

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 12, 2019

1:12 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Matt Claman, Chair  
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, Vice Chair  
Representative Laddie Shaw

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Chuck Kopp  
Representative Louise Stutes  
Representative Adam Wool  
Representative David Eastman

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARING: COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

- HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 124

"An Act relating to the recording of documents; relating to notaries and notarization; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JANE MORES, Deputy Municipal Attorney  
City and Borough of Juneau  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:12:17 PM](#)

**CHAIR MATT CLAMAN** called the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:12 p.m. Representatives Shaw, LeDoux, and Claman were present at the call to order.

**Confirmation Hearing: Commission on Judicial Conduct**

[1:14:06 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced that the only order of business would be a confirmation hearing for Jane Mores, the governor's appointee to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

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CHAIR CLAMAN opened public testimony on Ms. Mores's appointment.

[1:14:40 PM](#)

JANE MORES, Deputy Municipal Attorney, City and Borough of Juneau, testified as appointee to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. She paraphrased from a prepared statement, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Thank you very much for this opportunity to introduce myself, Jane Mores, as the Governor's appointee to an attorney-seat on the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

I'd like to share a little bit of my personal and professional history with you, before turning to my service commitment, should the legislature confirm my appointment to the Commission.

My husband, Peter (here in the audience), and I are semi-empty nesters, with 5 adult sons/stepsons between us. Our last two are in college-- one in his 1st year at UAS and the other finishing his second year at a community college in Oregon.

I moved to Alaska from Ohio with my family, as a young teenager in 1976. We joined a Christian Community about 10 miles outside of Hoonah, known as Game Creek or Mt. Bether, where I lived for the next 7 ½ years. Navigating those years in a close knit community taught me a lot about hard work and human nature --life lessons I'll forever value and hold dear. I don't milk cows, bridle horses, chop wood, can cauliflower,

dry greens, dig clams, cheek halibut, pitch hay, hand-crank a tractor or hand-weed endless rows of carrots much anymore, but that's ok. I like to think I gained from my years at Game Creek, a work ethic, critical thinking skills, relational skills and a personal and professional code of conduct that help define who I am today.

In my early 20's, I went from SE AK to the SEastern US where I obtained my bachelor's degree in secondary education from Auburn University. Having a classmate named Bo Jackson is one of my favorite Auburn memories. Yup, 'Bo Knows' (sort of, not really) ME!-- if sitting right behind me in a class, counts!

After a brief teaching stint in rural Alabama, I obtained my law degree from Ohio State University and was admitted to the Alaska Bar in 1990.

Since that time, I've represented individuals and business clients large and small, first with a private firm in Anchorage and then as a sole practitioner in Haines. For the past 12 years, I have been in the public sector--and had the pleasure of working for the City and Borough of Juneau Law Department.

In my years of practice, I've handled tort & contract, insurance defense, business & real estate, employment law and probate and estate planning matters. I've provided an array of legal services to CBJ municipal departments and handled a variety of hearings, administrative appeals and general civil litigation matters. I've advised the Assembly and various municipal boards and commissions, such as the Planning Commission, the Bartlett Regional Hospital Board, the Bid Review Board and the Board of Equalization.

Through my municipal work I've conducted specialized board trainings on conflicts of interest and the quasi-judicial role of certain boards---that of being a fair and impartial tribunal vested with authority to make decisions under applicable rules of law, much like a judge. Before that I had the pleasure serving 6 years on the Alaska Bar Association's Ethic Committee, a committee responsible for researching and writing ethics opinions at the request of Bar Counsel and/or the Board of Governors.

This brings me to my interest in serving on the Commission, and the commitment I make to you, as legislators, and to every Alaskan, should I be confirmed.

I believe, and quote from the Preamble of the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct:

The role of the judiciary is central to American concepts of justice and the rule of law.... Judges, individually and collectively, must respect and honor the judicial office as a public trust and strive to enhance and maintain confidence in our legal system. The judge ... is a highly visible symbol of government under the rule of law.

I believe public trust and confidence in our judicial system is essential to the effectiveness of the system. Public trust is not built on blind trust, but must be earned and maintained through public accountability. We know Judges have significant authority and make decisions every day that change lives and have far-reaching impacts. Those entrusted with such positions must not only be competent in the law, but must conduct themselves in and out of the courtroom in a manner that upholds the integrity of the office.

As you know, the Judicial Conduct Commission is tasked with the oversight of judicial conduct through a fair and impartial deliberative review process that investigates and appropriately addresses complaints of judicial misconduct and disability. This oversight protects the public and maintains public trust. As a member of the legal community, both of these things are especially important to me.

I also respect the Constitutional make-up of the Commission---that of public citizen members, judge-members and attorney members. I can assure you that in carrying out my Commission responsibilities every perspective and voice on the Commission will be of equal import to me. I think anyone who knows me would vouch for that fact. You have my commitment on that.

I'm very honored by this appointment from the Governor & will undertake my duties to the absolute best of my ability. I also want to acknowledge & give a shout out to Juneau atty & colleague Lael Harrison, for her integrity & professionalism—as having been appointed to this seat last year by the prior administration. Thank you for your time and consideration --- I also want to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication to the people of the state of Alaska.

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REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked, "Who's Bo Jackson?"

REPRESENTATIVE SHAW explained that Bo Jackson was a great athlete who played both baseball and football professionally.

MS. MORES added that Bo Jackson was the 1985 Heisman Trophy winner.

REPRESENTATIVE SHAW informed Representative LeDoux that the Heisman Trophy is a football award.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX said she knows that. She noted that she attended the University of Southern California (USC).

CHAIR CLAMAN commented that Bo Jackson was drafted by the Oakland Raiders and suffered a hip injury fairly early during his professional football career. He noted that Bo Jackson was among the first to have a well-publicized hip replacement surgery.

REPRESENTATIVE SHAW noted that "the other Heisman Trophy winner" attended USC. He asked Representative LeDoux if she knows to whom he is referring.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX answered "yes." She said she attended USC the same years "that he was there."

CHAIR CLAMAN asked Representative LeDoux if O.J. Simpson ever had a class with her at USC.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX answered "no."

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CHAIR CLAMAN shared his personal history working with Ms. Mores and spoke highly of her qualifications. He remarked that the Commission on Judicial Conduct is vital to the integrity and the reputation of the Alaska Court System.

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REPRESENTATIVE SHAW commented that he supports the appointment because Ms. Mores is well-spoken, and he can tell she is highly respected. He added that he also grew up in Ohio.

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REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX said Ms. Mores is extremely qualified. She shared some of her own personal history with Ms. Mores.

[1:25:03 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN, after ascertaining that no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on Ms. Mores's appointment.

[1:25:19 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX stated that the House Judiciary Standing Committee has reviewed the qualifications of the Governor's appointee and recommends that the following name be forwarded to a joint session for consideration: Jane Mores to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. She stated that this does not reflect intent by any of the members to vote for or against this individual during any further session for the purposes of confirmation.

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The committee took an at-ease from 1:25 p.m. to 1:28 p.m.

[1:28:15 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN explained that he spoke with Legislative Legal Services during the at-ease and was advised that the committee could not take action on Ms. Mores's appointment without a quorum. He said the committee would seek to forward her name to the joint session during the next meeting.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.