

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 3, 2020

8:04 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Harriet Drummond, Co-Chair  
Representative Sara Hannan, Co-Chair  
Representative Matt Claman  
Representative Steve Thompson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Representative Sharon Jackson  
Representative DeLena Johnson

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 193

"An Act adding a second verse to the official state song."

- MOVED HB 193 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 221

"An Act providing for state recognition of federally recognized tribes; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 221 (TRB) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 193

SHORT TITLE: SECOND VERSE OF ALASKA'S STATE SONG

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) STORY

01/21/20	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/20
01/21/20	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/20	(H)	CRA, STA
02/27/20	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/27/20	(H)	Heard & Held
02/27/20	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
03/03/20	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 221

SHORT TITLE: STATE RECOGNITION OF TRIBES

SPONSOR (s) : REPRESENTATIVE (s) KOPP

01/27/20	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/27/20	(H)	TRB, CRA
02/13/20	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/13/20	(H)	Heard & Held
02/13/20	(H)	MINUTE (TRB)
02/18/20	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
02/18/20	(H)	Moved CSHB 221 (TRB) Out of Committee
02/18/20	(H)	MINUTE (TRB)
02/19/20	(H)	TRB RPT CS (TRB) 4DP 1NR 1AM
02/19/20	(H)	DP: KOPP, LINCOLN, EDGMON, ZULKOSKY
02/19/20	(H)	NR: VANCE
02/19/20	(H)	AM: TALERICO
02/27/20	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/27/20	(H)	Heard & Held
02/27/20	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
03/03/20	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented HB 193.

SUSAN BEHLKE FOLEY, President

University of Alaska Foundation;

Chief Development Officer

University of Alaska

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered a brief clarifying comment during the hearing on HB 193.

KENDRA KLOSTER, Executive Director

Native People's Action

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 221.

KELSEY WALLACE, Communications Director

Native People's Action

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 221.

RONALD LEIGHTON, President

Organized Village of Kaasan

Kaasan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 221.

JUDITH JAMES  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 221.

MARINA ANDERSON, Administrator/Vice President  
Organized Village of Kasaan  
Kasaan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 221.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[8:04:59 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR HARRIET DRUMMOND** called the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Representatives Thompson, Claman, Hannan, and Drummond were present at the call to order.

#### **HB 193-SECOND VERSE OF ALASKA'S STATE SONG**

[8:05:46 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND** announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 193, "An Act adding a second verse to the official state song."

[8:06:28 AM](#)

**REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY**, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented HB 193. She said she was proud of the students that testified before the committee at the previous hearing on HB 193. She reviewed some of the points the students had made about why they support the proposed legislation: It highlights all cultures in Alaska; it makes people learn more about history and about Benny Benson, the winner of the Alaska Flag design contest; and it honors Alaska's indigenous people. She indicated she knew there was support for the second verse based on having followed similar legislation about it in the past. She reminded the committee that HB 193 would not change the first verse but would simply add to what is already official. She said there is a letter from the University of Alaska Foundation showing that it owns the rights to the song and "they are available for use." The proposed legislation would not require that the second verse be sung, but would allow those who want to sing the second verse the ability to do so.

She opined that the second verse "complements the first verse, tells a more complete story of Alaska, and honors all cultures here."

[8:08:52 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND opened public testimony on HB 193.

[8:09:07 AM](#)

SUSAN BEHLKE FOLEY, President, University of Alaska Foundation; Chief Development Officer, University of Alaska, remarked that the university has no official stance on HB 193 but wants to maintain its copyright [to the Flag Song].

[8:10:06 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND, after ascertaining that there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 193.

[8:10:33 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN moved to report [HB 193] out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection, HB 193 was reported out of the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:11:01 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:11 a.m. to 8:14 a.m.

#### **HB 221-STATE RECOGNITION OF TRIBES**

[8:14:55 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 221, "An Act providing for state recognition of federally recognized tribes; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee was CSHB 221(TRB).]

[8:15:11 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND opened public testimony on CSHB 221(TRB).

[8:15:23 AM](#)

KENDRA KLOSTER, Executive Director, Native People's Action, testified in support of HB 221. She said:

Alaska Native people have lived on these lands for thousands of years. Our cultures are deep within Alaska history. Tribal governments have held special recognition and place in Alaska as sovereign governments providing important services and support, including public safety, economic development, and protecting our land and waters. This bill will be good for not only tribal citizens but for all of Alaskans. Alaska's home to 229 federally recognized tribes. This formal relationship was established with the federal government; however, we have not had any formal recognition by the State of Alaska. We have to recognize that in Alaska there is no Alaska without the indigenous people, and it's time, finally, that our state government in Alaska formally recognize the First People of Alaska.

MS. KLOSTER concluded her testimony by stating her appreciation of the bill sponsor, Representative Kopp, for bringing HB 221 forward and expressing hope that the legislature would support and pass the proposed legislation.

[8:17:13 AM](#)

KELSEY WALLACE, Communications Director, Native People's Action, testified in support of HB 221. She indicated that she is testifying as a tribal citizen. She said Native people have stewarded the land and waters [that make up Alaska] since time immemorial. Today, tribes provide essential services and programs, including public safety, economic development, and education, as well as employment opportunities for people in rural areas. She opined that HB 221 is long overdue. She added that she says that "with a smile." She said the proposed legislation would "open up silos that have been created between tribal governments and the State of Alaska." She said it will benefit Alaska as a whole.

[8:19:42 AM](#)

RONALD LEIGHTON, President, Organized Village of Kaasan, testified in support of HB 221. Concurred that it is about time this legislation took place. Tribal, state, and federal government is beneficial; it brings in federal funds. He said he thinks tribes working together benefit from pooling funds.

He congratulated the state "on new reform with this" and anticipated "better things to come in the state because of this - both for tribes and the State of Alaska."

[8:23:09 AM](#)

JUDITH JAMES testified in support of HB 221. She said as a student at the University of Alaska, she did a practicum regarding "the language of the land." She said every tribe in Alaska is working on healing from historical trauma. She said she was a drug and alcohol counselor for 7 years. She has spoken about historical trauma. She said she grew up in the '60s where in her community "the lights went out at 10 o'clock and we brought out our oil lamps." She said she tries to give back to any community in which she has lived. She has been a member of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, among other organizations. She said she believes that tribal sovereignty and the State of Alaska go hand in hand. The state is rich in culture. She thanked the committee.

[8:25:58 AM](#)

MARINA ANDERSON, Administrator/Vice President, Organized Village of Kasaan, offered an introduction in her Native language. Then she stated, "The tribes in Alaska operate a very heavy and sustainable economic base for the small areas that surround us." She indicated that tribal citizens and non-tribal citizens benefit from "our growing economy." She stated that she thinks it is important to pass HB 221. She said she thinks there are opportunities for [tribes and the State of Alaska] to work together in areas such as natural resources, tribal courts, law enforcement, education, and the economy.

[8:28:23 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND closed public testimony on CSHB 221(TRB).

[8:28:38 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN moved to report CSHB 221(TRB) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection, CSHB 221(TRB) was reported out of the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:29:41 AM](#)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.