

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARCTIC**

February 19, 2015

11:16 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Cathy Giessel, Co-Chair  
Senator Lesil McGuire, Co-Chair  
Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Senator Donald Olson  
Senator Click Bishop  
Senator John Coghill  
Senator Berta Gardner

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 1(EDA) AM  
"An Act declaring the Arctic policy of the state."

HEARD AND HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 1

SHORT TITLE: STATE ARCTIC POLICY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) HERRON

01/21/15	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/15
01/21/15	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/15	(H)	EDA, STA
01/27/15	(H)	EDA AT 10:15 AM BARNES 124
01/27/15	(H)	Heard & Held
01/27/15	(H)	MINUTE(EDA)
02/05/15	(H)	EDA AT 11:30 AM BARNES 124
02/05/15	(H)	Moved CSHB 1(EDA) Out of Committee
02/05/15	(H)	MINUTE(EDA)
02/06/15	(H)	EDA RPT CS(EDA) 1DP 5NR
02/06/15	(H)	DP: HERRON

02/06/15 (H) NR: JOHNSON, TILTON, WOOL, ORTIZ,  
STUTES  
02/10/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106  
02/10/15 (H) Moved CSHB 1(EDA) Out of Committee  
02/10/15 (H) MINUTE(STA)  
02/11/15 (H) STA RPT CS(EDA) 3DP 1NR 2AM  
02/11/15 (H) DP: TALERICO, STUTES, LYNN  
02/11/15 (H) NR: KELLER  
02/11/15 (H) AM: KREISS-TOMKINS, GRUENBERG  
02/13/15 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)  
02/13/15 (H) VERSION: CSHB 1(EDA) AM  
02/18/15 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
02/18/15 (S) ARC,STA  
02/19/15 (S) ARC AT 11:15 AM BUTROVICH 205

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of HB 1.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[11:16:31 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR LESIL MCGUIRE** called the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic meeting to order at 11:16 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Hoffman, Stevens, Coghill, Co-Chair Giessel, and Co-Chair McGuire. Senators Olson and Bishop arrived shortly thereafter.

#### **Video: "The Arctic"**

[11:17:22 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE** said the committee meeting would begin by watching a video entitled "The Arctic", produced by the Institute of the North, in conjunction with others. The movie portrays the beauty and lifestyle of the people in Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow. It depicts the need to consider the voices of the people in the Arctic in all resource development decisions.

[11:26:26 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE** noted the film is available to all who would like it. She noted recent decisions by the federal government that do not include Alaskans. She shared the theme of the video,

"We're meeting you; are you meeting us half way?" She stressed that the federal government must listen to the people of Alaska.

She mentioned a resolution on the Senate floor where there was testimony in Barrow that the Native people living there would like to see the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) drained because elders know there has been forty years of success in maintaining the Porcupine Caribou herd as well as success in growing jobs. She concluded that the people in the video are saying, "Please listen." She thanked the Institute of the North for assisting the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission (AAPC) in this endeavor.

### HB 1-STATE ARCTIC POLICY

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE stated that the committee would take up HB 1, an Act declaring the Arctic policy for the state. [CSHB 1(EDA)AM was before the committee.] She related that HB 1 and its companion bill SB 16 are the products of the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission's work over the last two years. She said she and Representative Bob Herron served as co-chairs of AAPC. She noted that Senators Olson, Stevens, and Giessel also served on the commission and worked on the bill.

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE noted the presence of Senator Olson and Senator Stevens.

CO-CHAIR GIESSEL moved to adopt the proposed SCS for CSHB 1, version 29-LS0013\S, as the working document. There being no objection, version S was before the committee.

11:30:07 AM

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON, Alaska State Legislature, sponsor of HB 1, explained that the bill is AAPC's statutory responsibility to deliver a bill that all 26 members worked on. The report has three products, the Final Report, the Implementation Plan, and Executive Summary. He said HB 1 puts people first and will benefit the entire state. It strengthens Alaska's position in the Arctic with the federal government and other Arctic nations, and will lead to economic benefit in the Arctic region.

He said there are eight findings in Section 1 of the bill. The one that is the most important is that Alaskans are Arctic experts. He related in Section 2, the bill declares the Arctic policy will uphold the state's commitment to economically vibrant communities sustained by development activities consistent with the state's responsibility for a health

environment, collaborate with all appropriate entities to achieve transparency and inclusiveness in Arctic decision making, enhance Alaska security, and strengthen the resilience of communities and integrate local knowledge. The Arctic policy of the state includes promoting economic development, addressing the infrastructure gap in the Arctic, supporting healthy communities, and strengthening Alaskan Arctic science and research.

[11:32:08 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON stated support for version S. He clarified that on page 4, line 22, the words "resource management decision making" were deleted. He said he thought the commission's target was the federal government. He said he explained to Secretary Jewell that the state is the local jurisdiction and should be included. In spite of concern for that part of the sentence, he said he supports the SCS.

[11:34:03 AM](#)

SENATOR OLSON pointed out that there also has been a deletion related to the ratification of the Law of the Sea. He requested Representative Herron's comments.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON said there was not unanimous support by the commission to include that provision, however, there was a healthy dialogue. In the end, it is an issue before the Senate. He concluded that it is out of place in this document which relates to Arctic policy. He agreed that the Law of the Sea is important to many in the state, but Alaska needs to address its relationship with the federal government.

SENATOR HOFFMAN referred to Representative Herron's comments on resource management decisions and said the federal government is going to contact and involve people of the Arctic, particularly those in the Northwest Arctic Borough and in the North Slope. He suggested there should be a dialogue whether that wording should be included or not in the document. By excluding it, it seems that the federal government, on those issues, are going to contact the people of the Arctic. He emphasized that the federal government should also consult the state of Alaska.

[11:36:20 AM](#)

SENATOR COGHILL agreed. He said line 23 (b) is important. It is not a subset, but a main point. "Enhances security of the Arctic Region" would be a subset of that main point. He opined it is emphatically stated. He said he could go either way on it.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON pointed out that there has been vigorous debate in previous hearings. He recalled the model legislation which became HB 1 and SB 16 was not about coastal zone management. He noted the deletion is not a deal breaker. He emphasized that Arctic policy is about the state dealing with the federal government and other international countries, not internal issues.

[11:38:51 AM](#)

SENATOR OLSON spoke as the senator most impacted by federal decisions. He concurred with Senator Hoffman's comments.

SENATOR COGHILL referred to the intent language on page 1 of the bill. It includes the entirety of the state and residents of the state. He suggested it should be in the codifying section of the bill.

SENATOR GIESSEL asked for clarification.

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE explained that the committee is working off of the S draft and comparing it to I.A version of the bill [that passed the House.] The language being discussed is found in version S on page 4, lines 21 and 22 (E). In version I.A it is found on page 4, lines 23-25. The comparison is between the old language "to encourage more effective integration of local and traditional knowledge into conventional science, research, and resource management decision making," and the new draft, which deletes "resource management decision making." She summarized that Senator Hoffman requested the old version remain.

SENATOR COGHILL said he missed the point and was thinking about including the state. However, the sponsor is saying it refers to strengthening the debate within the state.

SENATOR HOFFMAN asked how to include the idea, but not in this section, in order to make the point at the federal level that the state needs to be consulted on resource management issues. He stressed the importance of the state being at the table. He added that it was the message at the meeting in Kotzebue.

[11:42:40 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON pointed out that many repeated this message to Secretary Jewell in private and in public discussions. The national strategy for the Arctic Region and the latest presidential executive order emphatically state that they will consult and have dialogue with the state of Alaska and Alaskan indigenous people. He added that Alaska has internal

debate about resource management decision making, but this wording is a clear message that the feds "will do what they said they would do." He agreed that it is not elsewhere in the uncodified section.

SENATOR HOFFMAN maintained that it needs to be included somewhere. He stated that the federal government is going to consult the indigenous people on many different levels. We, as a state, want to also be at the table along with everyone else regarding resource development. Excluding the wording gives more power to the indigenous people when dealing with the federal government.

SENATOR GIESSEL said she did not see that element being excluded. She opined that lines 8 - 22 on page 4 all focus on the notion to value and strengthen the resilience of communities and respect and integrate the culture, language, and knowledge of Arctic peoples. They all emphasize a seat at the table, especially (C) - employ integrated, strategic planning that considers scientific, local, and traditional knowledge. She said to call it out in terms of management decision making, raises concerns of the interpretation. She suggested leaving it broader.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON referred to page 3, lines 13 - 15, the "need to collaborate with all levels of government, tribes, industry, and nongovernmental organizations to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic decision making." In the codified section, all subjects are included. He said the commission learned a new phrase in Kotzebue; a new definition of "non-government organizations" is called ENGO's, with the E standing for "environment." He said ENGO's are not included in this section.

[11:47:19 AM](#)

SENATOR OLSON pointed out if you don't consult the local people, you don't get all the opinions. The legislators and the Alaska Federation of Natives were of one mindset; however, the people south of the Brooks Range were not in agreement.

[11:48:09 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE called Senator Bishop's forthcoming amendment - Amendment I.

SENATOR BISHOP moved to adopt conceptual Amendment I, to add a new (G) under Section 2: "Encourage the connection between the state public and private education systems with business,

government, and labor to ensure that state residents are receiving workforce readiness skills throughout the education process."

SENATOR COGHILL objected.

SENATOR BISHOP explained that Amendment I fits into the spirit of the entire bill. He said at the beginning of the meeting, the committee heard numerous indigenous people talk about the value of education and the ability to make a living in the Arctic. He read the amendment: "Encourage the connection between the state public and private education systems with business, government, and labor to ensure that state residents are receiving workforce readiness skills throughout the education process."

He said the state is already doing that but he felt that it was imperative that it is stated in the bill to meet the spirit of the intent of the people living in the Arctic.

[11:49:55 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR GIESSEL countered that the state has no jurisdiction over private education systems. The amendment calls out three entities - business, government, and labor, as though labor were a specific entity when 87 percent of the state is not a member of a labor union. She said she is not sure what government's role in the workforce is. She argued that there are multiple workforce plans in place. She suggested reworking the amendment to call out a continued effort on workforce readiness and the connection between education and business.

SENATOR BISHOP clarified that labor does not imply organized labor. Training plans through the Department of Labor encompass all types of education systems to deliver the workforce; public and private. This is not reinventing the wheel; the delivery mechanisms are in the state. He said his intention is to embed them in the Arctic policy to ensure that all Alaskans have the skills necessary to work in the Arctic.

[11:52:32 AM](#)

At ease

[11:53:26 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE brought the meeting back to order. She said the committee would work on an amendment on workforce development in the Arctic. She recessed the meeting to a call of the chair. [The committee did not reconvene until the next scheduled meeting on 2/26/15.]