

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE

February 28, 2019

1:31 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Lora Reinbold, Chair  
Senator Mia Costello, Vice Chair  
Senator Click Bishop  
Senator Chris Birch  
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners Dr.  
Dr. Matthew Dammeyer - Soldotna

CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Real Estate Commission  
Jesse Sumner - Wasilla  
Michael Tavoliero - Eagle River

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Board of Examiners in Optometry  
Dr. Bradley Cross - Soldotna

CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Workers' Compensation Board  
Randy Beltz - Anchorage  
Bob Doyle - Wasilla

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Board of Marital & Family Therapy  
Noah Shields - Soldotna

CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Occupational Safety and Health Review Board  
Vincent Perez - Wasilla

CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

MATTHEW DAMMEYER, Ph.D., Appointee  
Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Soldotna, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners.

JESSE SUMNER, Appointee  
Real Estate Commission  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

MICHAEL TAVOLIERO, Appointee  
Real Estate Commission  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Eagle River, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

BRADLEY CROSS, OD; Appointee  
Board of Examiners in Optometry  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Soldotna, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Examiners in Optometry.

RANDY BELTZ, Appointee  
Workers' Compensation Board

Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Workers' Compensation Board.

BOB DOYLE, Appointee  
Workers' Compensation Board  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Workers' Compensation Board.

NOAH SHIELDS, Appointee  
Board of Marital & Family Therapy  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Kenai, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Marital & Family Therapy.

VINCENT PEREZ, Appointee  
Occupational Safety and Health Review Board  
Department of Administration (DOA)  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Board.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:31:46 PM](#)

**CHAIR LORA REINBOLD** called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Costello, Gray-Jackson, Bishop, Birch and Chair Reinbold.

#### **CONFIRMATION HEARING(S):**

**Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners**

**Real Estate Commission**

**Board of Examiners in Optometry**

**Workers' Compensation Board**

**Board of Marital & Family Therapy**

**Occupational Safety and Health Review Board**

[1:32:21 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD announced that the only order of business would be Confirmation Hearings for appointees to the Board of

Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners, Real Estate Commission, Board of Examiners in Optometry, Workers' Compensation Board, Board of Marital & Family Therapy, and Occupational Safety and Health Review Board.

1:33:34 PM

MATTHEW DAMMEYER, Ph.D., Appointee, Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), stated he is a clinical psychologist and has a consulting firm, M2Consulting. He related that for the past 15 years he has worked in a hospital setting. As part of their ethical principles, psychologists have a responsibility to contribute time to professional activities with little or no compensation or personal advantage. He said he now has time to do so, which is why he would like to serve.

1:34:41 PM

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Matthew Dammeyer, Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners.

1:35:09 PM

SENATOR BIRCH thanked him for his interest and engagement. He related that the Alaska Psychiatric Institute will reopen under private management. He noted from his resume that he has a background serving on the municipal Methamphetamine Task Force. He asked him to share his thoughts and ways the legislature can assist.

DR. DAMMEYER said he recently gave a talk to the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA). Prior to moving to Alaska 20 years ago, he worked in critical capacities in four other states. Most state hospitals do not function the way API does, he said. He explained that API is used in a stabilizing manner rather than to focus on the most acute, most difficult forensic cases. He offered his belief that patients are sent to API when acute care hospitals could probably do a better job.

Some of the problems that API has struggled with stem from hospitals not being very responsive, he said. He noted that he has worked in an acute care hospital for the last 15 years in Alaska. He said he thought that perhaps this might be the moment to really shift the model of care by better caring for patients in their local communities, by referring fewer patients to a

system that simply cannot absorb 800-1,000 patients per year. That is not a typical state hospital system, he said.

REPRESENTATIVE BIRCH thanked him for his interest in serving.

[1:37:57 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD expressed her interest in addressing sexual assault and any correlation to drug use, such as methamphetamine use.

DR. DAMMEYER said he finished his training at the Medical University of South Carolina and worked at the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center (NCVRTC) in Charleston, South Carolina. He considered the NCVRTC to be the leading research lab in the country for PTSD [Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome], affiliated with the Department of Psychiatry. In the late 1990s they conducted what has been considered the best study to determine what comes first, substance abuse that is leading to trauma and PTSD or if people exposed to trauma suffer from PTSD and are led to use substances to mitigate their discomfort. He characterized it as a double-bladed sword study, in which the study found causal pathways in both directions. In other words, those with an anxiety disorder have a significantly higher incidence of being affected by a sexual assault. And vice versa, people who suffer through sexual assaults are much more likely to use drug and alcohol use to mitigate their discomfort. He recalled about 4,000 people were involved in the study. Unfortunately, in Alaska both sectors occur and Alaska struggles with a lack of clinicians to address the challenges.

[1:40:39 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD requested a copy of the research study for the committee.

[1:41:50 PM](#)

JESSE SUMNER, Appointee, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), said that he also serves on the Mat-Su Borough Assembly and previously served on the Mat-Su Planning Commission for the City of Wasilla. He related his interest in serving on the commission is to work on regulations. For example, he would like to work on the situation in which real estate agents pay very substantial percentages of their commission to non-realtors in the form of finder fees. Essentially, agents are paying commissions to individuals or businesses who are not licensed in real estate. In other instances, real estate agents with exclusive marketing

agreements may not be acting in their clients' best interest, he said. He offered his belief that he can really contribute, given his experiences as a homebuilder who has used licensed real estate agents to buy and sell homes.

[1:44:11 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO thanked him for his willingness to serve.

MR. SUMNER briefly reviewed his background, stating that he has a degree in physics from the University of California Santa Barbara, which is not on the resume in members' packets. He said he is the president of Sumner Homes and Alaska Mechanical Solutions, with a 51 percent ownership in each business. He is a homebuilder in the Mat-Su Valley, and he works primarily in Eagle River. He said that most of his jobs have been in the construction industry. In response to Chair Reinbold, He offered to provide an updated resume to the committee.

[1:46:23 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH thanked him for his interest in serving on the commission. He said that he will bring a lot to the commission with his construction experience and exposure to the market.

[1:47:34 PM](#)

MICHAEL TAVOLIERO, Appointee, Eagle River, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), said he has been a real estate licensee since 2008 and is also an associate broker. He said his interest in serving is to change the way the commission does business. The previous appointee mentioned some issues related to unlicensed activity, which is in violation of state law. He expressed concern that 500 licensees chose not to renew. He likened it to losing 20-30 years of industry experience and he would like to learn the reason. He characterized these licensees as small boutique licensees who served the public very well. He also expressed concern about the current real estate surety fund [renamed the Real Estate Recovery Fund in 2008], which was established to address issues, protect consumers, and avoid small claims court. He offered his belief that the fund balance was established at \$500,000 but has eroded to about \$240,000. He expressed concern that the fund appears to be used to cover expenses, staff salaries, and commission travel.

He offered his goal in serving is to improve the standards that the commission operates under and provide better protection for the public.

1:50:32 PM

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Jesse Sumner and Michael Tavoliero, appointees to the Real Estate Commission.

CHAIR REINBOLD said she knows Mr. Tavoliero personally and she identified his strength as community involvement. She said she thinks that he will bring a lot of skills to the commission.

1:51:59 PM

BRADLEY CROSS, OD; Appointee, Board of Examiners in Optometry, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), said he wants to serve on the board to continue to work on issues, including legislation, to help protect the public and provide the highest scope of care, yet not overstep the boundaries.

He said secondly, he would like to protect the profession of optometry, to ensure the board is doing its best for new licensees. He also wanted to ensure that optometrists are using updated current practices through continuing education requirements. He said that the prior board has done a great job rewriting statutes and regulations pertaining to the profession. He anticipated one upcoming issue is telemedicine and the role it will play in optometry. He expressed concern that some doctors are not on site but use videoconferencing. However, there are benefits to being in the room with a three-dimensional view when conducting exams or providing treatment. He was unsure that having a technician with a two-dimensional patient exam format was the best setting at this time. He said the prescription drug management program has added educational requirements for those [practitioners who are licensed for prescription authority under the Drug Enforcement Administration]. He acknowledged that it is relatively rare in optometry to use narcotics or heavy doses of Schedule III or IV narcotics. However, he would like to ensure that Alaska's statutes and regulations are on par with other states.

1:55:37 PM

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked him for his email since it demonstrated his eagerness to serve. She wished him well.

1:56:14 PM

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Bradley Cross, appointee to the Board of Examiners in Optometry.

CHAIR REINBOLD stated that she opposed a bill that passed the legislature to allow optometrists to perform surgery. She asked him to watch for any issues with regard to optometrists performing surgery.

MR. CROSS said that he shared similar concerns about that issue.

[1:57:42 PM](#)

RANDY BELTZ, Appointee, Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), stated he serves as manager and business development manager for North Star Equipment Services, an affiliate of North Star Terminal and Stevedore. He related that his willingness to serve is to give back to his state and community. He serves on other boards and commissions. Now that he is no longer coaching baseball, he has more time to commit. This board seems like a good fit for him, he said. He brings integrity, impartiality, independent thinking, compassion, and a wide breadth of business management and work-place experience to help settle disputes to the board, he said.

[1:58:59 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH thanked him for his interest in serving.

[1:59:50 PM](#)

SENATOR BISHOP asked whether he could identify any top goals or accomplishments for the Workers' Compensation Board.

MR. BELTZ answered that he does not have any specific goals in mind but will bring his experience to any issues or disputes that arise.

[2:01:24 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD said she graduated from East High School and noticed Mr. Doyle coached baseball at that school.

CHAIR REINBOLD said she gets lots of complaints about workers' compensation issues. She asked whether he was willing to listen to business owners and have an open mind on workers' compensation issues. She reported that Alaska ranks as one of the states with the highest workers' compensation costs.

MR. BELTZ answered yes.

CHAIR REINBOLD related that the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce has made workers' compensation reform one of their biggest priorities, that a bill will come before the committee. She asked him to carefully review it.

MR. BELTZ agreed to do so.

[2:03:31 PM](#)

BOB DOYLE, Appointee, Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), said he has lived in the state since 1968. He graduated from East High and has lived in the valley since 1982. He stated he has worked in public schools for 31 years and spent the last few years as superintendent. He stated that he served as the assistant superintendent of finance and ran self-insurance programs to lower the costs of health insurance and workers' compensation. He said that both were fully funded programs that saved money for classrooms. In the late 90s, the self-insurance costs were \$4,500 per employee, which is why the district moved to self-insure.

He acknowledged some things could be done to lower costs for employers. He also related he has reviewed the Chamber of Commerce's PowerPoint. Yesterday, he observed one of the hearings on a case before the Workers' Compensation Board that has been ongoing for three years. When the case finally went to mediation, prior to the hearing, it settled. He said he would like to see more mediation happen early to provide fairness to the employer and the employee.

[2:05:45 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Randy Beltz and Bob Doyle, appointees to the Workers' Compensation Board.

MR. DOYLE thanked the committee.

[2:07:04 PM](#)

NOAH SHIELDS, Appointee, Board of Marital & Family Therapy, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), stated that he is a licensed marital and family therapist, a licensed professional counselor, and a registered play therapist. He owns Foundations Family Resource Center and

he serves as president of SouthCentral Parenting, a non-profit organization that provides parenting classes on the Kenai Peninsula. He said that he is a lifelong Alaskan. He has had prior board experience and currently serves on the Alaska Association for Play Therapy Board. He has practiced family and marital therapy in Alaska for 10 years in private practice and a community mental health setting. He said he feels knowledgeable about this board's function. He looks forward to bringing his experience to assist his profession and the board.

[2:08:22 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD remarked on his numerous certifications, which she felt would be helpful in dealing with issues related to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

[2:09:07 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Noah Shields, appointee to the Board of Marital & Family Therapy.

[2:09:23 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD thanked him for his willingness to serve.

[2:09:53 PM](#)

VINCENT PEREZ, Appointee, Occupational Safety and Health Review Board, Department of Administration (DOA), said that he was a member of the Alaska Safety Advisory Council for two years. He currently serves as chair of the Safety Steering Committee for the Northwest Public Power Association. He said he looks forward to serving on this board to give the employer an opportunity to plead their case. He stated that the enforcement agency sometimes looks at the "letter of the law," but not the intent of the law. He said he has lived in Alaska since 1997, his four children have thrived here, and he hopes to remain here.

[2:11:37 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON said he was appointed to serve in the industry seat. She noticed he serves as the health and safety director for the Municipal Light and Power. She acknowledged that she spent four years working for that organization. She asked whether he will hold the position after the consolidation with Chugach Electric.

MR. PEREZ responded that he just met with his counterpart at Chugach Electric. He related that they will share the responsibilities due to the size of the organizations.

[2:12:56 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after ascertaining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Vincent Perez, appointee to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Board.

[2:13:23 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD thanked him for his willingness to serve. She said she thought he will bring experience to the table.

[2:14:18 PM](#)

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

Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners:  
Dr. Matthew Dammeyer - Soldotna

Real Estate Commission:  
Jesse Sumner - Wasilla  
Michael Tavoliero - Eagle River

Board of Examiners in Optometry:  
Dr. Bradley Cross - Soldotna

Workers' Compensation Board:  
Randy Beltz - Anchorage  
Bob Doyle - Wasilla

Board of Marital & Family Therapy:  
Noah Shields - Soldotna

Occupational Safety and Health Review Board:  
Vincent Perez - Wasilla

CHAIR REINBOLD reminded members that 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.

[2:14:59 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD reviewed committee announcements.

[2:15:33 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, adjourned the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 2:15 p.m.