

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 24, 2015

3:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mike Dunleavy, Chair
Senator Charlie Huggins, Vice Chair
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Sheri Buretta
John Davies
Lisa Parker
Andrew Teuber

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

ANDREW TEUBER, Chair and President
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and
President and CEO
Kodiak Native Association
Kodiak, Alaska,

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the University
of Alaska Board of Regents.

SHERI BURETTA, Chair
Chugach Alaska Corporation
Eagle River, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

JOHN DAVIES, Member
Fairbanks Assembly
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

LISA PARKER, External Affairs and Government Relations Manager
Apache Corporation
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:31:44 PM](#)

CHAIR MIKE DUNLEAVY called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Huggins, Gardner, Stevens, and Chair Dunleavy.

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS:

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Sheri Buretta
John Davis
Lisa Parker
Andrew Teuber

[3:32:16 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY announced the University of Alaska Board of Regents confirmation hearings.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY noted that the Senate Education Committee reviews the nominees and recommends their appointments to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. The nominees are not decided in this committee, but are forwarded to joint session for confirmation.

He announced the arrival of Senator Giessel.

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ANDREW TEUBER, Chair and President, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, President and CEO, Kodiak Areas Native Association, testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. He shared his personal background and professional history. He said that his reasons for wanting to serve on the

Board of Regents are that, as a parent and citizen of the state, he looks forward to giving back and finding solutions to difficult challenges that lie before the state. He maintained that education and the work that the University System does, and the opportunities it creates for Alaskans, is of vital importance.

SENATOR STEVENS voiced concern about regionalizing the Board of Regents so that designees only represent their regions.

MR. TEUBER said he shares the same concerns about politicizing the appointments. He opined that it would be to the detriment of the system to regionalize the board. The board should be made up of the best individuals, regardless of where they reside.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked how Mr. Teuber received his appointment.

MR. TEUBER said he sought the appointment because he would like to see more educational opportunities for Alaskans and to improve access to post-secondary education. He spoke as a father of three in the hopes that his children achieve their goals and that the UA System is an option.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked if Mr. Teuber has an MBA from the University of Washington.

MR. TEUBER said yes.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked about short-term educational issues to focus on the next three years.

MR. TEUBER replied that he did not anticipate today's economic status. He said he would draw on his experience in Tribal Health to find ways to maximize resources to achieve the university's mission. He would seek more economic opportunities, such as distance delivery of education. Another issue would be to develop a work force for the future.

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SENATOR STEVENS referred to administrative overhead reports which have not been implemented. They concern the growth and cost of university administration. He asked if Mr. Teuber has ideas about fixes for administrative costs.

MR. TEUBER said he recognizes that the overhead has to be reigned-in and made accountable. He said he has been briefed on

the MacTaggart-Rogers and Fisher Reports and is looking at ways to streamline and improve the efficiencies of the statewide administrative functions. He said ensuring that the state is getting their money's worth is important, but so is ensuring that the university has quality leaders.

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SENATOR STEVENS hoped Mr. Teuber would keep the MacTaggart Report and Fisher Report in mind.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY related that the hearing is conducted in accordance with AS 39.05.080 for the purpose of reviewing appointments. The committee will be sending these names forward for consideration of the full legislature sitting in joint session. At that time legislators vote to support or oppose any individual appointee. The process today is an opportunity to hear from and ask questions of the four nominees.

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SHERI BURETTA, Chair, Chugach Alaska Corporation, testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. She shared her background and professional experience. She stated that the reason she wants to serve on the Board of Regents is because the people in the Chugach Region have greatly benefitted by the university system. There have been only two amendments to an agreement and one was for education. The Corporation has invested in education and the university. She compared the Corporation's restructuring to the university's restructuring. She spoke of her experience in the process of restructuring.

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SENATOR STEVENS noted a problem of lack of home-grown teachers. He asked what the university can do to help fill that gap.

MS. BURETTA spoke of challenges and bureaucracy that prevent teachers from going back to their villages. She shared examples of bringing programs into the villages, such as ANSEP.

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SENATOR HUGGINS noted a letter of recommendation for Ms. Burette. He asked to what Ms. Burette owes her educational success.

MS. BURETTA shared her educational history and the fact that she had to work to get to go to the university where she discovered a new world. She spoke of the value of on-the-job training. She

suggested partnering and investing with the university. She concluded that education means control over one's own destiny.

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SENATOR HUGGINS mentioned problems in rural education and asked for a couple of solutions.

MS. BURETTA said one of the dilemmas is drugs and alcohol. The way out of that is to create economic opportunities. Chugach has also established a mechanism for mentoring students.

SENATOR HUGGINS asked about Mt. Edgcumbe.

MS. BURETTA said her mother graduated from there and found success there.

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SENATOR HUGGINS asked for two wishes for education.

MS. BURETTA said good telecommunications and good teachers.

SENATOR GIESSEL thanked Ms. Burette for applying for the board. She asked how doctoral programs can be made affordable. She asked about the WWAMI Program and said the university is looking at removing that funding. She asked how the university can meet those program needs.

MS. BURETTA spoke of Chugach's scholarship program as a means of funding upper-level programs. Due to funding constraints, the upper level scholarships were no longer subsidized at 100 percent, and became competitive. Also, there is the possibility of setting the terms of the scholarship to benefit the state by requiring service in order to reduce the amount owed.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY thanked Ms. Burette.

[4:02:55 PM](#)

JOHN DAVIES, Member, Fairbanks Assembly, testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. He shared his educational and professional background. He noted he has a broad history of public service. He said the university is very important to people in many ways and is an economic engine to the state. He said it is also culturally important.

He said he applied to be on the Board in order to give back to Alaska.

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SENATOR STEVENS asked what Mr. Davies learned during the legislature that will serve him on the State Board.

MR. DAVIES shared that his experience on the finance committee in the legislature and working on the Fairbanks Assembly budget provided a good background for budget work. He learned that a person can get a lot done if they don't care who gets the credit. The key is to respect everyone as an individual and focus on the issues, not the person.

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SENATOR HUGGINS asked about the land grant proposal regarding the university.

MR. DAVIES said during the time of the land grant proposal, the available land was not very valuable.

SENATOR HUGGINS asked if he would support land grants if they were valuable.

MR. DAVIES said yes. He likes President Gamble's proposal. Governor Egan saw land grants as a dedication of funds and believed that the legislature should make the decision. He said he would support land grants if they were for dedicated projects.

SENATOR HUGGINS asked about compensation for leadership and the cost of tuition.

MR. DAVIES say there is little correlation between the two, but there was a perception of there being an issue. The timing was not good. It was the right decision to not accept an increase in the president's salary. He maintained that there is a competitive marketplace when hiring good administrators and the university should pay a competitive rate.

[4:14:40 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGGINS asked why Mr. Davies is a nominee.

MR. DAVIES said he applied for the position. He has had an interest for a while and has been associated with the university for many years.

SENATOR HUGGINS asked about two things that would move the university forward.

MR. DAVIES said one would be to figure out the solution to the budget crisis in a way that does not destroy the quality of education. He said he would also focus on teacher training, especially for teachers of rural Alaska, using research to do so.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked what Mr. Davies thinks about ANSEP.

MR. DAVIES said it is a great program.

[4:18:53 PM](#)

LISA PARKER, External Affairs and Government Relations Manager, Apache Corporation, testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. She shared her public involvement in Alaska, professional career, and education. She described that she wants to serve on the Board of Regents because she wants to work to continue to develop a university that tracks the best. She said she feels she provides a beneficial perspective for the critical years ahead. The university can be key to helping Alaska during these challenging times.

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SENATOR STEVENS asked about the value of the research arm of the university.

MS. PARKER said she supports research because it highlights Alaska and provides assistance and problem solving to corporations. She thought it would be particularly important in the Arctic.

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SENATOR HUGGINS asked about the site of the coal gasification research listed on Ms. Parker's resume.

MS. PARKER said it was for Kenai's nitrogen operation. The plan was to take coal from Usibelli, transport it by rail to Port MacKenzie or to the Port of Anchorage, and then to Kenai to create a value-added product.

SENATOR HUGGINS asked about the challenges to the new power plant for UAF.

MS. PARKER said the issue came up during the February meeting regarding the upgrades. Coal is the main source of fuel. It remains a challenge.

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SENATOR HUGGINS asked why Ms. Parker has key qualities for the board.

MS. PARKER answered she has a love for Alaska and dedication to doing a good job. She added that she has a balanced perspective from all of her experience.

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SENATOR GIESSEL pointed out the board's role is fiduciary. She reiterated her concerns with the WWAMI program's losing funding and tuition increases. She asked what fiduciary role Ms. Parker would play.

MS. PARKER said she would not encourage adding new programs and would work to collaborate to decrease programs. She thought WWAMI was a critical program to Alaska. She noted her experience as a business owner and the skills she has to solve the university's financial problems.

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SENATOR STEVENS noted Ms. Parker came from a historical Alaskan family and asked for her family history.

MS. PARKER related that her family history in Alaska goes back to when her great-great-grandfather helped build Nome and her grandfather was Mayor of Hollis. Her father attended the University of Alaska - Fairbanks in 1947. She said her personal involvement in politics goes back to when she babysat for a legislator. She noted her parents were wonderful role models.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY thanked Ms. Parker.

He said in accordance with AS 14.41.50 the Senate Education Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends their appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration to the University of Alaska Board of Regents: Sheri Buretta, John Davies, Lisa Parker, and Andrew Teuber. This does not reflect the intent by any members to vote for or against the confirmation of the individuals during any further sessions. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

SENATOR GARDNER commented that there is a letter from the UA Faculty and Staff Association requesting that the legislature vet the candidates for a variety of things. She opined that the Governor has done a wonderful job with these four appointments and the state will be well-served by them all.

4:35:13 PM

There being nothing further to come before the committee, Chair Dunleavy adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee at 4:35 p.m.