

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 12, 2020

1:55 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Matt Claman, Chair
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative Harriet Drummond
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
Representative Laddie Shaw

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative David Eastman

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar

William Granger - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Commission on Judicial Conduct

Jane Mores - Anchorage

Robert Sheldon - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

WILLIAM GRANGER, Appointee
Board of Governors
Alaska Bar Association
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered testimony on his appointment to the Alaska Bar Association Board of Governors.

JANE MORES, Appointee
Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct
Alaska Court System
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered testimony on her appointment to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

ROBERT SHELDON, Appointee
Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct
Alaska Court System
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered testimony on his appointment to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:55:45 PM](#)

CHAIR MATT CLAMAN called the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:55 p.m. Representatives Claman, Stutes, LeDoux, and Shaw were present at the call to order. Representatives Kopp and Drummond arrived as the meeting was in progress.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S): **Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar**

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CHAIR CLAMAN announced that the only order of business would be the Confirmation Hearings on the Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar and the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

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CHAIR CLAMAN opened public testimony.

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WILLIAM GRANGER, Appointee, Board of Governors, Alaska Bar Association, offered testimony on his appointment to the Alaska Bar Association Board of Governors. He stated that he has served on the Board of Governors for approximately 14 years, although not all that time has been served contiguously. He explained that most of his time served on the Board of Governors has been as treasurer. He expressed that he has enjoyed the

work, learned a lot along the way, and would like to be considered for reappointment.

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REPRESENTATIVE STUTES asked Mr. Granger, aside from his experience on the Board of Governors, what qualifies him to be on the board.

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MR. GRANGER answered that he thinks boards should have a reasonable amount of diversity and talent. He remarked that he is a public member and has been involved with financial businesses for most of his life. He expressed that he is a "numbers, dollars, sense kind of guy." He said that he has interacted extensively with the legal community throughout his professional career, which gives him a reasonable understanding of how lawyers operate in civil proceedings. He expressed that he thinks he lends a great deal of continuity and institutional knowledge to the board; the board members turn over regularly and he stated that he thinks he is the longest tenured member to have ever served on the board. He said that he thinks the institutional knowledge he has is valuable in helping new board members get up to speed as quickly as possible; the turnover typically happens every three years. He added, "It takes really a full year for them to get a grasp as to what's going on, the second year to start kind of contributing in a meaningful way, and the third year to be up to speed and running, and usually after that they're gone." He summarized that as a public member, he is always interested in what is good for the public and working to ensure that the Alaska Bar Association is acting in the public's best interest and contributing to the public's perception of the judiciary.

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REPRESENTATIVE STUTES asked whether Mr. Granger could tell her what the function is of the Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar Association.

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MR. GRANGER replied that the Board of Governors is responsible for administering the testing for the entrance to the Alaska Bar Association and it makes recommendations to the Alaska Supreme Court. He stated that it is responsible for administering

discipline in matters regarding lawyers who may have violated ethics or court rules. The board also administers funds for the lawyers' fund for client protection; should a lawyer pass away while he/she has clients, the board will handle the transition and arrange to find another lawyer to take over the case. He said that the board is involved in education and advocacy projects, and it puts on a free legal symposium that allows people to meet a large group of lawyers and get free legal advice.

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CHAIR CLAMAN noted that he had served on the Board of Governors for six years in the mid-2000s, and he found Mr. Granger to have a very active presence. He stated that the total number of members on the Board of Governors is 12 or 13, 3 of which are public members. He explained that Mr. Granger was in the minority as a public member and, in two significant areas during Chair Claman's tenure, Mr. Granger was a tireless voice for the public's interest. He recalled a discussion on whether the Alaska Bar Association should have a director of pro bono services, in which the public members of the board really worked to convince the lawyers on the board that it was a good idea. He added that Mr. Granger was also a very strong voice in terms of increasing required continuing education, which prevailed in the Alaska Supreme Court and resulted in a now mandatory legal education rule. He summarized that Mr. Granger has been effective on the board and has a great deal of institutional knowledge. He expressed that he thinks it is good to see Mr. Granger desire to continue his service, and he commended the governor for re-appointing him to the board.

[The statement made in regard to forwarding the confirmation of William Granger, Appointee, Board of Governors, was combined with the statement forwarding the two appointees to the Commission on Judicial Conduct made at the end of the meeting.]

Commission on Judicial Conduct

[2:06:04 PM](#)

JANE MORES, Appointee, Commission on Judicial Conduct, Alaska Court System, offered testimony on her appointment to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. She stated that she has been a member of the Alaska Bar Association for nearly 30 years and it was her pleasure to serve on the Commission on Judicial Conduct for the past year. She expressed that she was honored to be

reappointed and hopes to continue her service for a full four-year term. She stated that she did not have a prepared statement, but she would be happy to answer any questions the committee might have.

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REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND thanked Ms. Mores for her service on the commission. She pointed out to the committee that Ms. Mores is the sister of Senator Shelley Hughes. She expressed that she met Ms. Mores in her first year as a legislator in 2013 and is "pleased to no end" to be able to move her name forward on the appointment.

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CHAIR CLAMAN stated that he has known Ms. Mores for nearly his entire time in the legislature and has always appreciated her participation and contributions in the community. He said that he is pleased to see her getting reappointed to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

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ROBERT SHELDON, Appointee, Commission on Judicial Conduct, Alaska Court System, offered testimony on his appointment to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. He stated that he is a third generation Alaskan who has followed in his family's example of public service in Alaska, which has spanned the last 88 years. He said he is presently employed by companies and serves on boards for high latitude capital formation and business endeavors in Alaska, Canada, Iceland, Greenland, and Mainland Scandinavia. He explained that since 2004, he has served on several boards, commissions, and councils for each of the past five governors of Alaska. He stated that he would be going on to his fourth term on the Commission on Judicial Conduct. He explained that the commission investigates alleged judicial misconduct and ethical impropriety; he expressed that it was fortunate that most of these complaints were either unsubstantiated or not under the commission's jurisdiction.

MR. SHELDON said that his education, work, and interest in finance and economics extends to interconnections with the judiciary, and he expressed that the rule of law is critical to the orderly function of the economy but is also a component of Alaska's cost of capital. He explained that Alaska is priced as though it is an emerging market rather than a developing

economy; it is his hope that through ensuring continued confidence in the judiciary, Alaska's cost of capital will decrease over time. He expressed that serving on the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct has been an extremely satisfying experience, but he has seen it is highly important that the commission has orderly continuity of service, as well as institutional knowledge retention amongst its members. He stated that judge and attorney representatives are, for a variety of reasons, frequently unable to serve for more than one four-year period, and public members help to bridge long-term continuity and knowledge; he expressed that he hopes to continue to be a part of that continuity and knowledge.

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REPRESENTATIVE SHAW commented, "I got back on the Ruth [Glacier] this last season and I see that the Mountain House has expanded accordingly; it's quite a beautiful structure and I hadn't been up there since the days that I was climbing with Harry Johnson and Janae (ph), and I just wanted to say hello."

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MR. SHELDON replied, "Well, thank you very much. It's been the fulfillment of a 50-year family vision."

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REPRESENTATIVE KOPP stated that he is very happy that Mr. Sheldon wants to continue with his service, and he thinks that it is fortunate to have someone who is involved on so many levels bring his experience to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct. He said, "It's not often that we have individuals that run on about 12 tracks simultaneously, but he's got the energy to do it."

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CHAIR CLAMAN thanked Mr. Sheldon for his willingness to serve again. He equated Mr. Sheldon's experience, as a public member of a board, to that of Mr. Granger, and he expressed that he thinks the experience these men bring, with their prior service, is a real benefit to the boards on which they serve.

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CHAIR CLAMAN, after ascertaining that there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony.

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REPRESENTATIVE STUTES stated that the House Judiciary Standing Committee had reviewed the qualifications of the governor's appointees, and recommends that the following names be forwarded to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration: William Granger to the Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar, Jane Mores to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, and Robert Sheldon to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct. She stated that this does not reflect intent by any of the members to vote for or against these individuals during any further sessions for the purposes of confirmation.

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CHAIR CLAMAN stated that the names would be forwarded to the joint session of the House and Senate.

[2:13:22 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.