficult time that followed the event.

MR. KOEHLER said the earthquake was associated with tremendous damage and over 130 fatalities related to ground shaking, land sliding, tsunami, and other hazards distributed across Southcentral Alaska. He echoed Mr. Volanti's testimony regarding the landslides that affected the Turnagain Heights neighborhood in Anchorage, and he said there was catastrophic damage done in the Fourth Street area downtown. He said tsunami waves devastated communities, including Valdez, Seward, and Kodiak, with costly impacts to fishing fleets and transportation and supply chain infrastructure.

MR. KOEHLER stated that in the decades following the event, Alaska communities adopted stringent standards that exceeded the Uniform Building Code and rezoned the tsunami inundation areas. He said human disaster memory is short-lived, and appropriate seismic hazard mitigation measures are not universally applied. For example, many older schools and other important buildings are still not adequately designed to withstand strong ground shaking. He said building permits have recently been issued in areas susceptible to landslide. Mr. Koehler said although the possibility of a repeat of the 1964 event is not likely in the near future, a magnitude 8 is entirely possible anywhere in the south part of the state. Further, any other fault lines that are "relatively unsteadied" are capable of causing damaging earthquakes.

[8:31:55 AM](#)

MR. KOEHLER stated that the 2002 Denali fault earthquake, which was a magnitude 7.9, as well as the 2013 "event" near Craig, Alaska, are sobering reminders of the potential for future damaging events.

[8:32:09 AM](#)

MR. KOEHLER said last year, during the 50th anniversary of the 1964 earthquake, many events were designed to increase public awareness and preparedness for future potentially damaging earthquakes. He said the events helped planners, developers, and the general public build a better resilience to Alaska's seismic hazards. He opined that HB 35 would provide an annual reminder of the state's exposure to earthquakes and facilitate continued earthquake education and awareness. He said this reminder would ensure continued programs and events, which provide the public with the knowledge of what to do during an earthquake; it would help in the planning of tsunami evacuation routes and drills; and it would assist in the design of

infrastructure. Mr. Koehler stated that adoption of HB 35 would lead to safer communities, a reduction in the number of lives lost during earthquakes, and result in faster social and economic recovery in the aftermath of a future damaging earthquake.

8:33:15 AM

MR. KOEHLER, regarding Mr. Volanti's recommendation to amend HB 35 to add the words "Good Friday" to the name, related that in recent scientific literature the event has been referred to as "the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake." He said that is the most common name currently; however, he said he understands and appreciates that the Good Friday name is embedded in many people's minds. Regarding the ringing of bells, he related that he was in San Francisco for the one-hundred year anniversary of the Great 1906 Earthquake, and all the fire houses rang their bells very early in the morning, and they ran the horse-drawn cars down the street. He said that event had an emotional impact on many people. He stated support for the idea to sound the bells. He concluded by stating he thinks HB 35 is a great bill that raises awareness of earthquakes.

8:35:03 AM

ROBERT L. SCHER, PE, Chair, Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission (ASHSC), emphasized his appreciation in the way in which the sponsor and Mr. Volanti captured the significance and effect of the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake on Good Friday. He stated that without question, that earthquake and subsequent recovery effort represents one of the defining moments in Alaska statehood. He said the significance of the earthquake went beyond the borders of Alaska and time: it greatly affected the science of geology and seismic engineering, in terms of demonstrating the massive potential for destruction of a great subduction zone earthquake; it helped to solidify the theory of plate tectonics; and it effected the engineering of structures, land use planning, and the idea of predicting the potential for ground shaking and failure when considering building codes.

MR. SCHER stated that the earthquake was an important factor in the federal adoption of the National Earthquake Reduction Program in the early '70s, which led to the formation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He said the lessons provided from that earthquake are still applicable today and should be remembered. He said that as Chair Lynn pointed out, Alaska is one of the most seismically active places in the world

and certainly the most active in the U.S., and the 1964 earthquake is one of the strongest recorded on earth. He echoed Mr. Koehler's remark that Alaska may not see another earthquake of that magnitude "in our lifetime," but pointed out that recent earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand, Italy, and China have illustrated the destruction and devastation from earthquakes of magnitudes of 6 and above. He offered his understanding that the earthquake in Christchurch was a magnitude 6.3 and resulted in close to 200 deaths, and the one in Italy was also a magnitude 6.3. He said, "There were over 300 deaths associated with earthquakes." He related that in 2014, Alaska had over five earthquakes in greater than magnitude 6. He said three of them occurred in remote parts of the state, but one occurred close to Fairbanks, and another close to Anchorage. If the two earthquakes near cities had been any closer to those cities, they could have resulted in destruction.

MR. SCHER said the first of ASHSC's statutory powers and duties is to work with the governor and the legislature to find ways to mitigate the hazard or the risk to the population and the state's infrastructure. He said he thinks the most practical and cost-effective way to reduce the risk of a future earthquake to public safety is through the continuation of education outreach and awareness. He said HB 35 will not only honor those who lost their lives in the 1964 earthquake, but also will go a long way in helping the commission spread awareness, which can save lives.

[8:41:21 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN, after ascertaining that no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 35.

[8:41:38 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER asked for the prime sponsor's feedback regarding Mr. Volanti's suggestion for a title change. He said he thinks there are many Alaskans who think of the earthquake as the Good Friday earthquake.

[8:42:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLETT said she was sure Bishop Edward Burns would love to have "Good Friday" in the title of HB 35; therefore, she stated that she would not [oppose] an amendment.

[8:42:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER moved to adopt Amendment 1, as follows:

Page 1, line 1:

Between "Great Alaska" and "Earthquake
Remembrance Day"
Insert "Good Friday"

[8:43:23 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG moved to adopt a conceptual amendment to Amendment 1, to conform the same language throughout the bill. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

CHAIR LYNN announced that there being no objection, Amendment 1, as amended, was adopted.

[8:44:19 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER moved to report HB 35, Version 29-LS0212\W, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection, HB 35(STA) passed from the House State Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:44:39 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:45 a.m. to 8:47 a.m.

HB 13-ELECTION PAMPHLETS AND ABSENTEE BALLOTS

[8:47:35 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that the final order of business was HOUSE BILL NO. 13, "An Act requiring notice of the postage required to mail an absentee ballot on the envelope provided by the division of elections for returning an absentee ballot; and repealing the authority to include certain material from a political party in the election pamphlet."

[8:47:54 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER moved to adopt the proposed committee (CS) substitute Version 29-LS0091\E, Bullard, 2/3/15, as a work draft.

8:48:10 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG objected for the purpose of discussion.

8:48:20 AM

REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA, Alaska State Legislature, as joint prime sponsor, presented HB 13. He acknowledged Chair Lynn as the other joint prime sponsor. He said the state election pamphlet allows each political party up to two pages in the election pamphlet, at a cost of \$600 per page, which he said is a nominal fee that covers the cost of printing and publishing those pages. Typically, those pages have been used to state the party's position; however, in the 2014 election, an attack advertisement ("ad") was placed for the first time. He said he thinks that depending upon who the chairs of political parties are in the future, Alaska can expect to see that course of conduct on a regular basis. He said this is a non-partisan issue. Representative Gara said there are plenty of attack ads on television and radio during the election season, but he does not think they should be funded by the state in the election pamphlet, which he characterized as "more of an information guide."

8:50:11 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARA said Version E would delete language in law that allows parties to buy two pages in the election pamphlet. He said, in that the fee goes to the publication and distribution of the pamphlets, the Division of Elections would not lose money. He said neither he nor Chair Lynn want to make this issue partisan.

8:52:00 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARA referred to language [of Section 1 of the original bill version], which would have required the division to print how much postage is necessary to mail a ballot back to the Division of Elections on the return envelope. He explained that the cost is often more than just one stamp, and the United States Post Office (USPS) normally delivers those ballots, but then the division must pay for the underpaid postage. However, he said that part of the bill has been dropped in Version E, because the joint prime sponsors feel that the issue could be addressed within the division.

8:53:59 AM

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN said he thinks the proposed legislation is good. He stated his assumption that probably 95 percent of all candidates purchase two pages in the election pamphlet on which to publish their biographies and political platform. He called this good advertising, because he opined that people pay more attention to the election pamphlet than they do to junk mail. He offered his understanding that a candidate can "say almost anything."

[8:55:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER said the bill makes him uncomfortable. He said Representative Gara implied that the state subsidized the ads from political parties, but he said that the ad states clearly which party has paid for it. He asked whether Representative Gara was saying that the disclaimers are a lie or implying that the value of the ad was "a whole lot more" than \$600.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA clarified what he had meant to say was that the cost of the election pamphlet on the whole is more than the fees charged to publish it; therefore, the state loses a little money. He said Chair Lynn is correct that the voters rely on the election pamphlet as an informational pamphlet and the question is whether attack ads should be included.

[8:57:10 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN interjected that he does not see the proposed legislation as prohibiting attack ads, but as prohibiting an ad by a political party, whether it is an attack or not. He said an ad may be seen as an attack in the eyes of the beholder, but not by someone else.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA said that is correct. He said the proposed legislation is not intended to define what an attack is, but will take out the section that allows parties to pay for those two pages, now that it has been seen how they can be used [negatively], perhaps by all parties.

[8:58:00 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER opined that debate and interaction between the parties are beneficial. He asked whether there are other publications in the state that sell ads because there may be

further implications. He stated that he does not see the real advantage of avoiding conflict and interaction.

8:59:15 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARA said this would not be a slippery slope because "this is the only publication where we want this rule to apply." He offered his understanding that there is no other state-funded publication that is as relied upon as the election pamphlet, and said he thinks the public has a distaste for negative ads.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER suggested that some senior centers subsidized by the state may have fliers or newspapers that are published.

9:00:00 AM

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES cited the bill title, which read: "An Act repealing the authority to include certain material from a political party in the election pamphlet." She asked whether the intent of HB 13 was to exempt all ads from political parties, or just certain ads.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA answered that current law allows political parties to purchase up to two pages in the election pamphlet. He noted that the law is contained in the statutes listed [on page 1, line 4, of Version E]. Those three statutes would be removed under HB 13; therefore, political parties would be barred from taking out ad space. He added that candidates would still be allowed to advertise. He said candidates are not allowed to attack their opponents when they issue a personal statement; that is a guideline from the division.

9:01:24 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARA, in response to Representative Keller, said no one else can buy an ad in the pamphlet. In response to Chair Lynn, he said a candidate cannot buy an ad; he/she only can buy space for a position statement. He offered further details regarding the restrictions on the candidates' position statements.

CHAIR LYNN asked for confirmation that what he puts in the election campaign to further his own campaign is not considered to be an ad.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA answered that that is a statement regulated by the Division of Elections; it includes a statement of so many words, a photo, a biography, and a web site. Further, the division allows a "pro" and a "con" on the propositions. There are no graphics or "ugly pictures of the other side" allowed.

9:04:00 AM

PAMELA GOODE stated that she agrees with the joint-prime sponsor regarding the ads in the back [of the election pamphlet]. She said she noticed that those ads were restricted to political parties; political groups could not utilize them. She posited that is a way the state is subsidizing political parties and not groups. Further, she said when candidates participate in the pamphlet they are clearly notified that they cannot attack opponents; there are guidelines by which they must abide.

9:05:27 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG directed attention to AS 15.58.060, which sets forth the charges, and he observed that the statute was last amended 18 years ago. He said the amount it costs a state representative to have his/her name published in the pamphlet is only \$100, and he would like to know what the inflation has been in that time, and he suggested that a small increase in the amount charged may be in order.

9:07:00 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARA said the candidate filing fee is \$100, a political party is charged \$600 per page, and there are some other non-legislative candidates that pay \$300. He said he does not know the inflation rate, but reiterated that the fees collected do not entirely cover the cost of producing the election pamphlet.

9:08:09 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG mentioned that most races are won in the primary because most districts are one-party districts. He said, unfortunately, candidate pages are not allowed in the primary election pamphlet so the public cannot learn about the candidate, only about the ballot propositions.

CHAIR LYNN asked whether Representative Gruenberg was considering an amendment to the bill because the subject was off-topic.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG said he was considering one.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA replied that although he understands the idea, adding candidate information to primary election pamphlets would cost even more money. He said he does not think this is the right year to introduce that idea given the budget deficit.

CHAIR LYNN indicated he did not want to bring that topic into discussion.

[9:10:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER asked Representative Gara whether he knew how much savings there would be with four less pages to print.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA offered his understanding that the \$600 per page cost roughly equals the cost of the printing and publication of those pages; therefore, "it's a wash."

[9:11:09 AM](#)

GAIL FENUMIAI, Director, Division of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, in response to Chair Lynn, stated that the division would implement the statutes at the will of the committee. She said she was pleased that Section 1 was removed from the original bill version, resulting in Version E, because it would have been problematic for the division. She relayed that the division does provide a notice in the packet to the voters identifying how much postage is required to return the voter ballot back to the division. In response to Chair Lynn, she confirmed that the division wants all ballots to be counted, and stated that the USPS does not return a ballot for insufficient postage and the division bears the cost, but that happens infrequently. In response to another question, she said the cost to the division to cover insufficient postage is nominal.

[9:13:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG asked Ms. Fenumiai what the rate of inflation would have been since 1996.

MS. FENUMIAI answered she does not know. To a follow-up question, she said she did not have the cost of monies that were received from the 2014 pamphlet, but could look up that information. Nevertheless, she said, the total cost of the

General Election pamphlet for 2014 was \$256,090, which included printing, postage, staff travel, and a temporary worker to assist with the publication of the pamphlet.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG said last year the legislature passed a law that put this biographical information in the primary on line, and asked whether that law had been implemented.

MS. FENUMIAI answered yes. She said the division provides any candidate information on the division's web site at least two weeks before the primary election.

[9:14:47 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN asked whether the information put on line by the division includes the political party advertisements.

MS. FENUMIAI answered that the entire pamphlet is available on line.

[9:15:01 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG questioned whether there may be a significant number of people who do not have access to the Internet and, thus, only have access to the printed document.

MS. FENUMIAI said she did not know. In response to a follow-up question, she said she did not know whether that information is attainable.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG, in response to Chair Lynn, said he thinks his questions are germane to the subject matter.

[9:16:05 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN, after ascertaining that no one further wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 13.

[9:16:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER requested that the committee hold HB 13 in order to have the consideration of several members he observed were missing.

[9:17:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG removed his objection to the motion to adopt Version E. [There being no further objection, Version E was before the committee.]

[9:17:39 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that HB 13 was held over.

[9:17:58 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.