

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

February 28, 2017

3:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Chair
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, Vice Chair
Representative Chris Tuck
Representative Adam Wool
Representative Chris Birch
Representative DeLena Johnson
Representative Gary Knopp

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Andy Josephson (alternate)
Representative Chuck Kopp (alternate)

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 97

"An Act repealing the insurance tax credit for gifts to the Alaska fire standards council; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 82

"An Act relating to vehicle registration; relating to off-road system restricted noncommercial drivers' licenses; relating to off-highway commercial drivers' licenses; relating to off-road system eligible areas; and relating to motor vehicle liability insurance."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 1

"An Act relating to absentee voting, voting, and voter registration; relating to early voting locations at which persons may vote absentee ballots; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 127

"An Act relating to a permanent fund dividend for an individual whose conviction has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed; and relating to the calculation of the value of the permanent fund dividend by including payment to individuals eligible for a permanent fund dividend because of a conviction that has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 91

"An Act relating to fees for certain persons filing disclosure statements or other reports with the Alaska Public Offices Commission; relating to a tax on legislative lobbyists; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARING POSTPONED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 97

SHORT TITLE: REPEAL AK FIRE STANDS. COUNCIL TAX CREDIT

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) THOMPSON

02/01/17 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/01/17 (H) STA, FIN
02/28/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

BILL: HB 82

SHORT TITLE: RESTRICTED OFF HWY DRIVER'S LICENSE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KREISS-TOMKINS

01/25/17 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/25/17 (H) STA, TRA
02/02/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/02/17 (H) Scheduled but Not Heard
02/23/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/23/17 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
02/28/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

BILL: HB 1

SHORT TITLE: ELECTION REGISTRATION AND VOTING

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) TUCK

01/18/17 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/17
01/18/17 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/17 (H) STA, JUD
02/23/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

02/23/17 (H) Heard & Held
02/23/17 (H) MINUTE (STA)
02/28/17 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 97, as prime sponsor.

BRANDON BREFCZYNSKI, Staff
Representative Steve Thompson
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on HB 97 on behalf of Representative Thompson, prime sponsor.

BERETT WILBER, Staff
Representative Kreiss-Tomkins
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 82 on behalf of Representative Kreiss-Tomkins, prime sponsor.

MARLA THOMPSON, Director
Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
Department of Administration (DOA)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 82.

AUDREY O'BRIEN
Driver Services - Juneau
Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
Department of Administration (DOA)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 82.

KENDRA KLOSTER, Staff
Representative Chris Tuck
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on HB 1 on behalf of Representative Tuck, prime sponsor.

MICHAEL HAWFIELD

Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 1.

ALEX KOPLIN

Kenai Peninsula Votes

Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 1.

KIM REITMEIER, Executive Director

Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) Regional
Association

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 1.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:05:36 PM](#)

CHAIR JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Representatives LeDoux, Tuck, Birch, Johnson, Knopp, and Kreiss-Tomkins were present at the call to order. Representative Wool arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 97-REPEAL AK FIRE STANDS. COUNCIL TAX CREDIT

[3:06:26 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 97, "An Act repealing the insurance tax credit for gifts to the Alaska fire standards council; and providing for an effective date."

[3:06:40 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON, Alaska State Legislature, presented HB 97, as prime sponsor. He stated that the Twenty-Eighth Alaska State Legislature, 2013-2014, passed the indirect expenditures bill [House Bill 306] to review all tax credits and reductions in funds. He relayed that not all the tax credit programs had sunset dates, therefore not all were reviewed. He related that HB 97 is being introduced to allow the legislature the opportunity to review the effectiveness of the insurance tax credit program by setting a sunset date of January 1, 2022. He said that that the insurance tax credit program was established

to provide financing for the Alaska Fire Standards Council (AFSC).

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON relayed that HB 97 would not immediately repeal the insurance tax credits for donations made to the AFSC but would establish a sunset date of January 1, 2022. He asserted that the intent of HB 97 is to allow an opportunity for the legislature to review whether the credit is effective and necessary. He added that to date there have been no donations made to AFSC; therefore, there have been no tax credits under this program. He mentioned that the AFSC tax credits were established in the Twenty-First Alaska State Legislature, 1999-2000, by House Bill 380 introduced by former Representative Gene Therriault. He stated that the 2015 [Indirect] Expenditure Report released by the Legislative Finance Division recommended that the tax credit be reviewed to determine if it is still applicable and potentially terminate it if it is not. He concluded by saying that he would not be opposed to an amendment to HB 97 terminating the program in December 2017, as it has never been used.

[3:09:23 PM](#)

BRANDON BREFCZYNSKI, Staff, Representative Steve Thompson, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Thompson, prime sponsor of HB 97, stated that the intent of House Bill 380 was to establish a funding mechanism for the newly created AFSC by creating a tax credit for insurance companies to make donations to AFSC. He reiterated that there have been no donations to AFSC because of the legislation. He relayed that currently AFSC is funded by unrestricted general funds (UGF) and fees collected for firefighter certification.

[3:10:40 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON confirmed for Representative Wool that the insurance tax credit program has not been used in the 17 years it has been in place.

[3:12:05 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS, in response to Representative Knopp's interest in introducing an amendment, indicated that Legislative Legal and Research Services would be contacted to draft an amendment and that HB 97 would be held over.

HB 82-RESTRICTED OFF HWY DRIVER'S LICENSE

[3:12:35 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 82, "An Act relating to vehicle registration; relating to off-road system restricted noncommercial drivers' licenses; relating to off-highway commercial drivers' licenses; relating to off-road system eligible areas; and relating to motor vehicle liability insurance."

[3:12:45 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at ease at 3:12 p.m.

[3:12:51 PM](#)

BERETT WILBER, Staff, Representative Kreiss-Tomkins, Alaska State Legislature, presented HB 82 on behalf of Representative Kreiss-Tomkins, prime sponsor. She stated that HB 82 would change the criteria for an individual to be eligible for an off-highway driver's license. She said that under AS 28.15.126, an individual is eligible if his/her community is on a list of communities published by the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). She stated that the list consists of off-highway communities without DMV offices, and these communities are exempt from vehicle registration and insurance. She added that DMV publishes this list every year under the insurance exemption statute [AS 28.22.011], and residents of these communities qualify for off-highway driver's licenses.

MS. WILBER relayed that in 2014, "traffic count" was added as a new criterion for the list of off-highway communities. She explained that if a rural, off-highway community had a traffic count of greater than 499, it was removed from the list, and residents could no longer qualify for off-highway driver's licenses. She mentioned that five rural communities without access to DMV offices were removed from the list based on this new criterion - Kake, Hoonah, Angoon, Seldovia, and Hyder. She asserted that HB 82 would change statute to ensure that traffic count would no longer determine a community's qualification for the off-highway driver's license, thereby reinstating those five communities to the list of eligible communities. She opined that it is unreasonable and prohibitively expensive for a resident of rural communities to fly to Anchorage or Juneau to get a driver's license and results in people driving illegally.

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REPRESENTATIVE BIRCH moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 82, Version 30-LS0367\D, Martin, 2/27/17, as the working document.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX objected for the purpose of discussion.

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS explained that the CS for HB 82 is the newest iteration of the bill and was developed in close consultation with DMV.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX withdrew her objection. There being no further objection, Version D was before the committee.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked what criteria was used to qualify a community to be on the list of off-highway communities before the traffic-count criteria.

MS. WILBER answered that the criteria was that the community was not connected to the land state highway system and did not have access to a DMV office that offered road testing for a driver's license.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked if in the communities that don't require a driver's license, a driver isn't required to have car insurance.

MS. WILBER replied that under current statute, a person living in one of the 294 communities that allow off-highway driver's licenses is exempt from registration and insurance.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked for clarification that residents of the five communities with a traffic count of over 499 would be exempt from having insurance as well as driver's licenses. He asked if there is an age requirement for drivers not needing driver's licenses and insurance.

[3:20:36 PM](#)

MS. WILBER pointed out that in none of the communities are you allowed to drive without a license. She explained that the proposed legislation would allow a resident to get an off-highway restricted driver's license - a specific type of driver's license that can be obtained through the mail. She asserted that the intent of HB 91 is to provide a mechanism for

rural residents to obtain legal licenses to drive, thus preventing under-age driving.

[3:21:34 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked for clarification that an off-highway driver's license requires paperwork, a written test, the applicant to be a certain age, but not a road test or insurance. He asked if under the proposed legislation, the residents of the five communities having the higher traffic count would have those same requirements.

MS. WILBER answered that under current statute, an off-highway restricted driver's license: requires passing a written test; requires verifying identity with DMV; cannot be used outside the country or on the state highway system; and can only be used in an off-highway restricted area.

MS. WILBER stated that all communities that are eligible for off-highway driver's licenses are currently exempt from registration and insurance, and that would continue under HB 82. She added that the five communities that would become newly eligible under HB 82 would also be exempt from registration and insurance.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked if a community that loses its DMV office through budget cuts would qualify automatically for off-highway driver's licenses.

MS. WILBER answered that language in HB 83 states that if a road test is not offered in a community for more than 12 months, the community then becomes eligible for off-highway driver's licenses. She added that this would give DMV 12 months to provide other options for road tests: establish a commissioned agent position in the community; fly a DMV representative into the community; or contract with a third party.

[3:26:25 PM](#)

MARLA THOMPSON, Director, Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Administration (DOA), reiterated that if a community lost DMV services for 12 months, it would be exempt from registration and insurance.

[3:27:05 PM](#)

MS. WILBER confirmed in response to Representative LeDoux that the five communities that would be affected by HB 83 are Hoonah, Kake, Angoon, Seldovia, and Hyder.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX stated that she understands the situation in the villages, but she expressed that Seldovia is a city of substantial size with paved highways. She asked how many people in the five communities are eligible to have a driver's licenses but don't.

MS. WILBER mentioned that Seldovia has a population of 255, and the last traffic count study performed in 2007 revealed a highest average daily traffic count of 665.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked for an explanation of "traffic count."

MS. WILBER said that traffic count, also known as average daily traffic (ADT), is one assessment the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) uses to determine the classification of roads. She added that it is a count of the number of people who drive over a given segment of road on a given day.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if "655" refers to the number of cars driving over a segment of road.

MS. WILBER responded yes. She clarified that the number does not refer to the number of individual cars but the number of times over which the traffic count strip has been driven.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if the traffic assessment was performed in the summer or winter, since Seldovia is a tourist destination in the summer.

MS. WILBER answered that the reason it is called an average daily traffic count is because a statistical analysis is performed on the actual numbers collected to produce a representative count.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked how long it takes to travel from Seldovia to Homer by ferry.

MS. WILBER replied that she didn't know but asserted that having to travel by ferry to obtain a driver's license was an imposition, and a community such as Seldovia should be able to qualify for off-highway driver's licenses. She stated that DMV

and DOT&PF personnel have indicated to her that there are off-highway communities that would have traffic counts of over 499, if a traffic count were performed. She mentioned that the communities of Hooper Bay, Sandpoint, King Cove, Selawik, and Togiak, which all have populations significantly larger than the five mentioned in relation to the proposed legislation, would likely have traffic counts over 499. She added that DOT&PF is not likely to do traffic counts in these communities, which is why they have never been removed from the list of off-highway communities. She stated that HB 83 was introduced to protect rural communities that don't have road access to DMVs from being removed from the list of off-highway communities in the event DOT&PF performed a traffic count. She opined that a traffic count is not a good metric for determining qualification for the off-highway driver's license.

[3:33:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON offered that Seldovia stands out among the five communities because it has many roads and many people. She also mentioned that communities with ferry access are different from bush communities with just a few miles of road in the middle of nowhere. She added that the Alaska Marine Highway is part of the state's transportation system.

MS. WILBER confirmed that all five communities are served by the ferry system. Under HB 83, they would qualify for the off-highway driver's license, because they are not connected [to DMV offices] by land. She offered that it is prohibitive for people in those communities to buy ferry tickets, hotel rooms, and take road tests in an unfamiliar community, just so they can drive in their own community. She opined that even though the communities have access to a DMV office by ferry, the ability of the residents to obtain driver's licenses is impaired. She reiterated that HB 83 would allow them to access legal licenses that other Alaskans access without the expense and time.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON pointed out that Hyder is connected to a road system.

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REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP asked if the age limit for a driver's license applies to an off-highway driver's license.

MS. WILBER responded yes, the two are the same.

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP offered that in the summer, there are about 2,000 people in Seldovia; there are not many roads; and it is less than an hour from Homer by ferry. He stated that his concern is regarding the increased summer traffic in Seldovia and the uninsured drivers with off-highway driver's licenses. He asked if the off-highway driver's license system is working well given those drivers are exempt from insurance.

MS. THOMPSON responded that currently 1,527 drivers have off-highway restricted licenses. She said that those drivers are not required to pay DMV registration fees or to obtain insurance while driving in the off-highway community. She maintained that if the driver is driving in a community that is not an off-highway community, then the off-highway driver's license becomes a de facto permit, and the driver needs a regular driver's license or must be accompanied by someone with a regular driver's license. She mentioned that the number of off-highway driver's licenses is small due to the restrictions on them.

[3:43:11 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP reiterated his concern is about local young people driving around Seldovia with off-highway driver's licenses and no insurance. He asserted that every other driver is required to maintain insurance, and a visitor to Seldovia could be a victim of an uninsured driver.

[3:44:10 PM](#)

AUDREY O'BRIEN, Driver Services - Juneau, Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Administration (DOA), confirmed that for a person in Seldovia with an off-highway driver's license, insurance is optional, and a visitor to Seldovia could be at risk of a collision with an uninsured driver.

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS offered a scenario: Someone from Valdez travels to Tatitlek or King Cove, both of which have ferry service and are off-highway eligible communities. The visitor, who does have insurance, gets T-boned by an uninsured Tatitlek or King Cove driver. Representative Kreiss-Tomkins asked, "What happens to the insured driver who just got hit by the uninsured driver?"

MS. O'BRIEN replied that in that situation, the driver does not face a license suspension as would a driver "on-system" because insurance is not required for the off-highway driver. She went on to say that there still could be an application of financial

responsibility for the off-highway driver depending on who is at fault.

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REPRESENTATIVE BIRCH asked if the roads in the off-highway communities are publicly constructed roads or private roads.

MS. O'BRIEN conjectured that these communities have a combination of public and private roads.

REPRESENTATIVE BIRCH asked if it is reasonable to permit drivers with no registration or insurance on public roads.

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS asked what the insurance implications would be for the insured driver in the scenario he offered.

MS. O'BRIEN responded that depending on the insured driver's coverage, damages for which he/she was responsible could be reimbursed, and damages caused by the uninsured driver could be reimbursed under uninsured motorist coverage. If the insured driver did not have uninsured motorist coverage, he/she may have to pay for the damages caused by the uninsured driver or seek compensation by other means.

[3:51:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked how many people in the five off-highway communities would be affected by HB 83 because they are eligible for a driver's license and have a vehicle but don't have a regular driver's license. She opined that many people travel out of Seldovia for services.

MS. O'BRIEN answered that she doesn't have that number. She said she could attempt to get that information but would not know who chose not to have a driver's license.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if people with driving violations, such as driving under the influence (DUI), can get off-highway driver's licenses.

MS. O'BRIEN answered that the only difference between the off-highway driver's license and the regular license is that the former does not require a road test. She maintained that all other licensing criteria that applies to a regular driver's license applies to an off-highway driver's license. She stated that if driving privileges have been revoked for an individual,

he/she would not have off-highway driving privileges. She added, however, that a court-ordered requirement for an ignition interlock device is forgiven in the off-highway listed communities.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked what the rationale was for not requiring insurance.

MS. O'BRIEN replied that her understanding was that back in 1986, when this was enacted, traffic in those areas was so low that there was very little risk.

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REPRESENTATIVE TUCK suggested that the explanation for allowing uninsured drivers might be because insurance companies don't insure unlicensed drivers.

MS. O'BRIEN responded that her contact with insurance companies suggests to her they are unfamiliar with off-highway driver's licenses.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked if commercial driver's licenses still would be required in the off-highway communities.

MS. O'BRIEN answered that HB 83 would not change the criteria for commercial licensing in off-highway communities. She added that there is a restriction for commercial licenses based on the size of the community, which is an exemption applied to Alaska under federal law.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked for clarification that HB 83 would require the off-highway communities to be listed in statute.

MS. O'BRIEN responded that DMV publishes a list of off-highway communities, and HB 83 would change the criteria for communities to be on the list.

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REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP expressed his concern for people who are unaware of off-highway driver's licenses being in an area not requiring liability insurance policies. He stated that most people have an uninsured/underinsured provision on their insurance policy. He asked if that provision would protect the insured driver in the event of a collision with an uninsured driver.

MS. O'BRIEN stated that she is not aware of any clause that would render the insurance policy invalid in the off-highway community.

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP offered that the intent of the uninsured/underinsured provision is to protect the insured driver.

[4:01:12 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked if the off-highway driver's license communities have resident law enforcement officers.

MS. WILBER answered that in speaking with Department of Public Safety (DPS) personnel, three of the communities addressed by HB 83 have police departments.

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS offered his belief that Kake and Angoon have Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs); Hoonah has a municipal police department; Seldovia has a municipal police department; and Hyder does not have a municipal police department.

[4:02:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked if the off-highway driver's license would qualify as a "REAL ID."

MS. Thompson answered no, it would not qualify as a REAL ID. In response to a previous question on the number of registrations per city, she offered that there is a total of 2,752 vehicles registered with the breakdown as follows: Angoon with 264; Hoonah with 993; Kake with 374; and Seldovia with 1,119.

MS. THOMPSON, in response to Representative Wool, confirmed there were 1,527 individuals with off-highway driver's licenses. She clarified that the people in the four communities currently have regular driver's licenses.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL opined that a town with a thousand vehicles does not constitute light road traffic. He offered that in the case of Seldovia, accessing a DMV office entails a short ferry ride and is not much of a burden. He mentioned that Hyder is connected to the road system. He said that he is interested in the number of cars traveling to Homer from Seldovia in the summer.

[4:07:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX stated that she agrees with Representative Wool. She opined, however, that some of the other communities on the off-highway list might also have a high traffic count, and it is unfair to exclude these five communities based on high traffic count, when other communities on the list might also have high traffic count. She suggested that instead of including these five communities on the list, an equally reasonable solution might be to consider excluding the other communities with high traffic count.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked if the ADT count was removed as a criterion, the only other way to remove a community from the list of exemptions would be to open a DMV office in the community.

MS. THOMPSON answered yes. There would have to be a road test available in the community, either through a DMV office, a business partner, or a commissioned agent.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked Ms. Thompson to provide information to the committee identifying the community with the smallest ADT count that has a DMV office.

[4:09:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BIRCH referred to the financial implication of HB 83 and asked if vehicle registration fees would be required in these five communities.

MS. THOMPSON responded that there would not be registration fees, but many of these communities already have permanent registration available. She offered to provide the committee with information on the estimated loss of revenue.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL asked how DMV knows how many vehicles there are if they are unregistered.

[4:11:31 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS reiterated that many of the people in the five communities have regular licenses, and just a few have the off-highway restricted license, such as elders and people who never leave the village.

[HB 82 was held over.]

HB 1-ELECTION REGISTRATION AND VOTING

[4:12:22 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 1, "An Act relating to absentee voting, voting, and voter registration; relating to early voting locations at which persons may vote absentee ballots; and providing for an effective date."

[4:12:38 PM](#)

KENDRA KLOSTER, Staff, Representative Chris Tuck, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Tuck, prime sponsor of HB 1, explained forthcoming changes to HB 1. She said that Section 3 of HB 1 will be amended to clarify the verification process for individuals changing their voter registrations. These individuals must verify that they have lived in the district for 30 days, which is a requirement of the state constitution.

MS. KLOSTER stated that Section 9 of HB 1 will be amended to allow the applicant of an absentee ballot the option of receiving an absentee ballot every year without reapplying. She added that if the absentee voter does not vote for four years or his/her address becomes outdated, then he/she would be removed from the list of voters who get their absentee ballots mailed automatically. Those with a "bad" address may update their address information with the Division of Elections (DOE) and reapply to get back on the list.

[4:15:08 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP asked for verification that a person must be a resident of his/her district for 30 days prior to voting in that district and that the proposed legislation allows someone to register the same day as he/she votes.

MS. KLOSTER confirmed that is correct.

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP expressed his concern that same-day registration would lead to corruption in elections by allowing someone to move into a district just 30 days before voting in the district.

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REPRESENTATIVE TUCK responded that currently one must be registered to vote 30 days before an election to vote. He said that the constitution only requires residency for 30 days before voting in an election. He explained that under the proposed legislation, someone who moves to a different district but has not yet changed his/her registration, could register and vote the same day. He added that if a person moved to the new district 31 days before the election, he/she still would be allowed to vote in the election, because the constitution only requires a 30-day residency.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX mentioned that for presidential elections, same-day voter registration is allowed nationwide. She added that a person who is not registered to vote may vote a questioned ballot, and the ballot will be good for the presidential election. She asked if a person, who is not registered to vote but votes a questioned ballot, must show proof that he/she has lived in the district at least 30 days.

MS. KLOSTER explained that the change to HB 1 would include clarifying language for a verification process in voting a questioned ballot. She offered that the process would include a signed statement verifying residency, and she added that providing false information is against the law.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX mentioned that she doesn't recall anything currently in the voter registration process requiring the registrant to provide proof of residency.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK responded that under the proposed legislation, a person would be required to have verification of residency for same-day voter registration. He offered that voting a questioned ballot updates one's voter registration and, therefore, serves as reregistration. He asserted that same-day voter registration, as proposed by HB 1, will allow a person: to vote in his/her new district on Election Day in all the races; to re-register by updating the voter registration records; and to verify residency.

[4:22:27 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS opened public testimony on HB 1.

[4:22:55 PM](#)

MICHAEL HAWFIELD testified in support of HB 1. He stated his belief that HB 1 would clarify statutory language about the voter registration process, streamline and enhance the voting process, and encourage more participation, especially among young people.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON referred to the Alaska Voter Registration via the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) application, Ballot Measure 1 (2016), and asked if there was an estimate of how many people have not registered to vote.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK responded that the PFD voter registration initiative will solve some of the voter registration challenges. He said that voter registration information is automatically updated because of the PFD application. He offered that HB 1 would allow someone to vote through same-day registration if he/she moved to another district after applying for the PFD or turned 18 years of age two days before Election Day.

[4:26:59 PM](#)

ALEX KOPLIN, Kenai Peninsula Votes, testified in support of HB 1. He offered his belief that Alaska does well in registering voters, but getting people to vote is a challenge, especially in local elections. He emphasized the importance of increasing voter turnout. He offered other measures to increase voter turnout might include allowing people to leave work early to vote and extending voting beyond one day. He asserted that the absentee voting process is confusing, and the automatic mail out of absentee ballots would be a huge improvement and encourage more voter participation. He opined that Alaska does an excellent job with online voter registration, which serves to energize voters and enhance voter turnout. He attested that the democratic system works when more people get involved, and voter participation is not a partisan issue.

[4:30:28 PM](#)

KIM REITMEIER, Executive Director, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) Regional Association, testified that the association represents the 12 land-based Alaska Native corporations, 121,000 shareholders, and a significant number of descendants. She mentioned that she co-chaired the automatic PFD voter registration initiative, which passed last year. She stated that the association supports HB 1, supports a modernized election process, and seeks to ensure that rural residents have equal access to voter engagement. She asserted that the younger

generation requires new ways of communication and engagement, and it is "up to us to ensure that we are engaging those individuals, making processes easier for them, and ensuring that we have an energized state and communities."

[4:32:16 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS closed public testimony on HB 1. He announced HB 1 would be held over.

[4:32:57 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.