

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRIBAL AFFAIRS

April 30, 2019

8:06 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Tiffany Zulkosky, Chair
Representative Dan Ortiz
Representative Dave Talerico
Representative Sarah Vance

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Vice Chair
Representative John Lincoln
Representative Chuck Kopp

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Zack Fields
Representative Andi Story

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION(S): THE MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN
CRISIS

- HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 142

"An Act relating to Alaska Native organizations; relating to the
village public safety officer program; and relating to the
Alaska temporary assistance program."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 142

SHORT TITLE: NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS VPSO & TANF PROGRAMS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KREISS-TOMKINS

04/22/19	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/22/19	(H)	TRB, JUD
04/30/19	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

MICHELLE DEMMERT, Law and Policy Consultant
Alaska Native Women's Resource Center; Chief Justice
Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided a PowerPoint presentation
entitled, "Legislative Update" dated 4/30/19.

AREN SPARCK, Government Affairs Officer
Seattle Indian Health Board
Seattle, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony during the presentation
on the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls crisis.

RICHARD PETERSON, President
Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony during the presentation
on the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls crisis.

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Speaking as the sponsor, introduced HB 142.

JOHN SCANLON, Staff
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: On behalf of Representative Kreiss-Tomkins,
sponsor of HB 142, provided testimony and answered questions
during the hearing of the bill.

ANDREW MERRILL, Captain, Commander
"C" Detachment
VPSO Program
Division of Alaska State Troopers
Department of Public Safety
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing of HB
142.

RICHARD PETERSON, President
Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered a question and provided invited testimony during the hearing of HB 142.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:06:30 AM](#)

CHAIR TIFFANY ZULKOSKY called the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. Representatives Talerico, Ortiz, Vance, and Zulkosky were present at the call to order. Also present were Representatives Fields and Story.

**PRESENTATION(S): The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
Crisis**

[8:07:30 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY announced the first order of business would be a PowerPoint presentation on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls provided by the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center, followed by additional testimony by the Urban Indian Health Institute of the Seattle Indian Health Board and the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

[8:08:00 AM](#)

MICHELLE DEMMERT, Law and Policy Consultant, Alaska Native Women's Resource Center and Chief Justice, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Legislative Update." Ms. Demmert said she was speaking on behalf of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC) on the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) and related pending federal legislation. She directed attention to slide 3 and said MMIW is a far too common occurrence that has recently received public attention; however, MMIW occurrences have happened since first contact with outsiders coming onto indigenous Alaska lands. Many women and girls have suffered abuse and death due to the government's failure of its legal trust and moral responsibility to assist indigenous nations in safeguarding their women and children. Many of the challenges in protecting Alaska Native women and children are a lack of safe shelters, law enforcement and medical services, or any type of help to deal with the aftermath of victimization. Ms. Demmert provided the following explanations and solutions: no closure following a death; deaths with visible injuries are classified as accidental, suicidal, or undetermined, and she gave an example. She pointed

out indigenous families do not get closure regarding the cause of death that is received commonly by other nationalities because 40 percent of indigenous communities do not have law enforcement, and first responders are concerned with medical issues - not about gathering information for a future criminal proceeding. She opined colonization and resource development resulted in laws and policies that endanger Alaska Native women and children. In fact, the attitude of people coming into communities that do not have police and justice systems sends a message that there is a lack of care for indigenous people, along with a longstanding belief that Native people are less valuable than land and resources.

[8:12:11 AM](#)

MS. DEMMERT stated Alaska has the highest number of missing persons than any state in the U.S. As of January 2019, of the 347 missing Alaska Native and American Indian people in the federal database [National Missing and Unidentified Persons, U.S. Department of Justice (NamUs)] system, 74 individuals were from Alaska, the highest rate in the country. Further, the Violence Policy Center reports Alaska has the highest homicide rate of women by men and is the most violent state, with Anchorage being the most violent city in the U.S; the Urban Indian Health Institute reported that Alaska is among the top ten states with the highest number of missing and murdered Native Americans and Alaska Natives at 52 active cases - ten times the national average. Ms. Demmert said the aforementioned statistics are unacceptable and they indicate Alaska is a violent state; according to the [National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services], between 2003 and 2008 Alaska Natives and American Indians comprised 29.1 percent of the homicide victims in Alaska. Also, between 2003 and 2008, Alaska Native and American Indian women represented 38 percent of overall deaths. In addition, 86.1 percent of murdered Alaska Native and American Indian women were not victims of domestic violence or intimate partners. In response to this crisis, AKNWRC is creating a community engagement plan to address the services, public statements, legal issues and resources, and the governmental role needed when a person is missing or dies an unnatural death. The plan will follow models from other communities because residents cannot wait for the state or federal government to act. However, the state can achieve solutions through legislation; for example, Washington State is assigning two dedicated Tribal aides within the Washington State Patrol to address issues and develop a best practices protocol

when a woman is reported missing. In 2003, Montana established fatality reviews which compare cases with non-Native deaths and make recommendations to lawmakers. Montana also collects and shares data with its seven Indian reservations in order to include the Native community. North Dakota has enacted legislation that will require more law enforcement training related to missing and slain Native Americans; there is similar legislation pending in South Dakota. In Congress, there is support for Savanna's Act, which includes provisions for improving response to cases of MMIW in Tribal communities, and she suggested Alaska should do so.

[8:18:23 AM](#)

MS. DEMMERT, in response to Chair Zulkosky, offered to provide written copies of her testimony to the committee. She continued to slide 4, noting AKNWRC was funded in 2017 through the appropriations for an Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence, and is the first Native resource center funded due to the population of Native Americans and issues of violence against Native Americans and Alaska Native women in Alaska. The center provides the following: technical assistance and training, including needs assessments; public awareness, resource development; policy development and systems advocacy, engagement; research and knowledge development (slide 5). Ms. Demmert then turned attention to an overview of related pending federal legislation, beginning with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which was enacted in 1994 to address nationwide issues; the Act has been reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013, with additional provisions to enhance safety for Native victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking (slides 6 and 7). In 2005, Title IX: Safety for Indian Women, was an amendment to address the need for legislation to require annual government to government consultations with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes concerning the administration of related programs (slide 8).

MS. DEMMERT related, in 2013, an amendment to VAWA restored the inherent Tribal authority of Indian Tribes to prosecute non-Native domestic violence perpetrators of certain crimes, partially overturning previous federal legislation, and she provided background information on the legislation (slide 9). The 2013 amendment was limited in scope in that it only applied to domestic violence crimes and violations of protection orders by a defendant with close ties to the community (slide 10). She explained the effect of VAWA 2013 only applied to one Tribe in

Alaska, thus [H.R.] 1585, the Reauthorization of VAWA 2019, would expand Tribal court jurisdiction to other crimes, create a pilot project for five Alaska Tribes to exercise Tribal court jurisdiction, expand the Tribal Access Program, through the Department of Justice, to Tribes without law enforcement, and would expand other Tribal protection orders (slides 11 and 12).

[8:24:29 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY asked whether the five Alaska Tribes provided for in the pilot program have been identified.

MS. DEMMERT explained H.R. 1585 has passed in the House of Representatives but the [U.S.] Senate version has been delayed; if the pilot program is included in the Senate version, Tribes would apply to be part of the pilot program. She continued to slide 13, noting another provision within H.R. 1585 is a new section to recognize findings by the [Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010], including the finding that Alaska Native women suffer the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence in the country.

MS. DEMMERT continued to slide 14 and returned to the [H.R. 1585] pilot program provision, noting the definition of Indian country for the five Tribes would be expanded to include Alaska Native townsites, allotments, former reservation land acquired in fee by Alaska Native corporations, and all lands within any Alaska Native village with a population that is at least 75 percent Alaska Native. She cautioned at this time she was unsure whether the pilot program provision would be included in the Senate bill.

[8:28:30 AM](#)

[Due to recording difficulties, a portion of the audio was lost.]

MS. DEMMERT referred to marker bills, which are not standalone bills but are intended to be included within a larger bill (slide 16). She said the Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act was cosponsored by U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski and reaffirms Tribal criminal jurisdiction over some crimes committed by non-Indians, including child abuse, and crimes committed against certain public safety and justice officials (slide 17). In addition, the Studying the Missing and Murdered Indian Crisis Act [S. 336], introduced by Senator Tester from Montana, would direct the comptroller general to report on the

response of law enforcement agencies related to the MMWI issue (slide 18). The Justice for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence Act [S. 288], also cosponsored by Senator Lisa Murkowski, reaffirms Tribal criminal jurisdiction over some crimes committed by non-Indians including sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking, and is intended to address the gap in law enforcement and investigation of crimes such as rape and assault (slide 19). Another related U.S. Senate bill is the SURVIVE Act, which would direct 5 percent of the total annual outlays from the Crime Victims Fund be provided to Indian Tribes; Indian Tribes were added to the fund last year, and the SURVIVE Act would make the funding "more permanent" (slides 20 and 21). She returned to Savanna's Act [S. 227], which seeks to improve the response to MMIW by improving Tribal access to data, requiring data collection on missing and murdered Native people, and directing the [Offices of the U.S. Attorneys] to develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing persons. She pointed out Alaska does not have a strong connection to the U.S. Attorneys' office and thus may "be missing out on some of the, the safeguards there," and she discussed two ways to strengthen the bill (slides 22 and 23).

[8:33:18 AM](#)

[Due to recording difficulties, a portion of the audio was lost.]

[8:34:49 AM](#)

AREN SPARCK, Government Affairs Officer, Seattle Indian Health Board, gave a brief personal history and informed the committee the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) is the research division within the Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB) and is one of 12 Tribal epidemiology centers in the U.S. Both organizations work in 25 states, have partnerships with over 130 Tribes, and offer technical assistance and policy analysis of federal legislation; further, UIHI and SIHB have a policy platform working with community, Tribal, and government partners. He directed attention to a report entitled, "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls," co-authored by [Abigail Echo-Hawk, Chief Research Officer, SIHB, and Director, UIHI], that was provided in the committee packet. Mr. Sparck said the report was based on a 2017 list of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) compiled by Annita Lucchesi, PhD; the report is part two of a [three-part series entitled, "Our Bodies, Our Stories"], and part three of the series - to be released in November [2019] - will deal specifically with

Alaska. Mr. Sparck advised the report studied data from 71 cities in 29 states, and sought to provide a comprehensive snapshot of MMIWG crisis in urban Native communities, and explain why collecting data related to this issue is difficult. Also reported were law enforcement agencies' tracking and response to cases; collection of the data brought to light poor recordkeeping and consistent racial misclassification of American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls, as well as flaws in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request process. Mr. Sparck pointed out Alaska was very responsive to requests for information, although data reporting related to Tribal lands "still needs work across the country."

[8:37:51 AM](#)

MR. SPARCK continued, noting the report also showcases a severe lack of quality data, and accessibility to data, of violence against Native women and girls. Ultimately, the report provides advocacy for policy and system changes to end violence experienced by American Indian and Alaska Native communities. The report identified 507 cases nationwide, of which 127 were of missing indigenous women, 282 were cases of murdered indigenous women, and 98 cases were of unknown status; of those [507], 153 cases were not found in law enforcement records. The Anchorage Police Department was "the most complicit police department" contacted among all of the states, and Anchorage was third of cities with the highest number of MMIWG cases at 33. Alaska was the fourth state with the highest number of cases at 53; however, he cautioned due to the lack of nationwide uniform data reporting and collection standards, the report could not make uniform comparisons or analysis. Also reported was that 20 percent of the perpetrators were found not guilty or accountable; 85 percent of the perpetrators were men, and 50 percent of men were non-Native.

[Due to recording difficulties, a portion of the audio was lost.]

[8:40:09 AM](#)

MR. SPARCK stated there are different approaches to improve the situation, and he recognized Alaska is one of the states that has offered innovative approaches to address the MMIWG crisis. He directed attention to a document provided in the committee packet subtitled, "Overarching Policy Recommendations" and explained the first recommendation theme, "Engage Communities Most Impacted" means working with the Tribal communities;

however, he pointed out Alaska is a "Public Law 280 state," which means the jurisdiction of Tribes resides at the state level but happens in partnership [with Tribal governments]. Mr. Sparck, speaking from personal experience, opined the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program is "a little suspect" and gave an example of a young woman found murdered in Alaska whose body lay for three days waiting for law enforcement to respond. He stressed the extreme importance of the second recommendation theme, "Invest in Indigenous Approaches," which means investing in Tribal epidemiology centers to ensure the creation of community-led demographic data collection and reporting standards; in fact, epidemiology centers seek to work with legislators in this regard.

[Due to recording difficulties, a portion of the audio was lost.]

MR. SPARCK gave another example of the Washington State Patrol that found only a fraction of reported MMIWG "in the system." He remarked:

So, that's what we're saying when we want those indigenous data reporting and collection methodologies created, we want to make sure that it's done from the perspective of Native people, so we can understand this a little bit better. So, that data discrepancy from one coming from an indigenous method, to that of the state, just shows you how stark that contrast is and to make sure that investing in that indigenous methodology is a priority going forward in legislation.

[8:42:48 AM](#)

MR. SPARCK said investing in indigenous data sovereignty practices means respecting Tribal sovereignty, and he advised Tribes have the right "to know" and have recourse; another specific recommendation from the second recommendation theme is investment in indigenous approaches to ending gender-based violence, which should be developed by a partnership with Tribal systems and municipal, county, and state governments, and while maintaining respect for other jurisdictions. He cautioned getting to the bottom of the crisis requires strong coordination between all jurisdictions. A third specific recommendation of the second recommendation theme is to set aside money for services. The third recommendation theme was "Mandate Improvements in Data Collection and Reporting" and he related

legislation must be specific to each affected jurisdiction regarding the collection and reporting of data. He opined Alaska could be a beacon for the rest of the country to address this issue by creating a system to collect the right information in all jurisdictions through legislation that respects Tribal sovereignty. Another specific recommendation for the third recommendation theme is to fund the infrastructure needed to collect and report data or to access other systems. He closed his summary by restating his personal interest in the issue and offered additional help from SIHB and UIHI.

[8:45:53 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY asked for the release date for the [third part] of UIHI's report.

MR. SPARCK said November [2019].

[8:46:48 AM](#)

RICHARD PETERSON, President, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida), acknowledged the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs can bring important issues such as MMIW to the forefront of policy discussions. He expressed his belief this hearing is the first time MMIW has been discussed in the [State Capitol Building]. Since statehood, violence against Alaska Native women and girls has not been a priority and rural safety services have never been adequately funded. Furthermore, during the time Alaska was a territory, atrocities were committed through institutions sanctioned and funded by the federal government to separate Alaska Natives from their culture and traditional homeland. Historical cultural trauma continues to affect communities and touches every Alaska Native family, although generational trauma caused by boarding school experiences is not recognized by the state and federal governments. Generational trauma is a part of history that needs to be recorded, especially related to MMIW and public safety in rural Alaska. Mr. Peterson related Tlingit & Haida has acted to bring MMIW issues to the forefront, as evidenced by marches during its annual Tribal Assembly in response to an unsolved murder of a mother on Prince of Wales Island. In rural Alaska, because of insufficient resources, rural communities are told to call the Alaska State Troopers "when you have a body" and he provided examples of murders of young women that remain unprosecuted. Mr. Peterson explained the traditional process that should begin at the time of death is delayed by poor response from law enforcement; however,

hunters are prosecuted within hours for practicing traditional hunting methods, leaving some residents to conclude that "moose are more valued to the State of Alaska than Tlingits." Mr. Peterson said the imbalance of public safety priorities is unjust and is a pattern of oppression in Alaska. He described Tlingit & Haida's actions to elevate the issue of MMIW by establishing a taskforce and hosting public speakers; in addition to these actions, the keynote speaker for the Tlingit & Haida Tribal Assembly was Abigail Echo-Hawk, co-author of the aforementioned [MMIWG] report.

[8:52:16 AM](#)

MR. PETERSON pointed out the UIHI MMIWG report found media and government often blame victims of heinous crimes by affiliating the missing Native women with drugs, alcohol, prostitution, and criminal histories, but not acknowledging them by name, which contributes to the issue being "swept under the rug for so long." He questioned how the safety of Alaska Native women and girls can be a political decision and not the basic responsibility of a sovereign government to keep its citizens safe. Mr. Peterson urged state government to value the lives of Alaska Native women on the same level as other citizens; Tribes are ready to share resources and work together to better protect Alaska Native communities because Alaska Native women and girls are human, have names, and deserve protection.

[8:53:57 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease.

HB 142-NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS VPSO & TANF PROGRAMS

[8:54:53 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY announced the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 142, "An Act relating to Alaska Native organizations; relating to the village public safety officer program; and relating to the Alaska temporary assistance program."

[8:55:19 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS, Alaska State Legislature, paraphrased from the following sponsor statement [original punctuation provided]:

House Bill 142 addresses ambiguity in law by clarifying which Alaska Native organizations are eligible to administer Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) programs and Alaska Native family assistance programs. The Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of America (Tlingit & Haida) has operated Southeast Alaska's VPSO and Alaska Native family assistance programs for nearly 20 years. However, Tlingit & Haida has a different legal identity than the regional nonprofit corporations around Alaska (e.g., AVCP, Kawerak, TCC) that administer VPSO and/or family assistance programs, owing to Tlingit & Haida's status as a federally recognized tribe. Tlingit & Haida is not a regional nonprofit corporation, despite regularly being mistakenly referred to as one. House Bill 142 amends current statute to resolve this ambiguity and make fully explicit and unambiguous that Tlingit & Haida can administer VPSO and/or family assistance programs in partnership with the State of Alaska.

[8:56:47 AM](#)

JOHN SCANLON, Staff, Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Alaska State Legislature, stated currently, nonprofit regional corporations and "rural areas" are eligible to administer the VPSO program; HB 142 would add "Alaska Native organizations" to those eligible. There are 13 entities that are currently eligible to administer Alaska Native family assistance programs and adding Alaska Native organizations to those eligible would add Metlakatla and Tlingit & Haida. The technical change made by HB 142 does not add any other entities to the original 13 regional nonprofit corporations listed in statute, but would ensure all are authorized to administer Alaska Native family assistance programs. He explained the ambiguity occurs because Tlingit & Haida is a federally-recognized Tribe and not a regional nonprofit corporation, and thus is not technically authorized to administer the program[s]. Mr. Scanlon said the following organizations and agencies have favorably reviewed the bill: Tlingit & Haida; the Department of Public Safety (DPS); the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS); the Department of Law (DOL).

CHAIR ZULKOSKY said although the sponsor has characterized the bill as a narrow, technical change, the size and scope of the work done by Tlingit & Haida in Southeast leads one to think of Tlingit & Haida as similar to one of the regional nonprofits;

however, as a legal entity, Tlingit & Haida is a federally-recognized Tribe. She asked for confirmation that the bill would only apply to Tlingit & Haida and the Metlakatla Indian Community.

MR. SCANLON clarified, as it relates to the VPSO program, HB 142 would add Tlingit & Haida and Metlakatla as entities eligible to administer the program, in partnership with DPS. As it relates to the Alaska Native family assistance program[s], HB 142 ensures that the 13 entities currently listed in statute are legally authorized to administer the program[s].

[9:00:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE pointed out the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development recognizes Tlingit & Haida as a nonprofit corporation, which would fulfil the requirements to administer the VPSO program.

MR. SCANLON deferred the question.

[9:02:11 AM](#)

ANDREW MERRILL, Captain, Commander, "C" Detachment, VPSO Program, Division of Alaska State Troopers, DPS, informed the committee he manages the VPSO program and is captain of "C" Detachment.

[Due to recording difficulties, a portion of the audio was lost.]

CAPTAIN MERRILL recalled last year a VPSO and Tlingit & Haida were sued over actions by the VPSO; during the lawsuit, Tlingit & Haida exercised sovereign immunity and was removed from the civil suit. In the judge's ruling of the lawsuit, the state was repeatedly noticed that technically, Tlingit & Haida was not a Native nonprofit as defined in regulations or statute. Captain Merrill explained at that time DPS and Tlingit & Haida recognized the need to correct the issue, and one step in the process to become compliant was for Tlingit & Haida to establish nonprofit status with DCCED.

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE questioned whether Tlingit & Haida is now in compliance with the VPSO requirements.

CAPTAIN MERRILL said yes. Tlingit & Haida is established as a nonprofit and is legally within compliance of the regulation and statute.

[9:05:26 AM](#)

RICHARD PETERSON, President, Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida), in further response to Representative Vance, said Tlingit & Haida complied by registering as a nonprofit, albeit at some administrative expense. He opined it is in the interest of the state and Tlingit & Haida to complete the "statutory fix" within HB 142, which is housekeeping and noncontroversial. He then continued to his invited testimony and stated Tlingit & Haida has administered the VPSO and [Alaska Native family assistance programs/Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF)] program successfully for over 20 years through grant agreements with the state. The programs are vital for all of Southeast: TANF is operated for the entire region from Ketchikan to Yakutat; VPSO is operated through a grant agreement with DPS and interest from local communities. Mr. Peterson said Tlingit & Haida has done a good job for over 20 years overcoming obstacles to the programs; in fact, as a regional Tribe, Tlingit & Haida is "uniquely situated" to provide these services for Southeast, and although it is not a consortium of Tribes, Tlingit & Haida is directly connected to the affected communities. He restated Tlingit & Haida is not defined as a Tribal nonprofit and seeks a simple and efficient statutory correction to achieve compliance. Mr. Peterson acknowledged there are ongoing budgetary issues concerning TANF and VPSO programs; however, HB 142 has been discussed with DOL and DHSS and no issue, concern, or controversy has been raised.

[9:09:52 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY questioned whether Tlingit & Haida would face problems managing the VPSO program were the bill [not to pass].

MR. PETERSON said Tlingit & Haida would have additional costs associated with changes to its management operations. He restated Tlingit & Haida's existing management operation has been a successful model for over 20 years.

CHAIR ZULKOSKY surmised [without passage of HB 142] Tlingit & Haida would anticipate an increase in administrative costs and thereby decreased funding for the VPSO program.

MR. PETERSON agreed there would be additional costs for the VPSO and TANF programs.

[9:11:12 AM](#)

CHAIR ZULKOSKY opened public testimony on HB 142. After ascertaining no one wished to testify, public testimony was closed, and HB 142 was held over.

[9:12:03 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.