

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 29, 2019

1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Shelley Hughes, Chair
Senator Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair
Senator Mike Shower
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Jesse Kiehl

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING:

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics
H. Conner Thomas - Nome

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to an appropriation limit; relating to the budget reserve fund and establishing the savings reserve fund; and relating to the permanent fund.

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

H. CONNER THOMAS, Appointee
Select Committee on Legislative Ethics
Nome, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:30:30 PM](#)

CHAIR SHELLEY HUGHES called the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Reinbold, Micciche, Shower, Kiehl and Chair Hughes.

CONFIRMATION HEARING **Select Committee on Legislative Ethics**

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CHAIR HUGHES announced that the only order of business would be a confirmation hearing for H. Conner Thomas, appointee to the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics. She said Mr. Thomas is being reappointed as the public member.

CHAIR HUGHES reviewed the ethics committee composition and mission. The Select Committee on Legislative Ethics is responsible for:

- Helping people understand and comply with the Alaska Legislative Ethics Act
- Issuing formal advisory opinions interpreting the Ethics Act
- Considering complaints alleging violations of the Act
- Maintaining public files of disclosure statements.

She said that the Ethics Committee has nine members: two senators, two representatives and five public members. For the purpose of considering most complaints, the Ethics Committee is divided into a House Subcommittee and a Senate Subcommittee. Mr. Thomas is being reappointed as a public member to the committee and he has held that position since 1999.

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H. CONNER THOMAS, Appointee, Select Committee on Legislative Ethics, Nome, stated that he has resided in Nome for the last 40 years, where he practices law. He has served on the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics since 1999. He said that serving on the committee provides an important public service. He said he was willing to serve another term, if reappointed.

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CHAIR HUGHES thanked him for serving for 20 years.

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SENATOR SHOWER asked for further clarification on his service at the U.S. Department of the Interior.

MR. THOMAS said he initially came to Alaska as a VISTA [AmeriCorps VISTA] volunteer and after serving approximately 18 months he left the state. He was living with his parents in Annapolis, Maryland. He was anxious to return to Alaska and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was hiring. He got a job in Anchorage with the Department of Interior. He then decided to practice law and worked for Alaska Legal Services.

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CHAIR HUGHES opened public testimony and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Conner Thomas, Select Committee on Legislative Ethics.

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CHAIR HUGHES stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics:

H. Conner Thomas - Nome

Signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

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There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Hughes adjourned the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting at 1:36 p.m.