

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 12, 2018

1:54 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Louise Stutes, Co-Chair  
Representative Matt Claman  
Representative Harriet Drummond  
Representative Chuck Kopp  
Representative Mark Neuman  
Representative Colleen Sullivan-Leonard

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Adam Wool, Co-Chair  
Representative David Eastman (alternate)  
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux (alternate)

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 263

"An Act exempting certain water taxi operators from regulation as transportation services by the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 263 OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 263

SHORT TITLE: TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR HUNTERS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KNOPP

01/16/18	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/18
01/16/18	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/18	(H)	TRA, RES
02/01/18	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
02/01/18	(H)	Heard & Held
02/01/18	(H)	MINUTE(TRA)
04/12/18	(H)	TRA AT 1:15 PM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JAYME JONES, Staff

Representative Gary Knopp  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the discussion of  
HB 263.

REPRESENTATIVE GARY KNOPP  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as sponsor of HB 263.

MAKO HAGGERTY, Owner  
Mako's Water Taxi  
Homer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 263.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:54:26 PM](#)

**CO-CHAIR LOUISE STUTES** called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:54 p.m. Representatives Stutes, Sullivan-Leonard, Neuman, Claman, Kopp were present at the call to order. Representative Drummond arrived as the meeting was in progress.

#### **HB 263-TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR HUNTERS**

[1:55:02 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR STUTES announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 263, "An Act exempting certain water taxi operators from regulation as transportation services by the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and providing for an effective date."

[1:56:00 PM](#)

JAYME JONES, Staff, Representative Gary Knopp, Alaska State Legislature, introduced herself.

[1:56:12 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARY KNOPP, Alaska State Legislature, speaking as prime sponsor of HB 263, said the intent of HB 263 was to apply

the same exemption to water taxi operators that currently exists in statute for air taxi operators. The exemption has three requirements; first, transporting hunters or their gear must be incidental to the main business; second, the operator cannot charge a premium for that service; and third, the operator cannot advertise that service without having a transporter license. He stated that this bill was requested by a water taxi operator in Kachemak Bay. He offered his belief that this is equitable and has minimal impact. Water taxis businesses seem to be more prevalent in Southeast Alaska than in Southcentral, Southwest Alaska, or other parts of the state.

[1:57:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN asked for clarification that HB 263 would not reduce the United States Coast Guard boating safety requirements for someone with a transporter's license who caters to hunter.<sup>3</sup>

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP answered no.

[1:58:09 PM](#)

MS. JONES, on behalf of the sponsor, Representative Knopp, stated that the business must still comply with all US Coast Guard and federal regulations just as an airplane pilot must follow FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] regulations even when they are flying under this exemption. She stated that a water taxi business would still need to have a "six-pack" [USCG Operator's License].

[1:58:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN related his understanding a water taxi transports someone by boat to go hunting. He asked whether a person can currently transport someone by boat to go hunting without a transporter's license.

REPRESENTATIVE KNOPP answered he thought that was true. He stated if someone operates a water taxi business, the person would be prohibited from assisting hunters without the exemption. He related his understanding that the statute does not currently apply to water taxis, which means that a person operating a water taxi would be banned from transporting, assisting, or renting them boats or cabins to hunters. It would be a prohibition without this exemption, he said.

[2:00:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND moved to report HB 263 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

[2:00:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND withdrew the motion in order to allow for public testimony.

[2:00:34 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR STUTES opened public testimony on HB 263.

[2:01:04 PM](#)

MAKO HAGGERTY, Owner, Mako's Water Taxi, stated he was the owner and operator of Mako's Water Taxi. He thanked Representative Knopp for bring this bill forward. He offered his belief that water taxis were not included with air taxis, perhaps because there were not many water taxis in operation at the time. He stated that his water taxi business takes people across the bay to go to the [Kachemak Bay State Park]. His service does not delineate between a hiker, a kayaker or a hunter since these people seek transportation. He was unsure why the state requires a different permit for water taxis to transport hunters, since as far as he is concerned a hunter is just a camper with a gun. He offered his belief that believes that the language in statute needed to be cleaned up, and he fully supports the bill.

[2:02:57 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR STUTES, after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 263.

[2:03:08 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND moved to report HB 263 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 263 was reported from the House Transportation Standing Committee.

[2:03:37 PM](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transpiration standing meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.