

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE

March 16, 2017

1:36 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mia Costello, Chair
Senator Shelley Hughes, Vice Chair
Senator Kevin Meyer
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners

Suzanne Dutson - Juneau
Dr. Deborah Gideon - Anchorage

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Barbers & Hairdressers

Jennifer Lombardo - Anchorage
Michelle McMullin - Anchorage

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Dr. Brian Larson - Soldotna
Dr. Jonathan Vito - Anchorage

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Marital & Family Therapy

Karen Cunningham - Anchorage
Nicole Jenkins - Palmer

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Massage Therapists

Traci Gilmour - Juneau
Jill Motz - Wasilla

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Occupational Safety & Health Review Board
Thomas Trosvig - Kodiak

CONFIRMATION HEARD AND HELD

Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission
Stephen Hagedorn - Anchorage
Deirdre Ford - Anchorage

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Professional Counselors
Eleanor Vinson - Juneau

CONFIRMATION HEARD AND HELD

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Saleutogi (Togi) Letuligasenoa - Fairbanks
Linda Murphy - Soldotna
Donna Phillips - Girdwood
Aaron Plikat - Anchorage
Brett Stubbs - Anchorage
Rick Traini - Anchorage
Lake Williams - Fairbanks

CONFIRMATIONS HEARD AND HELD

Board of Dental Examiners

SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

Board of Physical Therapy & Occupational Therapy

SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

SENATE BILL NO. 64

"An Act adopting the Uniform Environmental Covenants Act; relating to environmental real property covenants and notices of activity and use limitation at contaminated sites to ensure the protection of human health, safety, and welfare, and the environment; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 64 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 71

"An Act relating to limitations on certain commercial fishing loans made by the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 79

"An Act relating to the prescription of opioids; establishing the Voluntary Nonopioid Directive Act; relating to the controlled substance prescription database; relating to the practice of dentistry; relating to the practice of medicine; relating to the practice of podiatry; relating to the practice of osteopathy; relating to the practice of nursing; relating to the practice of optometry; relating to the practice of veterinary medicine; related to the duties of the Board of Pharmacy; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

SENATE BILL NO. 75

"An Act relating to instruction in a language other than English; and relating to limited teacher certificates."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 71

SHORT TITLE: COMMERCIAL FISHING LOANS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) STEVENS

02/27/17	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/27/17	(S)	L&C, FIN
03/16/17	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SB 64

SHORT TITLE: UNIFORM ENVIRONMENTAL COVENANTS ACT

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) MICCICHE

02/17/17	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/17/17	(S)	CRA, L&C
02/28/17	(S)	CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
02/28/17	(S)	Heard & Held
02/28/17	(S)	MINUTE(CRA)

03/07/17 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/07/17 (S) Moved SB 64 Out of Committee
 03/07/17 (S) MINUTE(CRA)
 03/08/17 (S) CRA RPT 2DP 2NR
 03/08/17 (S) DP: BISHOP, HOFFMAN
 03/08/17 (S) NR: MACKINNON, STEDMAN
 03/14/17 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/14/17 (S) Heard & Held
 03/14/17 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
 03/16/17 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

WITNESS REGISTER

SUZANNE DUTSON, Appointee
 Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners
 Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners.

DR. DEBORAH GIDEON, Appointee
 Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners
 Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners.

JENNIFER LOMBARDO, Appointee
 Board of Barbers and Hairdressers
 Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

MICHELLE MCMULLIN, Appointee
 Board of Barbers and Hairdressers
 Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

DR BRIAN LARSON, Appointee
 Board of Chiropractic Examiners
 Soldotna, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

DR. JONATHAN VITO, Appointee
 Board of Chiropractic Examiners
 Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

KAREN CUNNINGHAM, Appointee
Board of Martial and Family Therapy
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Martial and Family Therapy.

NICOLE JENKINS, Appointee
Board of Marital and Family Therapy
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Martial and Family Therapy.

TRACI GILMOUR, Appointee
Board of Massage Therapists
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Massage Therapists.

JILL MOTZ, Appointee
Board of Massage Therapists
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as Appointee to the Board of Massage Therapists.

THOMAS TROSVIG, Appointee
Occupational Safety and Health Review Board
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Board.

STEPHEN HAGEDORN, Appointee
Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission.

DEIRDRE FORD, Appointee
Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission.

ELEANOR VINSON, Appointee
Board of Professional Counselors

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Professional Counselors.

SALEUTOGI (TOGI) LETULIGASENOA, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

LINDA MURPHY, Appointee
Workers' Compensation Board
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

DONNA PHILLIPS, Appointee
Alaska Workers Compensation Board
Girdwood, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

AARON PLIKAT, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

BRETT STUBBS, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

RICK TRAINI, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

LAKE WILLIAMS, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

RACHEL HANKE, Staff
Senator Peter Micciche
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions related to SB 64.

TIM LAMKIN, Staff
Senator Gary Stevens
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 71 on behalf of the sponsor.

SENATOR GARY STEVENS
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 71.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:36:45 PM](#)

CHAIR MIA COSTELLO called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gardner, Stevens, Meyer, Hughes, and Chair Costello. She and the other committee members introduced the youths from Facing Foster Care in Alaska who were job-shadowing.

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners
Board of Barbers & Hairdressers
Board of Chiropractic Examiners
Board of Marital & Family Therapy
Board of Massage Therapists
Occupational Safety & Health Review Board
Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission
Board of Professional Counselors
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

[1:42:54 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO announced the first order of business would be confirmation hearings for governor appointees to boards and commissions. She stated that the intent is to hear from the appointees, ask questions, and forward the names in one batch at some later date.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Suzanne Dutson of Juneau to share her interest in serving on the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners in the public seat.

[1:45:05 PM](#)

SUZANNE DUTSON, Appointee, Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners, Juneau, Alaska, reviewed her educational credentials and stated she is interested in serving on this board because it matches her goal of serving the state using her education and experience in social services, behavioral health, and health care. She appreciates the opportunity to have an impact and ensuring that there is quality and accountability in licensure for behavioral health professionals. She has attended one meeting and was impressed with the talented and dedicated members serving on the board.

SENATOR STEVENS said he has heard complaints that it takes up to six months for the staff for this board to issue certifications and get the information out to employers. He asked her to comment on what she could do to help this situation.

MS. DUTSON said she believes the problem will be resolved with the new staff that has been hired.

SENATOR STEVENS expressed optimism that she would look into the timeliness issue.

SENATOR GARDNER reviewed Ms. Dutson's impressive resume and asked what a doctorate in management provides and if she will continue to work in the area of human services.

MS. DUTSON confirmed that she will continue to work in human services. She explained that the organizational leadership doctorate is an umbrella for her pre and post graduate degrees that will make her more effective in policy development and regulatory matters at the state or federal level.

[1:51:04 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked Ms. Dutson for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Dr. Deborah Gideon to share her interest in serving on the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners in a psychologist seat.

DR. DEBORAH GIDEON, Appointee, Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners, Anchorage, Alaska, said she is a clinical psychologist and neuropsychologist and she hopes

her experience will help the board. It is also an opportunity for her to give back to the state. She is interested in quality of care and providing care to the multiple groups in the state.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked if her experience working on boards in other states will translate to this board and perhaps make it more efficient.

DR. GIDEON said she can't address board efficiency at this point, but she does have a perspective of licensure, the qualifications required, and how the profession functions. She reiterated that quality of care is her biggest concern primarily because the training options in the state are limited. Her experience in other states has given her a perspective nationally about the standards and norms are in the field of psychology. She hopes to use that experience to the benefit of Alaska.

SENATOR STEVENS asked how achieving licensure in other states compares to achieving licensure in Alaska.

DR. GIDEON opined that the licensure rules in Alaska are more lenient than other states. It is a challenge to make the credentialing process more like other states while taking Alaska's unique challenges and needs into consideration.

SENATOR STEVENS asked if the licensure process in Alaska is as efficient as other states.

DR. GIDEON said she believes that the timeline is about the same. It is always a tedious, time-consuming process because it takes time to ensure that applicants are thoroughly vetted.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions and thanked Dr. Gideon for being willing to serve.

2:01:10 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Jennifer Lombardo of Anchorage to share her interest in serving on the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers in the industry licensee seat.

JENNIFER LOMBARDO, Appointee, Board of Barbers and Hairdressers, Anchorage, Alaska, said she is a lifelong Alaskan who has over nine years of experience as a tattoo artist. She was nominated to fill an industry seat and she looks forward to serving in this position representing the voice of tattooers in the state.

She also has an interest in protecting the community from unlicensed tattooers because it can be a high-risk profession.

SENATOR GARDNER asked if tattoo artist have to work a certain number of hours to qualify for a license.

MS. LOMBARDO said she believes a tattooer needs just under 400 hours for licensure. She added that she and several other tattooers believe that number is significantly lower than it should be. She would also like to work to modify the tattoo education, so it is more specifically geared to tattooing.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Lombardo for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Michelle McMullin of Anchorage to share her interest in serving on the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers in the nail technician seat.

[2:06:48 PM](#)

MICHELLE MCMULLIN, Appointee, Board of Barbers and Hairdressers, Anchorage, Alaska, said she has been a nail technician for more than 20 years and she travels out of Alaska for continuing education and to learn better techniques. She hopes to share her experience and develop a good industry in Alaska.

SENATOR GARDNER asked what kind of formal training is required to become a licensed nail technician.

MS. MCMULLIN explained that the current requirement is 250 hours of schooling with multiple hours focused in different areas such as artificial nails.

SENATOR GARDNER asked if the curriculum is set by the board.

MS. MCMULLIN answered yes.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. McMullin for being willing to serve.

[2:08:53 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Dr. Brian Larson of Soldotna to share his interest in serving on the Board of Chiropractic Examiners in a chiropractor seat.

DR BRIAN LARSON, Appointee, Board of Chiropractic Examiners, Soldotna, Alaska, said he graduated from chiropractic school in

2003 and has been working in the field since. He has volunteered significant amounts of time with school sports programs and now has his own practice specializing in sports injuries. He also discussed the two careers he had prior to this career. He said he looks at this appointment as an opportunity to give back to the community and state that have provided many opportunities.

CHAIR COSTELLO noted that he has been a Boy Scout leader since 1985.

SENATOR HUGHES expressed appreciation for his pro bono work and willingness to serve on this board.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Dr. Larson for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Dr. Jonathan Vito to share his interest in serving on the Board of Chiropractic Examiners in the chiropractic seat.

[2:18:04 PM](#)

DR. JONATHAN VITO, Appointee, Board of Chiropractic Examiners, Soldotna, Alaska, said he moved to Alaska in 2011 and practices chiropractic medicine in Anchorage. He shared that he wanted to serve on the board to help streamline the licensure process in Alaska and support an online option for taking the test. He is also interested in introducing advanced chiropractic concepts to the state, which includes limited prescription writing ability.

[2:19:54 PM](#)

At ease

[2:20:48 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO reconvened the meeting.

SENATOR MEYER asked if Life University (where Dr. Vito received his doctorate) is located in New York.

DR. VITO replied it is near Atlanta Georgia.

SENATOR MEYER asked for an explanation of his misdemeanor conviction in New York and if it has anything to do with this position.

DR. VITO replied it was a DUI offense. He worked as a bartender during his undergraduate years and had an extra drink during his shift and was pulled over while driving home.

SENATOR STEVENS asked if Life University is accredited.

DR. VITO answered yes; it has the number one part-four board scores for all chiropractic schools in the nation.

SENATOR GARDNER asked him to expand on the suggestion that chiropractors should have some prescription privileges.

DR. VITO explained that chiropractors are viewed in the health network as primary care physicians. Limited prescription privileges would allow chiropractors to prescribe low dose antibiotics or low dose pain medication. This would be particularly helpful in small communities that do not have a wide variety of physicians.

SENATOR GARDNER asked if the course work at Life University included classes on pharmaceuticals and prescribing.

DR. VITO replied he took three courses called toxicology, which were very similar to the medication courses that medical doctors take.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Dr. Vito for being willing to serve.

[2:24:42 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Karen Cunningham of Anchorage to share her interest in serving on the Board of Marital and Family Therapy in the therapist/counselor seat.

KAREN CUNNINGHAM, Appointee, Board of Martial and Family Therapy, Anchorage, Alaska, said she is a licensed marital and family therapist. She described the educational requirements and explained that during the associate period, clinicians must get a minimum of 1,500 face-to-face client hours. She said she is interested in serving on the board because of the current work the board is doing to develop statutes and regulations for tele-therapy. This is particularly appropriate for Alaska because it has so many underserved populations.

SENATOR GARDNER asked if there is any disadvantage to tele-therapy and if sessions that are not face-to-face will be of the same quality.

MS. CUNNINGHAM said it isn't ideal but still worthwhile. Her preference would be to require the first session to be face-to-face.

SENATOR STEVENS commented on Ms. Cunningham's humor and thanked her for applying.

CHAIR COSTELLO noted her work with the Special Olympics. She asked if she sees any challenges that she would like to address as a board member such as access in rural communities or coverage for insurance.

MS. CUNNINGHAM said she has been pleased with the way that insurance companies have embraced mental health. There is some indication that may not continue and it's frightening for everyone who works in mental health. Job losses will also have huge impacts on families. There will always be a need for people who can work with families to help with transitions to different lifestyles.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if she can bill insurance and Medicaid in her practice or if Medicaid billing requires working through a psychiatrist.

MS. CUNNINGHAM replied there are a lot of requirements to bill through Medicaid, one of which is that a psychiatrist needs to be on staff 40 hours per week.

[2:32:09 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Cunningham for being willing to serve. She noted that public testimony would remain open on all the nominees.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Nicole Jenkins of Palmer to share her interest in serving on the Marital and Family Therapy Board in the therapist/counselor seat.

NICOLE JENKINS, Appointee, Marital and Family Therapy Board, Anchorage, Alaska, said she moved to Alaska in 2014. She received her master's in marriage and family therapy in 2009 and is currently pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology. She was drawn to Alaska because it seemed that this profession was in its infancy compared to California where she lived before. Her interest in serving on the board is to see how to ensure the viability of the MFT profession moving forward to meet the needs in Alaska.

SENATOR HUGHES thanked Ms. Jenkins for her work in Palmer. She asked how Palmer compares to her life in California.

MS. JENKINS said the moment they drove into Palmer it felt like home.

SENATOR GARDNER asked what role the board might have in addressing the issue of medical billing for MFT services.

MS. JENKINS said she sees the role as bringing a voice to the national board to show why MFT services should be covered by Medicare and Medicaid.

VICE CHAIR HUGHES found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Jenkins for being willing to serve.

[2:38:33 PM](#)

VICE CHAIR HUGHES asked Traci Gilmour of Juneau to share her interest in serving on the Board of Massage Therapists in the licensed massage therapist seat.

TRACI GILMOUR, Appointee, Board of Massage Therapists, Juneau, Alaska, said she has been practicing massage in Alaska for 23 years. She worked with the Alaska coalition on the 2014 legislation to license massage therapists. She has been on the board since its inception and would like to continue the good work it is doing.

SENATOR GARDNER read excerpts of a letter from a constituent who questioned increasing the license fee from \$100 to \$610 plus new tests, fingerprinting, and other costly requirements. She asked what she should say to him; he feels he can't stay in the profession because of the additional costs.

MS. GILMOUR said the state sets the licensure fee and the board has requested reducing it to \$295 for the next application period. "We have heard the therapists and we are working to reduce our fees." She noted that the 16 hours of education can be done online, and that the most recent board minutes specifically address the constituent's questions.

CHAIR COSTELLO noted that insurance coverage for massage therapy has traditionally been difficult to get; she asked if more people are seeking coverage under different medical codes.

MS. GILMOUR said being able to bill insurance directly has been one of the biggest benefits of licensure. Coverage through Medicaid, Medicare, and Alaska Care Retiree is still difficult.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Gilmour for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Jill Motz of Wasilla to share her interest in serving on the Board of Massage Therapists in the licensed massage therapist seat.

JILL MOTZ, Appointee, Board of Massage Therapists, Wasilla, Alaska, said she has been a licensed massage therapist for 14 years. She reviewed her career and noted that she moved back into private practice in 2014 when licensing came to Alaska. She shared that she worked in various capacities for more than seven years to help bring licensure to the profession in Alaska. She is passionate about it and moving to the state board is a logical step to be of service.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Motz for her interest in serving.

[2:47:22 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Thomas Trosvig of Kodiak to share his interest in serving on the Occupational Safety and Health Review Board in the public seat.

THOMAS TROSVIG, Appointee, Occupational Safety and Health Review Board, Kodiak, Alaska, said this is a three-member board that hears OSHA appeal cases. He reviewed his professional career in the Coast Guard. His shore based specialty was marine safety and marine investigations. He has been on the board for more than ten years and has found the cases to be similar to those he handled in the Coast Guard. "I believe I have brought expertise in general safety matters and I have enjoyed using my expertise to enhance the safety for the citizens of Alaska."

SENATOR STEVENS thanked Mr. Trosvig for his work on the board and for making a life in Kodiak after a stellar career in the Coast Guard.

SENATOR GARDNER said she can't imagine how anyone could be more qualified for this particular board.

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked Captain Trosvig for being willing to serve.

2:51:16 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Stephen Hagedorn of Anchorage to share his interest in serving on the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission in the representative of employer seat.

STEPHEN HAGEDORN, Appointee, Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission, Anchorage, Alaska, reviewed his professional career and noted that he has served on this board under six different governors. He related that he has had extensive experience in workers' compensation matters, but he is not an attorney. He described the service as an opportunity to give back to the state.

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked Mr. Hagedorn for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Deirdre Ford of Anchorage to share her interest in serving on the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission in the commission chair seat.

2:54:46 PM

DEIRDRE FORD, Appointee, Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission, Anchorage, Alaska, said she was asked to come out of retirement for this service. She related that in 1985 she worked in Anchorage as an insurance defense counsel, primarily in the area of workers' compensation. In 2009 she became a hearing officer with the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board. She is pleased to be able to give something back to the state through this service.

SENATOR HUGHES observed that she was the co-chair of Alaska Sisters in Crime. She asked for an explanation.

MS. FORD explained that the national organization called Sisters in Crime was developed in the 1980s to bring together primarily women readers and writers of murder mysteries. Alaska formed a chapter with Dana Stabenow, Sue Henry, Suzan Nightingale and others. She described some of the activities the organization has undertaken.

SENATOR HUGHES asked what the acronym AIRRES stands for.

MS. FORD said she resigned from that board in 2012; it is an organization that provides people to read newspapers and books over the radio to blind and visually impaired people.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Ford for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Eleanor Vinson of Juneau to share her interest in serving on the Board of Professional Counselors in the public seat.

3:00:20 PM

ELEANOR VINSON, Appointee, Board of Professional Counselors, Juneau, Alaska, said she does not have a degree in counseling but she has lived in Valdez, Barrow, and Juneau since she came to Alaska in 1977 so she has an understanding of the unique areas of the state, which should be helpful. She has also worked as a staff member for a number of boards, so she has a good perspective of what it takes to be a good board member.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Vinson for being willing to serve.

3:01:56 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Saleutogi (Togi) Letuiligasenoa of Fairbanks to share his interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in an industry seat.

SALEUTOGI (TOGI) LETULIGASENOA, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Fairbanks, Alaska, said he was born and raised in Fairbanks and is currently the director of operations for a civil construction company that focuses on rural construction. The company also has an equipment rental division that provides oil field service and support; a rock quarry; and a marine department. He said his interest in serving on the board is to bring some of the knowledge from working in these multiple fields to the board. It is a way to give back to the state.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Mr. Letuligasenoa for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Linda Murphy to share her interest in serving on the Workers' Compensation Board in an industry seat.

LINDA MURPHY, Appointee, Workers' Compensation Board, Soldotna, Alaska, said she has lived in Alaska since 1972 and has both public and private sector experience. She was the city clerk and personnel director in Seward for about 16 years. Thereafter she moved to Soldotna and served as the Kenai Peninsula Borough clerk until 2005 when she retired. Since retirement she has

served on the borough planning commission and the assembly. Currently she is on the city council serving as vice mayor and runs the business end of the construction company she and her husband own. She said the foregoing experience makes her uniquely qualified to serve on the Workers' Compensation Board.

SENATOR STEVENS remarked that Ms. Murphy has been a valuable asset to communities and he appreciates the work she has done on the Alaska Municipal League Board of Directors. He thanked Ms. Murphy for applying to serve on the board.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions, comments, or public testimony and thanked Ms. Murphy for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Donna Phillips of Girdwood to share her interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in a labor seat.

DONNA PHILLIPS, Appointee, Alaska Workers Compensation Board, Appointee, Girdwood, Alaska, said she has been a registered nurse for 38 years. She currently works in the intensive care unit in an Anchorage hospital and is the labor chair of the Alaska Nurses Association. She also served on the hospital's state-patient handling committee and as the health and safety officer. She has served one term on the Workers' Compensation Board and enjoyed being able to use her expertise in hearing cases of injured workers.

SENATOR GARDNER greeted Ms. Phillips and extended her thanks.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no further questions or public testimony and thanked Ms. Phillips for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Aaron Plikat of Anchorage to share his interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in a labor seat.

[3:08:48 PM](#)

AARON PLIKAT, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Anchorage, Alaska, said he is a plumber and pipefitter by trade and has been a member of the local union since 1997. For the last ten years he has served as the union business agent and is the current president of the Building and Construction Trades Council for Southcentral Alaska. He also serves on several labor management boards and is currently the chair of the local apprenticeship training trust. He said he looks forward to serving on the board.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Mr. Plikat for being willing to serve. She highlighted that the committee members are reviewing the comprehensive packet on all the appointees as they listen to their testimony. Most of the resumes are very impressive.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Brett Stubbs to share his interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in an [industry] seat.

[3:10:17 PM](#)

BRETT STUBBS, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Anchorage, Alaska, said he has been in the construction industry for about 20 years. He started in residential construction, moved to commercial construction, and then joined the painters union in 2003. He served as president of that union and eventually became an estimator. As management, he served as the chair of the apprenticeship and training trust fund and a board member of the local painters' union retirement trust fund. He said he believes his experience would be an asset to the board.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Mr. Stubbs for being willing to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Rick Traini to share his interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in a labor seat.

[3:12:54 PM](#)

RICK TRAINI, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Anchorage, Alaska, said he worked at UPS for 16 years in a variety of positions and now he works for the local teamsters union as the negotiations coordinator. He has been serving on this board since 2011.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Mr. Traini for being willing to continue to serve.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Lake Williams to share his interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board in a labor seat.

LAKE WILLIAMS, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Fairbanks, Alaska, said he was born and raised in Fairbanks and has lived in Alaska fulltime except when he went to school to get a degree in business administration from the University of

Iowa. While going to school he joined the operating engineers' apprenticeship program. He worked in the field 10 years and has been in the office for 11 years. He listed his current and past affiliations. He was first appointed to the board in 2014 and has enjoyed serving. He shared his belief that institutional knowledge is beneficial. He appreciates both the labor and industry board members and has enjoyed the experience.

CHAIR COSTELLO found no questions or public testimony and thanked Mr. Williams for being willing to serve.

[3:16:52 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked all the appointees and stated that action would be taken on all the nominations at a later date. She highlighted the importance of the commitment and involvement of Alaskans who serve on boards and commissions uncompensated to further their professions and make the state work more smoothly.

SB 64-UNIFORM ENVIRONMENTAL COVENANTS ACT

[3:17:42 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO announced the consideration of SB 64. She stated that this is the second hearing and public testimony is closed; the intent is to answer questions and move the bill from committee.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if the sponsor expects to get letters stating support or opposition to the legislation.

[3:18:52 PM](#)

RACHEL HANKE, Staff, Senator Peter Micciche, Alaska State Legislature, said the sponsor's office is soliciting comments but at this point they have only heard opposition from the U.S. Department of Defense.

CHAIR COSTELLO noted the individuals who were available to answer questions. Finding no questions or comments, she asked for a motion.

[3:19:28 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES moved to report SB 64 from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

CHAIR COSTELLO announced that without objection, SB 64 is reported from the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

SB 71-COMMERCIAL FISHING LOANS

3:20:06 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO announced the consideration of SB 71 and noted that this was the first hearing.

3:20:43 PM

At ease

3:21:01 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO reconvened the meeting and asked Mr. Lamkin to introduce the bill.

3:21:20 PM

TIM LAMKIN, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens, Alaska State Legislature, introduced SB 71 speaking to the following sponsor statement:

Senate Bill 71 raises the maximum balance of sub-category loans an Alaskan resident may borrow from the state to support their activities in commercial fishing in Alaska.

The total balance allowed to be borrowed remains at \$400,000, but the bill allows borrowers more flexible options to reach the \$400,000 capped balance within the various loan sub-categories for which they qualify.

To clarify the effect of this bill, we must look to the loan categories described in a previous section of Alaska law, AS 16.10.310(a)(1)(a) through (a)(1)(f). The changes are summarized as follows:

Subsection A loans are intended for more experienced fishermen who hold current crewmember or commercial fishing permits, and who wish to purchase entry permits, upgrade existing vessels or gear to improve seafood product quality, or to improve fuel efficiency. The current Subsection A loan balance is capped at \$300,000. This bill raises that cap to \$400,000.

SENATOR HUGHES observed that, should the bill pass, fewer people will be able to get a loan.

MS. LAMKIN replied there is plenty of money to go around.

He continued to review the sponsor statement.

Subsection B loans are intended for repairing, upgrading, or purchasing vessels, and buying entry permits. Applicants must have been denied other financing options and demonstrate a local economic dependence on commercial fishing for their livelihood. Subsection B loan balances are currently capped at \$200,000 for buying permits or gear, and \$100,000 for vessel purchase, repair, etc. This bill caps all Subsection B loans to \$200,000.

Subsection C loans are intended for those wishing to buy Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQs) for halibut or sablefish. Applicants must have been denied other financing options. Subsection C loan balances are currently capped at \$300,000. SB 71 raises Subsection C loans maximum to \$400,000.

Subsection F loans are for Alaska residents wishing upgrade existing tender vessels and gear in order to improve the quality of Alaska seafood products. Section F loans are currently capped at \$300,000. SB 71 raises Subsection F loans maximum to \$400,000.

To reiterate, currently the most any Alaskan can borrow from the Alaska Commercial Fishing Loan Fund is \$400,000. SB 71 does not change that policy, but rather only changes how a person may reach the \$400,000 cap. It allows Alaskans to borrow more for an individual permit, engine, boat, gear, IFQ, etc., but still never more than \$400,000 total.

It is the policy of the state, under AS 16.10.300 - 16.10.370, to promote the rehabilitation of the state's fisheries, the development of a predominantly resident fishery, and the continued maintenance of commercial fishing gear and vessels throughout the state by means of long-term low interest loans. Senate Bill 71 is an effort to modernize that policy. Thank you for your consideration.

[3:30:46 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS, speaking as the sponsor of SB 71, related that this is part of the long-term solution to help young Alaskans get into the fishing industry. Right now, it is very difficult because the cost of boats and permits are astronomically high.

Mr. Lamkin made it very clear that the cap is not raised; "it just spreads it around a little bit differently."

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked Mr. Lamkin and Senator Stevens and held SB 71 in committee for further consideration.

[3:31:34 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Costello adjourned the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 3:31 p.m.