

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

March 1, 2016

3:34 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Gary Stevens

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 103

"An Act relating to school boards; relating to approval of educational programs at residential psychiatric treatment centers; providing for funding of educational services for students in residential psychiatric treatment centers; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SSSB 103 OUT OF COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 107(EDC) AM

"An Act relating to the composition of the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 191

"An Act relating to disciplinary sanctions imposed by the State Medical Board; restricting employees and representatives of abortion services providers, and affiliates of abortion services providers, from delivering instruction or distributing materials in public schools and providing civil penalties for violations; relating to revocation or suspension of teacher certificates; relating to the receipt of state funds by teachers and school board members; and providing for an effective date."

- REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 103

SHORT TITLE: RESIDENTIAL PSYCHIATRIC EDUCATION FUNDING

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) GIESSEL

04/10/15	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/10/15	(S)	EDC, JUD
02/17/16	(S)	SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE INTRODUCED-REFERRALS
02/17/16	(S)	EDC, JUD
02/25/16	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/25/16	(S)	Heard & Held
02/25/16	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/01/16	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 107

SHORT TITLE: BD OF REGENTS REGIONAL RESIDENCY QUALIF.

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) GATTIS

02/13/15	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/13/15	(H)	EDC
03/18/15	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/18/15	(H)	Heard & Held
03/18/15	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/27/15	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/27/15	(H)	Moved CSHB 107(EDC) Out of Committee
03/27/15	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/30/15	(H)	EDC RPT CS(EDC) NT 5DP 1DNP 1NR
03/30/15	(H)	DP: COLVER, DRUMMOND, TALERICO, VAZQUEZ, KELLER
03/30/15	(H)	DNP: SEATON
03/30/15	(H)	NR: KREISS-TOMKINS
04/14/15	(H)	TRANSMITTED TO (S)
04/14/15	(H)	VERSION: CSHB 107(EDC) AM
04/15/15	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/15/15	(S)	EDC
03/01/16	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN GATTIS, Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 107.

CHRYSTAL RANDOLPH, Staff
Representative Lynn Gattis
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information on SB 107.

JOHN DAVIS, Board Member
University of Alaska Board of Regents
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Expressed concerns about HB 107.

JO HECKMAN, Board Member
University of Alaska Board of Regents
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Expressed concerns about HB 107.

ELIZABETH RIPLEY, representing herself
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 107.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:34:54 PM](#)

CHAIR MIKE DUNLEAVY called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gardner, Giessel, Huggins and Chair Dunleavy. He said the committee will hear two bills today, SB 103 and HB 107. SB 103 was previously heard and public testimony is open.

SB 103-RESIDENTIAL PSYCHIATRIC EDUCATION FUNDING

[3:35:47 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY announced that the first order of business would be SB 103.

He announced public testimony was open and seeing none, closed it.

[3:36:28 PM](#)

At ease

[3:37:00 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY requested a motion to move the bill out of committee.

SENATOR HUGGINS moved to report SSSB 103, version I, from committee with individual recommendations. There being no objection, the motion carried.

[3:37:49 PM](#)

At ease

[3:39:16 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY corrected that SSSB 103 was reported from committee with an attached fiscal note.

SENATOR GARDNER clarified that at a previous meeting she had expressed dismay that the Anchorage School District had not commented on the bill, but she said it was not the fault of the school nor due to the contents in the bill. She said she has now received responses to her questions.

HB 107-BD OF REGENTS REGIONAL RESIDENCY QUALIF.

[3:40:24 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY announced that the final order of business would be HB 107. He noted a zero fiscal note.

[3:40:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN GATTIS, Alaska State Legislature, sponsor of HB 107. She related that the University of Alaska (UA) boasts approximately 32,000 students a year governed by an eleven-member Board of Regents, one of which is a full-time student. She maintained that there has been a lack of representation of the various areas of Alaska for the last century.

She read the mission statement of the University of Alaska: "The University of Alaska inspires learning, advances and disseminates knowledge through teaching, research, and public service emphasizing the North and its diverse peoples." She said in accordance with the university's mission to emphasize the diversity of Alaska's residents, HB 107 calls for change to the composition of UA's Board of Regents.

She noted that currently there is one seat reserved for a student and ten at-large regents who must be a citizen of the United States as well as a resident of Alaska. The bill will change the composition of the board to include geographic representation. If passed, the regents would include one board member from each of the following areas: Fairbanks North Star Borough, Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, City and Borough of Juneau, a resident not from the above areas and not connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks, one student, and four at-large members. This change would reflect the diversity of Alaska's population and bring more voices to the table on university policies.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS noted a handout that provides the history of the Board of Regents. She said that the Mat-Su Valley had never been represented until the Governor recently appointed Dr. Deena Paramo to the board. She concluded that her goal is to bring diversity to the board long term.

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CHRYSTAL RANDOLPH, Staff, Representative Lynn Gattis, Alaska State Legislature, presented information on SB 107. She read the sectional analysis:

Section 1:

AS 14.40.130(a). Repeals and Reenacts Composition of the Board of Regents

Defines the Board of Regents by requiring:

1. One resident of Fairbanks North Star Borough
2. One resident of Municipality of Anchorage
3. One resident of Matanuska-Susitna Borough
4. One resident of Kenai Peninsula Borough
5. One resident of City and Borough of Juneau
6. One resident of a community that is not described in (1) through (5) of this subsection and is not connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks;
7. One student regent.
8. Four at large members that are Alaskan Residents.

Section 2:

AS 14.40.130. Adds new subsections
Regents Qualifications and Board Membership

Regents must be a resident of region for at least two years prior to appointment. A regent will complete their term if they fail to maintain residency in a region.

Section 3:

Uncodified law. TRANSITION

Regents currently serving on the board will finish their terms and as vacancies arise the Governor shall make appointments that fulfill the residency requirements of this Act.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked whether the four at-large members could also be from the Mat-Su or must be from outside of the seven other categories.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS replied that the four at-large members can come from any region.

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SENATOR GARDNER pointed out that the Court System has five judicial districts. She asked if the sponsor considered that option.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS explained that she did not think of the court when she considered the regional areas and what they bring. She looked at where the regents came from in the past and who was left out. She said she also considered community size.

[3:47:58 PM](#)

SENATOR GARDNER asked where applicants came from when the Governor was looking for appointees.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS said during last year's public testimony, there was concern about the struggle to find representation from some areas. She opined that now is the right time to provide the opportunity to bring Alaskans together in light of this budget crisis.

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SENATOR GARDNER wondered what would happen if no good, strong applicants came forth in order to meet the regional requirements.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS said the bill does not focus on whether there were good, strong folks in areas. She maintained that each area has strong candidates.

SENATOR GARDNER agreed they are everywhere, but they may not apply.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS said that conversation did not come up in the House, but the Regents expressed concern about it.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY opened public testimony.

[3:51:18 PM](#)

JOHN DAVIS, Board Member, University of Alaska Board of Regents, expressed concerns about HB 107. He opined that regional regent applicants might not consider the university "one university" and that they may believe they only represent their region. He also said he is concerned that when there is a vacancy it may be difficult to find someone to fill it. He said it is important to give the Governor lee-way and not require specific regions be represented in that case. He concluded it may be hard to find an applicant from some regions.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY summarized the first concern if the bill is regionalized, there might be regents who represent their area first, rather than the university.

MR. DAVIS said yes.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY thought that could happen now. He wondered if there have been examples of that happening, currently. He asked if the selection process was previously regionalized.

MR. DAVIS said it was not regionalized previously, but people had the view that they were representing a certain region.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY thought it might have been a personal view held by a regent.

[3:56:07 PM](#)

JO HECKMAN, Board Member, University of Alaska Board of Regents, echoed concerns expressed by Mr. Davis. She said she has not experienced the "regionalism" mentality as a board member. It has been understood that there is a greater good over the last four years.

She appreciated the goal of diversity in HB 107. She listed areas represented and noted some members work in a variety of areas. She described the diversity on the current board. She did not know what additional gains could be had by HB 107, in terms of diversity.

She concluded that it is irrelevant where members come from as long as they advocate for the university as a whole. There is no need to focus on regions. She questioned who from rural areas would serve for eight years. She concluded it might be hard on the board to wait until the right person from the right region is found.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked who Ms. Heckman means by "we."

MS. HECKMAN said she meant a group of Alaskans; the Board does not have a choice in the matter, but would like to see the best people serve on the Board.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY commended Representative Gattis for looking for people from rural Alaska, as they are often overlooked and have unique needs. He opined that the intent of the at-large members might be for that purpose.

SENATOR GARDNER thanked Ms. Heckman. She referred to the current statute's language regarding student regent qualifications. She asked how a student who is enrolled for four years and remains a full-time student can serve for eight years.

MS. HECKMAN corrected that the student serves a two-year term.

[4:06:27 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked how long Ms. Heckman served.

MS. HECKMAN said she was appointed in 2011.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY asked if anyone has resigned from the Board.

MS. HECKMAN listed several instances where regents stepped down.

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ELIZABETH RIPLEY, representing herself, testified in support of HB 107. She provided her background and reasons why diversity is important on the Board of Regents. She described the population growth in the Mat-Su Valley, including student enrollment. She voiced concern about the lack of representation by people from the Mat-Su Valley. She urged passage of the bill.

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CHAIR DUNLEAVY left public testimony open.

He held HB 107 in committee.

SENATOR GARDNER requested information on how many applicants there were last year and this year when the Governor had the opportunity to make appointments to the Board. She said she is concerned about getting a pool of applicants that are available, interested, and qualified.

CHAIR DUNLEAVY thought there might be a different pool of applicants in the future due to HB 107.

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There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Dunleavy adjourned the Senate Education Committee at 4:10 p.m.