

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

April 12, 2019

9:01 a.m.

[9:01:45 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stedman called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Natasha von Imhof, Co-Chair
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Donny Olson
Senator Mike Shower
Senator David Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Bill Wielechowski

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Todd Syverson, Self, Soldotna; Fred Sturman, Self, Soldotna; Justin Hansen, Self, Soldotna; Allen Auxier, Self, Soldotna; David Brighton, Self, Kenai; Amy Seitz, Executive Director, Alaska Farm Bureau, Soldotna; Amanda Faulkner, Frontier Community Services, Soldotna; Pat Holmes, Self, Kodiak; Wayne Donaldson, Self, Kodiak; Jered Griffin, Self, Kodiak; Shawn Dochtermann, Self, Kodiak; Dan Rohrer, Mayor, Kodiak Island Borough, Kodiak; Bob Brodie, Self, Kodiak; Pat Branson, Self, Kodiak; Kathryn Adkins, Self, Kodiak; Jane Petrich, Self, Kodiak; David Wartinber, Self, Soldotna; Alice Ruby, Mayor, City of Dillingham, Dillingham; Holly Scott, Self, Soldotna; Jillian Lush, Self, Homer; Meg Mitchell, Self, Homer; Lisa Asselin Martin, Self, Homer; Rachel Lord, Self, Homer; Jay Bechtol, Self, Homer; Peggy Paver, Executive Director, Homer Council on the Arts, Homer; Delane Blackstock, Self, Homer; Jim Hornaday, Self, Homer; David Eckwert, University of Alaska, Kachemak Bay Campus, Homer; Moira Ireland, Self, Kenai;

Carol Hamik, Self, Homer; Linda Corbin, Self, Seward; Mar Swanson, Self, Seward; Letty Swanson, Self, Seward; Jane Dunn, Liaison, Students in Transition KPBSD, Homer; Laurie Deakins, Care Coordination Resource, Homer; Adam Hykes, Self, Homer; Maya Moriarty, Self, Seward.

SUMMARY

SB 20 APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

SB 20 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

SB 21 APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

SB 21 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

KENAI, KODIAK, DILLINGHAM
GLENNALLEN, SEWARD, HOMER

#sb20

#sb21

SENATE BILL NO. 20

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17(c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund; and providing for an effective date."

SENATE BILL NO. 21

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and capital expenses of the state's integrated comprehensive mental health program, including supplemental appropriations; and providing for an effective date."

[9:03:13 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman noted that senators may be coming and going throughout the day to attend to other state business. He stated that the time limit was one minute per testifier.

He stressed that the testimony should be focused on the bill.

Co-Chair Stedman handed the gavel to Senator Micciche.

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: KENAI, KODIAK, DILLINGHAM

9:06:40 AM

TODD SYVERSON, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke against the governor's proposed budget. He felt that it was the state's responsibility to fund education and the University.

9:07:15 AM

FRED STURMAN, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), testified in support of the governor's proposed budget.

9:08:11 AM

JUSTIN HANSEN, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke against the governor's proposed budget. He felt that the proposed budget would eliminate extracurricular activities, and possibly close his school.

9:08:58 AM

ALLEN AUXIER, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for public media. He stressed that it provided news and information to the entire state. He remarked that the smaller communities would lose an extremely valuable service.

9:10:12 AM

DAVID BRIGHTON, SELF, KENAI (via teleconference), testified in opposition to the governor's budget. He remarked that the result of the bill would be closing of schools. He felt that a major cut to education would lead to an increase in crime. He pointed out that cutting public broadcasting would create a problem. He stated that he did not mind that the legislation was done thousands of miles from his district, but eliminating public broadcasting would be detrimental.

9:11:31 AM

AMY SEITZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA FARM BUREAU, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for programs that relate to agriculture economy programs.

[9:12:56 AM](#)

AMANDA FAULKNER, FRONTIER COMMUNITY SERVICES, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke against the cuts to behavioral health grants.

[9:13:48 AM](#)

PAT HOLMES, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke against the governor's proposed budget. He support the operating budget that was recently passed by the House. He felt that there should be some more information about where the operating budget was in the Senate. He encouraged more information about the history of the state.

[9:15:02 AM](#)

WAYNE DONALDSON, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke in support of reinstating funds for higher education. He shared that he had graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF).

[9:16:12 AM](#)

JERED GRIFFIN, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke against the proposed cuts to public broadcasting. He felt that public broadcasting should be considered the same way that education and libraries are treated. He felt that public broadcasting was essential and enhanced the lives of Alaskans.

[9:17:28 AM](#)

SHAWN DOCHTERMANN, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), testified against the governor's proposed budget. He felt that the House had provided an adequate version of the budget. He spoke in support of funding for education and the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). He remarked that the ferry system should function in order to serve all the communities.

[9:18:45 AM](#)

DAN ROHRER, MAYOR, KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH, KODIAK (via teleconference), remarked that there was a concern about the budget, because it would shift the cost of the school bond debt to the community. He spoke in support of funding for school bond debt.

[9:20:05 AM](#)

BOB BRODIE, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for public broadcasting. He testified in support of funding for AMHS.

[9:21:11 AM](#)

PAT BRANSON, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke in support of a shared fisheries tax. She testified in support of AMHS and the community assistance fund.

[9:22:27 AM](#)

KATHRYN ADKINS, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), opposed the governor's proposed budget. She spoke in support of public broadcasting. She also testified in support of AMHS.

[9:24:03 AM](#)

JANE PETRICH, SELF, KODIAK (via teleconference), spoke in support of public broadcasting. She remarked that public radio was her family's only source of information.

[9:25:19 AM](#)

DAVID WARTINBER, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), spoke in support of maximum funding of education. He testified in support of public broadcasting, because it provided unbiased information. He noted that many people relied on public broadcasting for all of their information.

[9:27:16 AM](#)

ALICE RUBY, MAYOR, CITY OF DILLINGHAM, DILLINGHAM (via teleconference), spoke in support of school bond debt reimbursement, the shared fisheries business tax, and community assistance. He felt that omitting those funding sources would have a crippling impact on communities.

[9:29:12 AM](#)

HOLLY SCOTT, SELF, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), encouraged continual examination of the proposed budget. She stated that she had submitted a letter that outlined her concerns.

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: GLENNALLEN, SEWARD, HOMER

[9:30:39 AM](#)

JILLIAN LUSH, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of Medicaid funding and education of funding. She spoke in support of reversing elimination of Pre-K, Head Start, Best Beginnings, and Parents as Teachers.

[9:32:12 AM](#)

MEG MITCHELL, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke against the privatization of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

Senator Micciche stated that testimony should be focused on the operating budget.

Ms. Mitchell felt that the governor had traumatized the state, and did not respect the value of the state.

[9:33:26 AM](#)

LISA ASSELIN MARTIN, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), testified in support of education funding. She stated that she was a parent of an elementary age person.

[9:34:29 AM](#)

RACHEL LORD, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for education. She felt that

[9:35:33 AM](#)

JAY BECHTOL, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), testified in support of funding Medicaid and behavioral health grants.

[9:36:50 AM](#)

PEGGY PAVER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HOMER COUNCIL ON THE ARTS, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for the State Council on the Arts.

[9:38:06 AM](#)

DELANE BLACKSTOCK, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), stressed that she was a part of the community, because she valued education and the arts.

[9:39:23 AM](#)

JIM HORNADAY, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in opposition to the repeal of the senior assistance program. He spoke in support of education funding.

[9:40:15 AM](#)

DAVID ECKWERT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, KACHEMAK BAY CAMPUS, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for the university, specifically the Kachemak Bay Camus.

[9:41:26 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:48:08 AM](#)

RECONVENED

[9:48:38 AM](#)

MOIRA IRELAND, SELF, KENAI (via teleconference), appreciated the examination of the budget. She encouraged the committee to increase revenue by decreasing oil tax credits.

[9:49:43 AM](#)

CAROL HAMIK, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for education. She spoke in support of an income tax for workers who lived permanently outside of the state. She wanted increased taxes for oil companies.

[9:51:12 AM](#)

LINDA CORBIN, SELF, SEWARD (via teleconference), spoke against the proposed budget cuts to education.

[9:52:47 AM](#)

MAR SWANSON, SELF, SEWARD (via teleconference), felt that education was the prime objective of the budget. He felt that stable education funding was the highest priority. He remarked that he could be taxed and his PFD could be used to fund education.

[9:53:47 AM](#)

LETTY SWANSON, SELF, SEWARD (via teleconference), spoke in support of early childhood education programs. She stated that she was in support of using taxes for education.

[9:54:57 AM](#)

JANE DUNN, LIAISON, STUDENTS IN TRANSITION KPBSD, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for the Homeless Assistance Program. She stated that there were no homeless shelters in the central peninsula area of the state. She remarked that the communities relied on state funding. She noted that Alaska was the highest in human trafficking in the country.

[9:56:16 AM](#)

LAURIE DEAKINS, CARE COORDINATION RESOURCE, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of senior benefits. She remarked that she worked with seniors who were on a fixed income. She stated that those in the lower income bracket relied heavily on the couple of hundred dollars provided through the program.

[9:57:27 AM](#)

ADAM HYKES, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), looked at page 10, lines 17 and 18 of the bill. He queried the definition of "student and school achievement" and asked why it cost \$158 million. He looked at page 33, lines 24, 27, and 30, and asked why UAF had a budget five times the size of UAS, when Fairbanks and Juneau had roughly the same population. He spoke in support of the governor's budget.

Senator Micciche handed the gavel to Co-Chair Stedman.

[9:58:57 AM](#)

AT EASE

10:17:11 AM

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Stedman handed the gavel to Senator Micciche.

10:17:44 AM

MAYA MORIARTY, SELF, SEWARD (via teleconference), spoke against the governor's proposed budget. She believed that the loss of the Marine Highway would be damaging to the communities.

Senator Micciche handed the gavel to Co-Chair Stedman.

Co-Chair Stedman discussed the following meeting's agenda.

SB 20 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

SB 21 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#

ADJOURNMENT

10:20:43 AM

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.