

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

January 31, 2020

1:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative John Lincoln, Co-Chair
Representative Geran Tarr, Co-Chair
Representative Grier Hopkins, Vice Chair
Representative Sara Hannan
Representative Chris Tuck
Representative Ivy Spohnholz
Representative Dave Talerico
Representative Sara Rasmussen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative George Rauscher

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 12

Establishing a House Special Committee on Climate Change.

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 27

"An Act relating to the manufacture, sale, distribution, and labeling of child-related products containing certain flame-retardant chemicals; relating to an interstate chemicals clearinghouse; adding unlawful acts to the Alaska Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HR 12

SHORT TITLE: HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) JOSEPHSON

05/14/19	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/14/19	(H)	RES
01/24/20	(H)	RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

01/24/20 (H) Heard & Held
01/24/20 (H) MINUTE (RES)
01/31/20 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

NATHANIEL GRABMAN, Staff
Representative Andy Josephson
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced a Committee Substitute, Version S, to HR 12 on behalf of the resolution sponsor, Representative Andy Josephson.

TERRY CHAPIN
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

KENT BARKHAU
Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

MICHAEL TOBIN
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HB 12.

LYNETTE PHAM
Unalaska, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ERIC JORDAN
Sitka, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

SALLY SCHLICHTING
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

DICK FARNELL
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

KONRAD SCHAAD
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ALYSSA QUINTYNE, Community Organizer
The Alaska Center;
Volunteer
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

SOMMERS COLE
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ELAINE SCHROEDER
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

MARA KIMMEL
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ERIC MEADOR
Houston, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

HAROLD SPENCE
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

JOSEPH MIDDLETON
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

SHAYNA

no address provided

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing of HR 12.

TRAVIS MONTGOMERY

Anchorage Faith & Action Congregations Together (AFACT)

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

BOB SCHROEDER

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

MIKE HEKKERS

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

SAMUEL MAUKOKAS

Ketchikan, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ABIGAIL STEFFEN

Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

NOAH WILLIAMS

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

AARON BRAKEL

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

GORDON VERNON

Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

MARGI DASHEZSKY

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

CLAYTON HAMILTON
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

AUSTIN TAGABAN aka NAAWEIYAA
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ANN RAPPOPORT
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ESAU SINNOK
Shishmaref, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

LOUIE FLORA
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

MINDY O'NEAL
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

VIKKI KENNEDY
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

HEATHER EVOY
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

DOUG ROBBINS
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ANA HOKENSON

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support during the hearing of HR 12.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:04:26 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR GERAN TARR called the House Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Representatives Tarr, Lincoln, Hopkins, Hannan, Spohnholz, Talerico, and Rasmussen were present at the call to order. Representative Tuck arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HR 12-HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

[1:05:09 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR TARR announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 12, Establishing a House Special Committee on Climate Change.

[1:08:02 PM](#)

NATHANIEL GRABMAN, Staff, Representative Andy Josephson, Alaska State Legislature, stated that there was a proposed committee substitute, dependent on the will of the committee.

[1:08:36 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HR 12, 31-LS0817\S, Nauman, 1/30/20 [Version S] as the working document.

[1:08:51 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR TARR objected for discussion purposes.

[1:08:56 PM](#)

MR. GRABMAN introduced the proposed committee substitute (CS), and explained the proposed changes, which included:

Page 1, line 1: a name change to the House Special Committee on Climate Policy to emphasize a focus on

forward-looking actions by the Alaska State Legislature and others could take rather than simply doing more research and creating more reports;

Page 1, lines 8-16 and page 2, lines 1-5 would add a number of new WHEREAS statements with specific information related to record heat and fires during the summer of 2019 as well as a statement on drought which has been an issue which was not originally involved;

Page 2, line 18 would replace the word 'melting' with 'thawing'; in the section dealing with permafrost, permafrost is defined as ground including rock and soil which has been continually below freezing for two or more years; while ice water can be present, it's not necessarily all ice, and because the rock and soil is not itself turning into a liquid, it would make more sense to have 'thawing' as the word there;

Page 2 lines 21-31 adds some new WHEREAS statements with information relating to Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, maintenance costs or Alaskan infrastructure and village relocation;

Page 3, lines 2-7 rephrases some existing WHEREAS statements for grammar and clarification.

[1:11:19 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR TARR removed her objection. There being no further objection, Version S was adopted as the working draft.

[1:11:24 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR TARR asked that testifiers be aware of the importance of brevity when giving public testimony. She pointed out that a zero fiscal note had been attached to the proposed resolution by the House Resources Standing Committee, and she confirmed her comfort with this fiscal note as the Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA) who would provide the staffing for the proposed committee, had helped with its preparation. She read from the resolution packet:

provided that meetings held during the interim are located at a legislative information office that is staffed year-round, such as in Anchorage or Fairbanks,

there would be no additional cost to the Legislative Affairs Agency to provide support to those meetings.

1:13:27 PM

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked for confirmation that the Juneau Legislative Information Office (LIO) was staffed year-round and whether there would be the potential to have meetings in Juneau, Anchorage, or Fairbanks.

CO-CHAIR TARR stated that, as Juneau was staffed year-round, meetings could be held in Juneau.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked for clarification where the committee would meet if it was going to meet.

CO-CHAIR TARR replied that the email from LAA had only used Anchorage and Fairbanks as examples.

1:15:09 PM

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK pointed out that, should this resolution pass, the committee would be meeting in Juneau, although after the end of the session all the bills remaining in the committee would die. He added that the committee could meet in the interim for presentations, although no action could go any further. He reported that this was the question for a task force versus a working group versus a committee. He suggested that, with one meeting per month, there could be three meetings prior to the end of session. He suggested that this was the reason there was no fiscal note.

CO-CHAIR TARR expressed her hope that the sponsor was taking note of Representative Tuck's comments, as other members had also been concerned.

1:16:56 PM

[CO-CHAIR TARR opened public testimony on HR 12]

1:18:12 PM

TERRY CHAPIN reported that he had studied climate change and its effect on Alaskan ecosystems and communities for fifty years as well as participated in Alaskan national and international climate assessments. He declared that all these assessments showed patterns of climate warming, with Alaska warming twice as

fast as the planet. He pointed out that some of these consequences were already listed in proposed HR 12. He emphasized that it was urgent to act as it had become increasingly clear that 3.5 billion people would be living in temperatures warmer than the Sierra desert, which would induce mass migration. He stated that the youth today would experience these drastic changes in climate and the resulting societal consequences. He offered his belief that, as Alaska was on the front line of climate change, it was important for the state to take steps toward policy making. He pointed out that, even as many cities in Alaska were already moving forward with planning for climate change, there was the lack of a concerted effort at the state government level.

[1:20:21 PM](#)

KENT BARKHAU expressed his agreement with the need to act, noting that preparations must begin at the state level. He referenced the Yale Center for Climate Communication's nationwide poll which reflected that 75 percent of Americans recognized and wanted action by the members of U.S. Congress to counter climate change. He added that this included 75 percent of Republican voters under the age of 30. He declared that it was in everyone's interest to deal with this significant problem. He offered his belief that it was the special interest groups against Alaskans who were ignoring the challenges from climate change.

[1:22:26 PM](#)

MICHAEL TOBIN reported that he was a board member of "350 Juneau, Climate Action for Alaska." He reported that the WHEREAS portion of proposed HR 12 laid out many of the reasons Alaska needs the committee. He pointed out that Alaska was warming almost twice as fast as the rest of the United States, especially in Southcentral Alaska with consecutive hot, smoky summers. He noted that, after several years of drought and fire storms in California and Australia, residents of Southeast Alaska were becoming aware that our forests could burn, as well. He added that Paradise, California, recently destroyed by fire, had the same population as Juneau. He listed many results from climate change which affected all areas of our lives, including: thawing permafrost, lack of sea ice, melting glaciers, heat and drought, shorter snow seasons, and thinner river ice. He declared that this was just the early stage of the climate emergency and was promising to be rapidly changing and unpredictable. He shared an example of the winter temperatures

in Siberia which were 70 degrees Fahrenheit above normal. He declared his support for proposed HR 12 as one way to evaluate legislation from a climate perspective.

1:25:13 PM

LYNETTE PHAM shared her fear of losing her home. She shared a personal anecdote about her parents meeting in Alaska as war refugees. She asked for protection for the fishing industry.

1:27:36 PM

ERIC JORDAN reported that he was a lifelong Alaskan and more than 40-year member of the Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee. He read from his written comments regarding a climate change emergency in the Sitka area. He emphasized the urgency for taking action to this "incredible problem."

1:30:07 PM

SALLY SCHLICHTING shared that she was a 50-year resident of Juneau and that she supported proposed HR 12. She listed the changes and impacts of global warming and pointed out that Alaska was the largest state in the U.S. facing these challenges. She suggested that the climate impacts be viewed through "a fiscal lens," pointing to coastal erosion, thawing permafrost, forest fires, and drought, all of which pose infrastructure costs that are in the billions. She reported that, as banks, insurance companies, and investment firms were moving away from businesses, infrastructure, and real estate that had climate risks, this would affect Alaska's bottom line. She declared that this special committee was an opportunity to focus on legislation that could 'climate-proof' our budget and ensure community resilience. She stated that legislation could include energy conservation and efficiency, incentives to transition to renewable energy, focus on infrastructure vulnerabilities, and reduction of state expenditures over the long term.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked about her personal expertise and professional background work with water issues in Alaska. She asked if state agencies were appropriately addressing these impacts.

MS. SCHLICHTING reported that she had formerly worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), in the Division of Spill Prevention and Response. She declared that it was her

understanding that climate change was not being evaluated. She offered her belief that DEC was not the appropriate agency to head up climate change, as it did not have the capacity.

[1:33:34 PM](#)

DICK FARNELL shared his encouragement from several actions by Norway to meet the climate challenge. He pointed to their priority for electrifying transportation, noting that the country leads the world in electric vehicle sales, with 7.9 percent of all passenger cars being zero-emission vehicles. He reported that Norway was capturing and storing CO2 emissions from cement production, ramping up the use of biofuels, and placing a carbon tax on offshore drilling production with almost 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions taxed. He encouraged the committee to pass HR 12.

[1:35:42 PM](#)

KONRAD SCHAAD shared that he was a commercial fisherman and that it was obvious the changes from ocean acidification were killing cod and crab. He said that there was still denial for climate change, just as some people still claimed that the earth was flat. He urged that the issues be addressed and declared that proposed HR 12 needed to be more proactive than the rest of the nation. He stated that there was a lot of money to be made by addressing the issue.

[1:37:51 PM](#)

ALYSSA QUINTYNE stated that she had been a resident of Fairbanks since 2001, and she recalled many disastrous events caused by climate change that were now getting worse. She declared that the "fires were getting uncontrollable, our homes and our roads are sinking from permafrost melt, our villages are being flooded, our hunting and farming are consistently changing and kind of unpredictable at this point." She stated that governmental and industrial decisions were exacerbating the crisis. She pointed out that legislative members were elected to provide the funding, the effort, and the authority for these actions and projects that individuals could not do. She called on the committee to provide a space for communities, experts, and elected leaders to come together to develop solutions to the climate crisis. She declared that this was "healing work."

[1:40:28 PM](#)

SOMMERS COLE reported that he was a commercial fisherman and that he was in support of proposed HR 12. He offered his belief that this changing environment presented both challenges and opportunities, as stated in the sponsor statement. He reported that the fisheries were observing increased variability and abundance of commercially harvested species such as pacific cod and king salmon. He noted that there were observable rain shifts in the north, and increased encounters with species less common to Alaskan waters such as blue sharks and some squid. He directed attention to the coastal erosion associated with the retreat of Bering sea ice, record wildfire seasons, and thawing permafrost, as very tangible problems. He suggested that this could lead to opportunities for albacore or squid fisheries, and a growing maricultural industry to connect with carbon offset markets. He stated that Alaska could position itself to develop research opportunities in the state and lower energy costs, especially in rural areas. He declared that these would all require forward thinking policy solutions.

[1:42:44 PM](#)

ELAINE SCHROEDER shared that she had lived in Juneau for 40 years. She stated that climate was the world's emergency and would be for the years to come. She stated her support for HR 12, noting that, "in some ways, our lives depend on it." She declared that Alaska was behind nationally and internationally in addressing climate destabilization. She expressed her understanding for the politics, but declared that politics were not the issue, as all that mattered was the scientific truth. She declared that life on earth was in crisis, noting that scientists had agreed that this was a period of abrupt climate breakdown, with the possibility of mass extinction. She referenced a recent article in the Juneau Empire. She declared that the current effects of climate disruption were "nothing compared to what will come." She observed that Alaska was at ground zero and she said that "to minimize or deny the reality and urgency of this danger is to deny Alaskans and all of humanity a livable planet."

[1:45:50 PM](#)

MARA KIMMEL emphasized the need for governance partnerships. She reported that she had been leading a few initiatives, as the First Lady of Anchorage, on a city-wide level which included an initiative to promote community wide resilience. She added that she had been the Chair of the advisory committee to a recently passed municipal wide climate action plan, adopted by the

municipal assembly. She noted that she was also a former member of the Climate Action Leadership Team, under former Governor Walker, which had been recently disbanded. She declared the need for governance partnerships between the state and local governments in order to support building adaptation and mitigation capacity through creation of good policies and practices that were responsive to the needs of the various communities. This would ensure that Alaskans were protected from the dramatic changes. She urged the committee to promote the interest and security of the state's residents, including partnerships on issues such as climate action planning, to ensure that the smaller communities had the capacity to plan and adapt to these impacts. She suggested that communities work together to think about new opportunities and to ensure safe and enduring critical infrastructure such as the Alaska Marine Highway, airports, and the Port of Alaska. She suggested that energy efficiency codes and other regulatory opportunities be adopted to promote adaptation and mitigation, with jobs for Alaskans and renewable sectors to help the transition into more sustainable economic opportunities. She urged support for the proposed resolution.

[1:50:21 PM](#)

ERIC MEADOR stated his support for the proposed resolution. He expressed his concern with the output of CO2 and ocean acidification, with its domino effect on subsistence and the economic future in Alaska. He declared a need to address these problems as soon as possible for the benefit of the next generation.

[1:51:19 PM](#)

HAROLD SPENCE acknowledged that "Alaska is the canary in the coal mine with regards to climate change impacts." He urged that the proposed committee consider legislation for policies with genuine steps to mitigate the effects of climate change, and with an effort to reduce fossil fuel dependence rather than being footstools for the oil and gas industry. He acknowledged that this could mean financial and social disruptions.

[1:53:18 PM](#)

JOSEPH MIDDLETON reported that, as a lifelong resident of Homer, he had noticed the warmer summers and winters as well as glaciers receding, all a result of climate change. He offered his belief that there should be more discussion of renewable

energy such as solar, geothermal, and wind, adding that the technology "is already for the most part there." He stated his strong support for proposed HR 12.

[1:54:44 PM](#)

SHAYNA stated that she and two classmates were in support of page 3, lines 18 - 20, which read in part: "Whereas the state is the only Arctic state in the nation and is properly positioned to be an active and independent voice in international discourse relating to climate change and adaptation policies, independent of the federal government." She asked why the federal government was involved and stated that she was proud to be born in Alaska, as the state was taking the initiative to become a voice on climate change.

[1:56:34 PM](#)

TRAVIS MONTGOMERY, Anchorage Faith & Action Congregations Together (AFACT), explained that AFACT was a coalition of faith communities in Anchorage which addressed quality of life issues and he stated his support for the proposed resolution. He referenced an earlier meeting on the changing climate in Alaska hosted by AFACT, which included some legislators and about 225 public members. He reported that there was testimony by many people that they were afraid the world would be worse than the one they grew up in. He referenced a report that the infrastructure damage from a warming climate could cost Alaska between \$110 - \$270 million per year. He spoke of the irreparable damage caused by climate change. He urged that proposed HR 12 be moved from the committee.

[1:58:46 PM](#)

BOB SCHROEDER stated his support of proposed HR 12, as the global climate emergency disproportionately affected Alaskans. He expressed his hope that this would initiate thoughtful, fact finding deliberations and actions to reduce the increases in global temperature and mitigate the inevitable effects of global heating on Alaska. He directed attention to chapter 26 of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, published in November 2018, which included a section with good background information on Alaska. He listed the six categories addressed: marine, terrestrial, human health, indigenous people, adaptation, and economic cost. He added his suggestion that the committee hear from constituents affected by the global climate emergency. He pointed to erosion and ocean acidification. He urged that the

committee have "the courage to take a deep look at our fossil fuel extraction industry." He noted that control of methane release "would be a low hanging fruit to reduce Alaska's inexcusable contribution to global heating." He added that most of Alaska's known fossil fuel reserves, as well as what was yet to be discovered, could not ever be produced and burned if there was to be a livable world.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked about the report referenced.

MR. SCHROEDER, in response, said that it was chapter 26 of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, published in November 2018. He added that this report was congressionally mandated.

[2:01:55 PM](#)

MIKE HEKKERS reported that he was a 22-year resident of Juneau. He noted that he was a glaciologist, and lauded the effort to form the committee, although "it doesn't nearly go far enough." He stated that it was necessary to create a climate emergency department, a suggestion he had also recently e-mailed to the governor. This department would be self-funded with a carbon tax from all the fossil fuels, and the revenues would be spent on households, individuals, utilities and communities to help minimize fossil fuels. He listed the assistance that each would receive. He declared that this needed to be done for Alaskans and for the planet.

[2:03:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked if any federal or state agencies had been working on the kinds of research he had been working on in order to arrive at specific policies to address the problems.

MR. HEKKERS replied, "no."

CO-CHAIR TARR asked where he worked as a glaciologist.

MR. HEKKERS replied that he was an instructor in glaciology at the University of Alaska Southeast until the recent budget crisis. In reply to Chair Tarr, he stated that many of the faculty were "pink slipped."

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked what was happening with his research.

MR. HEKKERS replied that research being conducted on the Mendenhall Glacier had completely stopped.

[2:05:22 PM](#)

SAMUEL MAUKOKAS reported that he was an environmental specialist for tribal government, and that he frequently worked on climate change planning efforts. He declared his strong support for proposed HR 12. He stated that this climate crisis would forever alter the way Alaskans interact with the environment and would cost livelihoods and lives. He emphasized that this was an issue of fighting for justice for Alaskan communities, noting that this was not a partisan issue. He stated that all government leaders should be taking this issue seriously.

[2:07:13 PM](#)

ABIGAIL STEFFEN shared that she was a student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and that she had focused a lot of her studies on climate change advocacy and policy. She pointed out that the Arctic "feels the impact of climate change first." She emphasized that it was alarming that there was not a statewide effort to recognize this and prepare the state for the inevitable. She said that HR 12 was "a great opportunity for the state to begin building a sustainable Alaska that is more prepared for our future." She stated her support of proposed HR 12.

[2:09:15 PM](#)

NOAH WILLIAMS declared that scientists had been aware of the implications for the man-made climate emergency for almost 50 years. These actions were obvious, they represented a sensible, rational action in defense against a powerful, dangerous, and complex threat. He declared that the governor and "a good chunk of the rest of the legislature don't give a damn about our generation's desperation for good jobs and a livable future." He added that neither did the major political parties on the national level. He asked if the committee would have "the guts to stand up to the greed and the corruption of the fossil fuel industry, will you have the guts to stand up to your own parties when they're wrong on a national level." He pointed out that, although this could create discomfort for many legislators, this discomfort was nothing compared to the terror that was currently hanging over his entire generation.

[2:11:34 PM](#)

AARON BRAKEL stated his support for the proposed HR 12. He shared a few quotes, which included: "do the best you can until you know better, then, when you know better, do better." He shared a personal anecdote for the remodeling of his elementary school as a young child. He declared that the upcoming generations were critically important. He asked that the committee ponder this: "Fossil fuel's production is..."

[2:16:01 PM](#)

GORDON VERNON asked that the state acknowledge the concerns of the younger generations, pointing out that it was necessary for a committee that realized "our role in the melting of Alaska." He declared the need for an integrated policy for state government and emphasized that the state "must divest our permanent fund corporation of fossil fuels." He pointed to statements by BlackRock and Fidelity [investment companies] claiming they were on the edge of reshaping financial investment to sustainable investment.

[2:18:13 PM](#)

MARGI DASHEZSKY shared that she worked with inspiring youth leaders across Alaska. She directed attention to indigenous youth experiencing climate impacts and noted that their work exemplified the unifying intergenerational action for the future. She referenced the global youth lead climate strikes during September 2019, with more than 7 million participants. She listed the participating Alaska communities, which included: Nome, Fairbanks, Homer, Palmer, Anchorage, Cordova, and Sitka. She reported that, in October 2019, Native Alaska youth wrote a declaration of climate emergencies, passed by the Elders and Youth Conference and then the Alaska Federation of Natives. She reported that the anxiety for young people from the climate issue had serious mental health implications. She asked that the committee take action to support the youth.

[2:21:30 PM](#)

CLAYTON HAMILTON mused that it would take good governance to anticipate some of the upcoming changes. He stated that he was worried about the Tanner crab industry with the increase in [ocean] acidification. He asked, "what would Norway do?"

[2:22:25 PM](#)

AUSTIN TAGABAN aka NAAWEIYAA said that climate impacts most affected those with the least means. He declared that it was necessary to ensure a just way of ensuring that everyone makes it to the same place, so no one is left behind while attempts were made to solve the problem.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked if he was involved at the Alaska Federation of Natives and the actions with climate change.

MR. TAGABAN shared that, in October 2019, he helped write a resolution at the Elders and Youth Conference asking that the Alaska Federation of Natives declare a state of climate emergency in the State of Alaska. He spoke of the experience and emphasized that what youth have to say is important and would affect their lives in a way that matters.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN expressed her pleasure to have her former student here as a young leader.

[2:26:18 PM](#)

ANN RAPPOPORT stated that she was in strong support of proposed HR 12 and that it was an essential first step for the Alaska State Legislature to address climate change. She added that she had been a resident of Alaska for more than 40 years. She offered an example of the receding Portage Glacier. She spoke of unusual weather patterns and a longer growing season. She declared that there were "tremendous economic impacts to our state" and "it also presents public safety hazards." She emphasized that it was necessary to take more actions to highlight solutions and to plan for mitigation and adaptation measures. She declared that these climate changes were due to human issues and activities increasing the rate of change. She expressed her pride in the Anchorage climate action plan.

[2:29:06 PM](#)

ESAU SINNOK shared that he had seen the effects of climate change in his community since his birth. He reported that his home would soon be lost because of climate change, noting that legislators do not live in the rural areas which were threatened. He declared a need for youth voices on the proposed committee, as youth are the future of Alaska and will take the leadership positions. He said that people affected by climate change, indigenous people, also needed to be part of this committee. He stated his support for proposed HR 12.

[2:31:45 PM](#)

LOUIE FLORA reported that he was a commercial driftnet fisherman and he also worked for the Alaska Center. He stated his support for proposed HR 12. He offered his belief that this issue "really shouldn't just be on the shoulders of the Alaska State Legislature but right now it lands squarely on your shoulders as the state administration has taken the liberty of repealing the work of the Climate Action Leadership Team under the previous administration which produced 36 pages of recommendations informed by the efforts of a diverse stakeholder group." He added that the current federal administration had added rule making that would curtail federal agencies and their cumulative impact analysis. He said that HR 12 was important as a special committee can hear bills and look at climate impacts of legislation and proposed legislation.

MR. FLORA, in response to Representative Tuck, said that some of the recommendations from the Climate Action Leadership Team included land use, municipal actions, and a carbon tax. He offered to provide the full report.

[2:35:37 PM](#)

MINDY O'NEAL stated her support for the proposed resolution; even though, she opined, the resolution did not go far enough. She declared the need for a permanent, regularly scheduled committee. She stated that these problems were not going away. She referred to the recently disbanded climate change team. She acknowledged that, even as the changes to the climate were continuing, Alaska continued "to be in stop and repeat cycle that is destructive and irresponsible." She shared an anecdote from her Masters' program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks which pointed to the effects of climate change to all areas of our lives and all areas of governing. She questioned why real action continued to be debatable even as the window of opportunity to make good decisions for governance of our earth, animals, resources, and people was closing. She stated that "we will soon just be in reaction mode." She encouraged that the proposed committee be made as relevant as the current House Resources Standing Committee or House Finance Committee. She closed with a quote from Buddha: "the trouble is, you think you have time."

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked if Ms. O'Neal's Master's project could be made available to the committee.

[Ms. O'Neal indicated that she would send it to the committee]

[2:38:59 PM](#)

VIKKI KENNEDY expressed her faith in youth and the present legislature. She offered her belief that the governor would also be supportive for proposed HR 12. She said, "just remember the love is what brought us here, the love is what's gonna keep us here."

[2:41:04 PM](#)

HEATHER EVOY shared that she was from Ketchikan and her family was from Metlakatla. She stated her support of proposed HR 12, although, she declared, it was not enough. She offered her belief that the University of Alaska had a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of climate change research. She suggested that all the proposed legislation could be referred to a climate change committee. She pointed to the economic problems to the ferry system from budget cuts, noting that the ocean acidification monitor program had been on the ferries. She reported that tribes and municipalities were incorporating their climate adaptation plans. She reported on the recent "First Alaska Just Transition" summit in Fairbanks, and she urged that the members review this to understand a just transition framework.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked about the ocean acidification monitoring program on the Alaska Marine Highway System.

MS. EVOY replied that she would provide it.

[2:45:21 PM](#)

DOUG ROBBINS reported that he was a retired petroleum geologist with 15 years of oil company management experience. He relayed that he had been studying climate change for the past decade and that he supported proposed HR 12 in order to develop policies for adaptation and mitigation of climate change and to work toward an Alaska future without oil. He related a conversation he had with the late Senator Birch, formerly a public climate change denier and a retired mining engineer, which had changed how Senator Birch had viewed climate change. He shared that Senator Birch had indicated he would speak with the Senate Resources Standing Committee to see what could be done about climate change. He reflected on a 2015 audit which reported that two-thirds of the green house gas emissions in Alaska were

occurring on the North Slope from fuel gas usage. He acknowledged the challenge for an Alaskan economy without oil. He pointed out that everyone could do whatever was "within our own scope," and a common understanding and use of the vote could bring a future without catastrophic change. He noted that there were already impacts to Alaska including fisheries, coastal communities, and the subsistence lifestyle. He shared that the Fourth National Climate Assessment reported that there would be two to three times the number of wildfires in Alaska by mid-century.

[2:49:05 PM](#)

ANA HOKENSON stated that she was in support of proposed HR 12, and was speaking on behalf of a statewide network of high school students invested in climate justice, "Alaska Youth for Environmental Action." She pointed to wildfires, melting permafrost, and the fishing industry as all being affected by climate change and global warming over many decades. She shared that the youth had been holding climate strikes statewide. She emphasized that it was "repulsing" that her generation was expected to preserve the planet.

[2:50:38 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR TARR closed public testimony on HR 12. She reported that there had been 36 witnesses declaring support during public testimony and noted that there were individual letters of opposition on-line. She reiterated that the committee members were interested in the Fourth Climate Assessment, the climate plan from the administration of Governor Walker, the ocean acidification program on the Alaska Marine Highway System, the 2018 National Infrastructure report, and the master's thesis by Ms. O'Neal.

[HR 12 was held over.]

[2:54:01 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Resources Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m.