

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RULES STANDING COMMITTEE

April 25, 2018

8:15 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Kevin Meyer, Chair
Senator Pete Kelly
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Anna MacKinnon
Senator Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19(CRA) AM
Urging Governor Bill Walker to issue an administrative order
recognizing a linguistic emergency.

- MOVED SCS CSHCR 19(RLS) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HCR 19

SHORT TITLE: GOVERNOR: AK NATIVE LANGUAGES EMERGENCY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) ORTIZ

02/16/18	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/16/18	(H)	CRA
03/06/18	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/06/18	(H)	Heard & Held
03/06/18	(H)	MINUTE(CRA)
03/08/18	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/08/18	(H)	Moved CSHCR 19(CRA) Out of Committee
03/08/18	(H)	MINUTE(CRA)
03/09/18	(H)	CRA RPT CS(CRA) 5DP
03/09/18	(H)	DP: SADDLER, DRUMMOND, LINCOLN, RAUSCHER, PARISH
03/19/18	(H)	TRANSMITTED TO (S)
03/19/18	(H)	VERSION: CSHCR 19(CRA) AM
03/21/18	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

03/21/18 (S) CRA, STA
04/03/18 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
04/03/18 (S) Heard & Held
04/03/18 (S) MINUTE(CRA)
04/10/18 (S) CRA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
04/10/18 (S) Moved CSHCR 19(CRA) AM Out of Committee
04/10/18 (S) MINUTE(CRA)
04/11/18 (S) CRA RPT 3DP
04/11/18 (S) DP: BISHOP, GARDNER, HOFFMAN
04/17/18 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/17/18 (S) Heard & Held
04/17/18 (S) MINUTE(STA)
04/19/18 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/19/18 (S) Moved SCS CSHCR 19(STA) Out of
Committee
04/19/18 (S) MINUTE(STA)
04/20/18 (S) STA RPT SCS 5DP NEW TITLE
04/20/18 (S) DP: MEYER, WILSON, GIESSEL, EGAN,
COGHILL
04/23/18 (S) NOT TAKEN UP 4/23 - ON 4/24 CALENDAR
04/24/18 (S) RETURNED TO RLS COMMITTEE UC
04/25/18 (S) RLS AT 8:15 AM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

No witness

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:15:24 AM](#)

CHAIR KEVIN MEYER called the Senate Rules Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators MacKinnon, Gardner, Micciche, Kelly, and Chair Meyer.

HCR 19-GOVERNOR: AK NATIVE LANGUAGES EMERGENCY

[8:15:45 AM](#)

CHAIR MEYER announced consideration of HCR 19. [SCS CSHCR 19(STA), version 30-LS1402\T, was before the committee.] He said this resolution had been heard in the Senate Community and Regional Affairs and Senate State Affairs Committees; it was amended in the Senate State Affairs Committee changing the title and emergency language to "recognizing the urgent need for language revitalization efforts." This meeting is being held today to address two amendments.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLY moved Amendment 1.

AMENDMENT 1

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SCS CSHCR 19(STA)

BY SENATOR KELLY

Page 1, line 1:

Delete "issue an administrative order
recognizing"

Insert "recognize"

Page 2, line 24:

Delete "issue an administrative order
recognizing"

Insert "recognize"

CHAIR MEYER objected for discussion purposes.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLY explained that current language states that the Alaska legislature urges Governor Walker to issue an administrative order recognizing the urgent need for language revitalization efforts. This amendment just takes out the administrative order words and conforms the title, because of a separation of powers issue. The legislature writes statutes and the governor has the right to write administrative orders, but the legislature shouldn't be asking the governor to do what the legislature is able to do in a statute.

This resolution speaks to something that the state needs and the amendment does not change the spirit of it. It just allows the legislature to be vigilant about the separation of powers.

CHAIR MEYER removed his objection. Finding no further objections, he said Amendment 1 was adopted.

SENATOR GARDNER moved Amendment 2.

AMENDMENT 2

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SCS CSHCR 19 (STA)

BY SENATOR GARDNER

Page 1, lines 1 - 2:

Delete "the urgent need for language
revitalization efforts"

Insert "a linguistic emergency"

Page 2, lines 24 - 25:

Delete "the urgent need for language
revitalization efforts"

Insert "a linguistic emergency"

CHAIR MEYER objected for discussion purposes.

[8:19:26 AM](#)

SENATOR GARDNER related how one of her majors in college was linguistics and she remembers discussions on how language colors culture. For example, in Gambia, an uncle - any of the father's brothers - uses the same word as the father and a mother's sisters are all called mother, because they all carry the responsibilities and obligations of the father and mother; as a child, they would all mother you. Their language defines that very clearly, and when you lose a language you really lose the way of seeing the world, and that is why it is an emergency.

[8:20:45 AM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE remembered about 25 years ago when his community made the effort of recording the Dena'ina language through the help of two remaining fluent speakers and he thinks this resolution recognizes the need to take immediate action, but when he thinks of an emergency, he thinks of life and death situations, and this needs to be a comprehensive plan on mobilizing for documenting existing languages. "Urgency" does not adequately capture that. He just wants this resolution to get to the floor and it doesn't need additional complications at this point.

SENATOR GARDNER said they are really discussing degrees of importance. To those who are relatively new to the state it has little impact, but to some Alaskans whose history in the state goes back thousands of years it makes a huge difference. It is critically important and that was heard in their emotional testimony. They are talking about the ongoing death of a culture, and for some people it is a death.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLY explained why he won't support her amendment. "Emergency" has a statutory definition; it is not just a term of art. It means the Governor declares an emergency and the National Guard or FEMA is called out. The legislature doesn't do this. This issue needs some community involvement and he feel uncomfortable using the word "emergency" in this regard.

SENATOR GARDNER responded that she will look into that between now and the floor session.

CHAIR MEYER maintained his objection.

[8:25:45 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Senator Gardner voted yea; Senators Micciche, Kelly, MacKinnon, and Meyer vote nay. Amendment 2 failed on a 1:4 vote.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLY moved to report SCS CSHCR 19(RLS), as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached zero fiscal note. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

[8:26:34 AM](#)

CHAIR MEYER adjourned the Senate Rules Committee meeting at 8:26 a.m.