

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE

February 13, 2020

1:18 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Matt Claman
Representative Harriet Drummond
Representative Andi Story
Representative Dave Talerico
Representative Mel Gillis

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 208

"An Act renaming College Road in Soldotna as Alan Boraas Road."

- MOVED HB 208 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 185

"An Act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 208

SHORT TITLE: RENAMING COLLEGE RD AS ALAN BORAAS RD

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KNOPP

01/21/20	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/20	(H)	TRA
02/06/20	(H)	TRA AT 1:30 PM BARNES 124
02/06/20	(H)	Failed to Move Out of Committee
02/06/20	(H)	MINUTE(TRA)
02/13/20	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 185

SHORT TITLE: REGISTRATION OF BOATS: EXEMPTION

SPONSOR (s) : REPRESENTATIVE (s) STUTES

01/21/20	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/20
01/21/20	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/21/20	(H)	FSH, TRA
02/04/20	(H)	FSH AT 11:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
02/04/20	(H)	Heard & Held
02/04/20	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)
02/06/20	(H)	FSH AT 11:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
02/06/20	(H)	Moved CSHB 185(FSH) Out of Committee
02/06/20	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)
02/07/20	(H)	FSH RPT CS(FSH) 4DP 1NR
02/07/20	(H)	DP: KOPP, EDGMON, TARR, STUTES
02/07/20	(H)	NR: NEUMAN
02/13/20	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE GARY KNOPP
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, introduced HB 208.

ERIC BORAAS
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As the son of Alan Boraas, testified in support of HB 208.

MATT GRUENING, Staff
Representative Louise Stutes
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 185 on behalf of Representative Louise Stutes, prime sponsor.

JOANNE OLSEN, Interim Director
Division of Motor Vehicles
Department of Administration
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided information and answered questions during the hearing on HB 185.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:18:16 PM](#)

CHAIR LOUISE STUTES called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:18 p.m. Representatives Story, Claman, Talerico, and Stutes were present at the call to order. Representatives Edgmon, Gillis, and Drummond arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 208-RENAMING COLLEGE RD AS ALAN BORAAS RD

[1:19:14 PM](#)

CHAIR STUTES announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 208, "An Act renaming College Road in Soldotna as Alan Boraas Road."

[1:19:33 PM](#)

CHAIR STUTES sought to reverse the previous action of the committee [in failing to move HB 208 out of committee by a vote of 2-3 during its hearing on 2/6/20]. She explained that it had been her intent to set HB 208 aside for further consideration.

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REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN moved to reconsider his vote on HB 208.

[1:20:23 PM](#)

CHAIR STUTES reported that, there being no objection, HB 208 was back before the committee.

[1:20:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARY KNOPP, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor of HB 208, reminded the committee that the community [of Soldotna] had requested to change the name of College Road in Soldotna to Alan Boraas Road after Alan Boraas, PhD, a faculty member at Kenai Peninsula College (KPC) for 46 years, who "lived and breathed" the Dena'ina language and the Kenaitze Indian Tribe heritage and culture. Representative Knopp also brought the committee's attention to a letter from Joel Isaak [included in the committee packet], which had come in since the committee's first hearing of HB 208.

[1:23:00 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN let the committee know that he appreciated Mr. Isaak's letter, especially in that it identified that the

[KPC] anthropology lab had already used the Dena'ina name that his honorary tribe had bestowed upon Dr. Boraas. He added that he was in full support of the road's renaming and that he considered it especially fitting considering the relationship between Dr. Boraas and Peter Kalifornsky, after whom the intersecting highway is named.

[1:23:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON echoed Representative Claman's sentiment of support and gratitude for Dr. Boraas, his connection to the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, and his writings. He went on to say that HB 208 was an important measure and that he looked forward to supporting it.

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ERIC BORAAS, Dr. Boraas's son, imparted to the committee that he sought to recognize his father's almost five decades of work, primarily in the Kenai Peninsula and Soldotna with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, and also let the committee know that the entire family was behind the decision to rename College Road "Alan Boraas Road."

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CHAIR STUTES announced that she would like to move HB 208 from committee.

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REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN moved to report HB 208 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 208 was reported out of the House Transportation Standing Committee.

[1:27:04 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 1:27 p.m.

HB 185-REGISTRATION OF BOATS: EXEMPTION

[1:29:48 PM](#)

CHAIR STUTES announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 185, "An Act relating to the registration of

commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date."
[Before the committee was CSHB 185(FSH).]

[1:30:48 PM](#)

MATT GRUENING, Staff, Representative Louise Stutes, Alaska State Legislature, presented HB 185 on behalf of Representative Stutes, prime sponsor. He explained vessel documentation, a national form of registration through the United States Coast Guard's (USCG's) national vessel documentation center. A brochure located on the Alaska Legislature's Bill Action & Status Inquiry System (BASIS) from the USCG fully explains what USCG documentation is.

[1:31:46 PM](#)

MR. GRUENING imparted that vessel documentation is one of the oldest functions of the federal government, dating back to the Eleventh Act of the first Congress in 1789. He said HB 185 would exempt active commercial fishing vessels from duplicative registration requirements largely created by passage of Senate Bill 92, the Derelict Vessel Bill, in 2018 [passed during the Thirtieth Alaska State Legislature], removing requirements for current Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC)-licensed vessels to be registered every three years with the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

MR. GRUENING pointed out that prior to the passage of Senate Bill 92 in 2018, USCG-documented vessels were exempt from DMV registration. That registration was repealed with Senate Bill 92 and, as a result, larger vessels fell under the DMV's purview. The rationale at the time, Mr. Gruening pointed out, was to provide the state and local municipalities with a state-maintained database on who owned and operated vessels as well as how to contact those individuals.

MR. GRUENING said Senate Bill 92 overlooked the CFEC database. Vessel licensure with the CFEC, he pointed out, already required annual renewal and provided the necessary contact information in a shareable, publicly accessible state database. He added for committee members' reference that anyone can get on his or her cell phone and access the CFEC database: it's online, publicly accessible information.

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MR. GRUENING informed the committee that HB 185, in addition to removing a duplicative registration on larger vessels created by the passage of Senate Bill 92, would also take the additional step of exempting USCG-undocumented, CFEC-registered vessels under five net tons from a preexisting registration requirement with the DMV. He added that the vessels in question would still be subject to the new titling requirement of the DMV that was created by Senate Bill 92.

MR. GRUENING imparted that commercial fishing vessels are the backbone of Alaska's most vital industry, and it's the sponsor's intent with HB 185 that vessels would not be required to register every three years with the DMV at additional cost and frustration, only to provide the same information the state already has through the vessel's annual licensure process.

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MR. GRUENING briefly ran through the CFEC licensing process and what it entailed. With very few exceptions, he stated, all commercial fishing vessels, including tenders, processors, and transporters engaged in commercial fishing in Alaska waters, require CFEC licensure. The exceptions are primarily limited to setnet skiffs, he added. The licensing statute for commercial fishing vessels in Alaska states that as a condition of delivery or landing fish or engaging in commercial fishing in the state, a license is required for a commercial vessel. To give an idea of scope, the CFEC licensed 8,806 vessels in 2019 for a total of \$629,052 in licensing fees.

MR. GRUENING stated that the commission's license forms require quite a bit of ownership and contact information: the owner's name and permanent address, the owner's authorized agent, the name and number of the vessel, the vessel license number, the area to be fished, and any other information deemed reasonable by the CFEC. He proceeded to show the committee a copy of the four different CFEC licensing forms with the different areas asking for ownership information, vessel lineage, and ways to identify the vessel highlighted in yellow. On page 1 of the vessel licensing form, under penalty of perjury, the applicant must identify the legal owner of the vessel, a contact person if that is a different individual, the owner's mailing and permanent address, social security number, phone number, date of birth, and email address.

MR. GRUENING stated that if the vessel is new to the individual or the fisheries in Alaska and thus does not have an Alaska

Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) number, then the applicant must submit a current copy of the vessel's USCG documentation or state registration to the CFEC and fill out an additional vessel history in section 2.

MR. GRUENING let the committee know that every year in order to re-license a vessel, the same information needed to be verified, updated, and signed under penalty of perjury. Intentionally providing false information is punishable by up to a year in prison and/or a \$25,000 fine, and falsifying information also subjects the permit holder to a suspension of fishing privileges or permanent revocation of permit. Mr. Gruening passed to the committee an example of the decal to be displayed on a vessel, which is issued every year by CFEC. The metal plate to be permanently affixed to the vessel was also explained to the committee. More specifics about registering vessels with CFEC and the correct way to display said registration were explained.

MR. GRUENING stated that HB 185 would remove the duplicative registration requirement on larger vessels created by the passage of Senate Bill 92. Those vessels will still be subject to the new titling requirement with the DMV as well as the annual CFEC licensure, Mr. Gruening added, but three different state registrations seemed too much. With the passage of HB 185, all the information provided by the documented boats is there, and the new titling requirement in Senate Bill 92 is viewed in lieu of USCG documentation.

MR. GRUENING added that there is a fiscal impact to HB 185. He added that the DMV is not concerned with the lack of revenue, but it has been suggested that an amendment could be added to make up for the DMV's lost funds. He added that HB 185 is not a free pass for life for commercial fishing vessels, but a one-year exemption for active businesses that have renewed that year. Mr. Gruening pointed out that there have been many letters from businesses as well as from individuals in support of HB 185.

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REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN asked why there would not be a corresponding reduction in cost because people [in the DMV] would not be having to do as much work.

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MR. GRUENING replied that he had asked representatives of the DMV whether, while making the fiscal note, they could take a look at the reduced labor costs, and they said they would.

[1:44:33 PM](#)

JOANNE OLSEN, Interim Director for the Division of Motor Vehicles, Department of Administration, said that she did not have a breakdown of costs for an employee who would be handling the transaction.

[1:45:02 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN said that he would like to know more about the labor savings achieved by essentially not having to process as many applications.

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MS. OLSEN said that she would be happy to provide that.

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REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON followed up by commenting that Senate Bill 92 wasn't in effect long enough for the DMV to be actively involved, because it wasn't even in place in the summer of 2019.

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MR. GRUENING also pointed out that a lot of people didn't comply and that the fiscal notes may not yet be accurate, but that he would work with the DMV on the matter.

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CHAIR STUTES opened public testimony on HB 185. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, she closed public testimony.

[1:47:51 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE TALERICO said it seemed as though the DMV may be the one place that "carries its own water," and that this loss probably has almost no effect [on the DMV].

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CHAIR STUTES announced that HB 185 was held over.

1:49:03 PM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:49 p.m.