

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OCTOBER 29, 2020
10:00 AM**

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING BY TELECONFERENCE:

Senator Gary Stevens, Chair
Representative Louise Stutes, Vice-Chair
Senator John Coghill
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Natasha von Imhof
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Neal Foster
Representative DeLena Johnson
Representative Jennifer Johnston
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative Steve Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Tom Begich

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson
Senator David Wilson
Senator Donald Olson
Senator Jesse Kiehl

SPEAKER REGISTER:

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA)
Mindy Kissner, Finance Manager, Accounting, LAA
Megan Wallace, Legal Services Director, LAA
JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, LAA
Tim Banaszak, IT Manager, LAA

10:00:14 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR STEVENS called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 10:00am. Present at the call were: Senators Coghill, Giessel, Hoffman, Stedman, Stevens, von Imhof; Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, Johnston, Kopp, Thompson, Stutes.

Senator Begich was absent.

13 members present.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, let's move on then to the next item, which is the approval of the agenda.

Representative Stutes, for our motion, please?

10:03:17 AM

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Senator. I move and ask unanimous consent that the Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. I'll object for purposes of discussion. We hadn't planned on it before, but I'd like to add an IT update at the end of this meeting. Tim Banaszak is -- will be with us to explain the process we're now using and the IT process, as well as the LIOs and how we're able to make use of this entire new process.

So if there's no objection to adding Tim Banaszak at the end for IT update, are there any other changes to the agenda?

Seeing and hearing none, then the agenda has been approved.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CHAIR STEVENS: Moving on to the minutes.

Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Mr. Chair. I move and ask unanimous consent that the Legislative Council approve the minutes dated June 18th, 2020 as presented.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. So any corrections or additions to those minutes from the June 18th meeting? Any corrections or additions?

Hearing none, then the minutes are approved as presented.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MOVING & TRAVEL POLICY CHANGE

CHAIR STEVENS: Let's move on to committee business then. And I'll start by calling on Mindy Kissner, our finance manager, to explain a memo that that has to do with Risk Management.

And, Mindy, could you explain to us what's going on there?

MS. KISSNER: Chair Stevens, for the record, this is Mindy Kissner.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Mindy. Before you get into that, I just want to make sure everyone understands that we're not going to take action on this. I was a little surprised to read it, and there are some concerns I have, and I'm sure others will have concerns as well. I just wanted to bring in for discussion and then begin to see if there are other resolutions for this problem we're facing.

So, Mindy, if you'd go ahead and explain things.

MS. KISSNER: Yes, sir. So this was to bring to light and start a discussion, as you mentioned, regarding the use of the state car rental contract.

So we recognized that Risk Management will not cover anyone that is a non-state employee and using the state rental contract. And the importance is to make sure that our legislators' needs are being met, at the same time they are being fully protected, and the passengers in the car are being fully protected while using that car. And so that's the point of discussion today.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Well, thank you very much, Mindy. When I read that, I was really concerned. You know, some legislators, their spouses come with them. Actually, I gave a call to Senator Olson, whose spouse and family comes to the capital with them.

That would make it very difficult on his family if his wife could not drive and if they had a rental car, and it would require the Senator really to leave the building more often to take the kids to school and back and all those sorts of things. So I think -- I've heard that maybe rural legislators might be more impacted than others. I think all of us will be impacted.

So what I really ask Jessica to do is to look into other options, other solutions. I mean, I'd actually appreciate any discussion on this item to know what you are thinking.

SENATOR OLSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, is that Representative Edgmon, Mr. Speaker?

SENATOR OLSON: Actually, no, it's Senator Olson.

CHAIR STEVENS: Oh, I'm sorry.

SENATOR OLSON: I'm online.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Olson, yes, please, go ahead.

SENATOR OLSON: Well, I just wanted to second what you're saying. It makes it a less family-friendly atmosphere to go and have something like this recommendation going through. So I would say we should take it very seriously because if you have a number of kids, and we do have a number of kids, and they're all in school today, and would plan on being in school if we do go down there, so that it wouldn't necessitate for this kind of COVID pandemic situation that's going on where you've got to go ahead and leave the building.

And right now the idea is we don't -- once we get tested in the morning, they don't want us to be retested again. In other words, we've got to stay out the building once we leave, and so that's a consideration.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Olson. I understand what you're saying. And, again, we're not going to take any action on this today. It's an issue for discussion. We're reacting to the Risk Management.

So I think we understand now from Mindy Kissner that Risk Management has said they feel they should not be covering spouses. And I guess we need to see if we have other resolutions to that, otherways to find a resolution of that issue.

Any other comments on this matter?

MS. KISSNER: Chair Stevens, this is Mindy Kissner again. Can I clarify something, please?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Mindy, please, go ahead.

MS. KISSNER: Thank you. I wanted to make sure that I said we added the rental car piece as a thought that it would be the cheapest option, but in that process we realized it is an unrealistic option for probably all legislators because they come to live in Juneau, and they use the vehicle while here to go about their daily lives.

So the rental car, under the state contract, does not make the most sense because it doesn't cover anyone that is not a state employee, and that is the piece we wanted to address and say that it may not be the best option for our legislators.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Mindy. So when you rent a car through Budget, who we deal with, you can add a driver and add insurance. Of course it would not be paid for by Risk Management, but it could be paid for in other ways. Have you looked into that? Can people do that? When they go

up to the desk to rent a car, can they add a spouse as a driver and insurance as well?

MS. KISSNER: Chair Stevens, this is Mindy again. The answer is, yes, they can rent a car through any car company and add their own insurance and be covered.

And if they do that and they are driving on state -- let's say the legislator is driving for work and they are by themselves in that car and they get in an accident... their insurance would kick in first, and anything above that the state would kick in.

If they were driving that car with non-state employees, I think at that point the state would bow out of it. But they cannot use the state's rental contract and then try to apply their own insurance, so it's one or the other.

And I think our recommendation is moving away from the state contract because it doesn't accommodate and protect our legislators.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: I have a question.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Would there be a reimbursement provision allowed the legislator on using their own --

CHAIR STEVENS: Their own insurance?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: -- their own money and insurance to initially rent the car?

MS. KISSNER: Through the Chair, Representative Stutes, the way I interpret the policy, it is in the interest to look for the least expensive option, and that varies by legislator. So every scenario is going to be slightly different, but the intent would be the least expensive option. And I would say having a vehicle is a necessary cost of doing business, so, yes, it would qualify as a reimbursable expense.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you.

SENATOR COGHILL: Mr. Chairman, this is Coghill.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Coghill, please.

SENATOR COGHILL: So it sounds to me like the real question here is should we be looking for another rental policy or a different contract outside of the state contract?

Mindy, is that something that you've looked at the landscape on?

MS. KISSNER: Senator Coghill, through the Chair, no, we have not explored that other than to have a conversation with Risk Management.

And in their words, when you explore contracts that are covering citizens other than employees, you are venturing into something that somebody may not go into contract with you over.

I think, from our standpoint, to simplify it, the

best course of action would be to rent a car, if that was the option selected, and use your own insurance to do so.

SENATOR COGHILL: I see. Okay. All right. So then next question, Mr. Chairman, would be could the Legislative Council look into some way of giving a rental car stipend or something for insurance? Maybe that would kick us out, but it looks to me like we're going to have to venture into buying our own insurance for those of us who will bring family down. So that would be the next question is does the Leg Council even want to venture into something like that?

CHAIR STEVENS: Very good question. Thank you, Senator. Jessica, do you have any comments at this time?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, for the record Jessica Geary, executive director of Legislative Affairs. I think at this point we're really exploring different options and working with the Executive Branch in whatever capacity we're able to.

But what Mindy mentioned was the fact that we provide for spouses and dependents to travel to Juneau for the session, but the Executive Branch considers those people to be private citizens, not state employees; therefore, they're not covered, which is really the issue. I think regardless of what pot of money this comes out of, it's strictly a liability issue. So that's the standpoint they're taking.

Most of the time you don't need to use insurance however it's those times that you do, and the injuries are catastrophic, that this could really be a huge liability for the state. So it does make sense. We're exploring different options, and our hope is to bring those options back to the committee for discussion and action.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I think an option that should be considered by Mindy is giving authorization to those legislators that have spouses to lease the car for whatever period when they're down in Juneau and get reimbursed for those expenditures. By doing this, I think the individual, as stated, can go ahead and rent the vehicle, add the spouse and/or family members to the policy, and then get reimbursed by the State of Alaska. I think that this option, although has to go through another step, may be something that could be considered.

In many cases, like if you have a Costco rental car, a second individual is added for free. So there are options out there -- it's just that the State of Alaska needs to acknowledge that a state employee and/or their spouse needs to be covered. I think this option would allow that, but it would need to be sanctioned by our travel policy.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator. Yes, the issues there, it looks like we can solve them. We're looking at options. We certainly want to encourage legislators to bring their families to Juneau. They have in the past and probably more so now, but we don't want to discourage that. We want to make sure that should there be, as Jessica said, a catastrophic accident, that everyone is covered the way they should be.

Any other discussion?

Yes, please, Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: I have a question, and I'm not sure who this would go to. But has there been any comparison on the expense of, say, renting a vehicle for a legislator for the session as opposed to the cost of transporting their personal vehicle down to Juneau? It seems to me that if they had their own personal vehicle in Juneau, a lot of that expense or a lot of these issues could be alleviated.

MS. KISSNER: Chair Stevens, this is Mindy Kissner again. May I make a comment, please?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Mindy, I knew you'd have an answer to that. Go ahead.

MS. KISSNER: The practice exists today that we -- legislators, by all means, look to the least expensive way to have a vehicle in Juneau. That currently happens.

Our recommendation today would be to not use the state rental contract because it only allows coverage for state employees. So if you are driving with a friend, spouse, or family member, those people would not be covered under it, and that does not seem realistic. So going with the other option of renting a vehicle using your own insurance covers everybody in that car.

SENATOR STEDMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Stedman.

SENATOR STEDMAN: You know, I see and understand the dilemma, particularly when we're dealing with our colleagues that are out in the hinterland and there is no road access, or, frankly, Kodiak could be very little ferry access, as an example, or Nome. There's two good examples.

But, you know, we want to make sure that we keep a level playing field also so the people that bring their car to Juneau is a cost that they incur for the vehicle and maintenance and their own insurance and on and on and on. So we want to make sure we don't tip the field a little bit, keep it as fair as we can amongst all of the legislators as far as the compensation package goes.

My being extremely close would have to make a hard argument why I can't move my car from Sitka to Juneau and make that less expensive than moving one from Kodiak or

Dillingham to Juneau. Those are glaring examples. But I have to eat all my costs and get reimbursed for none of them. So we just want to keep that in mind when we put this policy together. But I would agree that we have to have the ability for the spouse to be able to drive whatever vehicle it is.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator. I appreciate it, Senator Stedman. We need to make sure that it's fair and equitable.

Mindy, did you have further comments there?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Chair Stevens, may I jump in?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: This is DeLena Johnson.

CHAIR STEVENS: Representative Johnson.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: I wanted to make sure, first of all, that you knew I was online.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. We got you.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: And I've been here for a while. I wanted to add my two cents. First of all, I think it's important that we remember that legislators should be looked at in many ways as a family unit unless we want to have people that go home on the weekends, and that's just a thought out there.

It sounds to me like there's a lot more administrative work to do on this policy and to examine some of the different options that are available, whether it's just a flat-out stipend for each person for a car and they go rent their own. There's lots of different ways to approach this.

Obviously we could talk about it all day, but I hope that when Legislative Affairs comes back with something, that they'll come back with something more definitive that we can work on, although I do appreciate them bringing it in front of us so we can examine it. Anyway, that's all. I just wanted to say I was here, and I'll let you guys carry on. Thanks.

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, thank you, Representative Johnson, appreciate your comments. And you're absolutely right, this needs to be family-friendly, and that's what we've always been. We want to make sure that continues.

One issue I'd ask the staff to look into is insurance. I decide with my insurance company how I'm covered and who's covered in my car and all that. As you talk about a catastrophic accident, we each have different coverages on our personal insurance so please consider individual insurance as you proceed on this, Mindy. I think you know where we're coming from and what we want to do. And I appreciate your comments, Mindy, to indicate that this is not working, it's not realistic, and we have to find a

solution to it.

Before we move on, any further comments on this matter?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, this is Jessica.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please, Jessica, go ahead.

MS. GEARY: I just wanted to make a quick comment in response to Representative Stutes' question about legislators being able to bring their own vehicles to Juneau.

Absolutely that is still able to happen. Legislators will still get reimbursed. Legislative Affairs will still arrange for transport of your vehicles. A recent change to the policy that was made was if it's less expensive to rent a car than to bring your personal vehicle, then you should rent a car. So this change in Risk Management has really caused us to evaluate our whole rental car contract practice.

I appreciate all of the comments, and we're certainly going to look into every possible option for how to take care of this and take care of our legislators and their families.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you very much. And, of course, as people are traveling to D.C. or wherever they might go or another community, the same incident might occur where a spouse is driving. So we have to look at the bigger picture here. Thanks very much for that comment.

Any other thoughts? Any other comments? I think somebody else is trying to speak.

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes, this is Senator Coghill.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Coghill.

SENATOR COGHILL: Just write this down; it needs to be looked into. 24.60.030 is the ethics on private benefits. It's something that needs to be considered because once you start allowing a private benefit, being on the ethics committee for a lot of years, that's going to be something you're going to have to think about.

CHAIR STEVENS: Absolutely. I appreciate your pointing that out to us. So, Jessica and Mindy, we will all pay attention to that as we move forward. Thank you.

Any further comments? Well, let's move on then. We'll try to find what the options are and try to find a way to solve this issue.

B. ADOPTION OF COVID-19 SESSION SAFETY PROTOCOLS

CHAIR STEVENS: Let's move on to adoption of COVID-19 session safety protocols. I'd like to make it clear what we're doing here.

First, I want to ask Jessica to go over her memo,

which you should have in front of you, and hear her recommendations and allow her time to answer any questions, are you to ask any questions.

After that, I'm going to ask Megan Wallace to talk about the memo that she has presented to us. I don't want to take any action on that memo at this time, but I think it all plays together. You need to know the information in her memo to really deal with the other issues that we've got in front of us.

And I would like to move these other three things, if we can: the Mask Policy, the Screening Process Policy, and the Code of Conduct Policy, but, again, not move the action in Megan's memo.

So then before we go into motions on those three things, Jessica, would you explain your memo?

MS. GEARY: Yes. For the record, again, Jessica Geary, executive director of Legislative Affairs.

I've been doing a lot of work over the past -- well, since the start of this pandemic on listening to what other states are doing to safely convene their Legislature. This Legislative Council has the authority to take appropriate action for pre-convening work of each legislative session; which got us thinking that January is right around the corner, and we really need to have some consistent policies in place that can be applied evenly across all of our legislative spaces and then carry us into the 32nd Legislature.

So one of the big ways that we know helps prevent the spread of this virus is to wear a face covering. And having a mask -- or having a policy in place that requires legislators and staff and visitors to those legislative spaces, if they have a face covering on, that is a recommendation. So there's a policy in there. I'm just going to go through each of these bullets briefly, and then we can talk about each policy separately.

The Screening Process Policy is a way to ensure those that are entering the Capitol are free of COVID symptoms, and those who participated in the session in May recall that the screening process is pretty painless, but it can help identify those who might have the virus or at least symptoms that could be contagious.

The next item is a little different. But when we look at bringing the legislators, the staff, the families down to Juneau in January, we sort of look at trying to create a bubble, in a sense, or a safe space where, to the extent possible, we know who we're dealing with. We know that there isn't somebody who has been out doing risky behaviors and might be a greater risk for carrying and

spreading the disease.

The Pandemic Code of Contact Policy is just one small piece of many different things that need to be looked at and decided upon. It's just basically saying that "I agree to follow best practices and not carry on any risky behavior which could bring back this virus to my legislative family."

So those are the three policies. Then up for discussion is also the travel. We have a current practice of legislators traveling back home to district routinely and then coming back down. Each community might have a different level of outbreak at the time, but if you're freely going back and forth between communities, it increases the risk of spreading the virus.

So the thought there was to place some restrictions on travel, not to forbid travel, but just to ensure that the travel is necessary and that it's been sanctioned, if you will, by the presiding officer and allowing for an excused absence.

I'll briefly mention, too, one of the things that we've been looking at is hiring a contractor to assist with the screening and the testing process. I can go into more detail on that, but I just wanted to briefly mention that if we look at this as a whole package, there's a lot of different moving parts and pieces and the more you can put into place, the more protected we would all be.

Perhaps I should stop and answer any questions, or would you like me to start going into the specific policies? I'm not sure which would be most helpful to do first.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thanks, Jessica. I appreciate all the efforts, all the work you put into this. I know it's been very time-consuming.

The goal, of course, is to make sure that all legislators and staff feel safe. They feel that coming into the Capitol is a safe place for them to be. And so I know there's some people that say, "Leave it the way it is right now. Don't make any changes at all." There are others that want to make sure that they're entirely safe.

That's going to be the problem we face is where do we draw that line and how far do we go? Also to realize that this Leg Council only continues until the end of the year, beginning of next year, but it does continue. If there's not an organization next year, there's a delay in organizing another body. So these are rules that would be in place when we come down, but they can be changed quickly by the 32nd Legislature, by the presiding officers, by leadership.

This gives everyone a heads-up as to what might occur, what they could consider. If we waited until the last

minute, then let the next legislature decide all of these things, I think they can be lost, depending on how organizations go and who winds up in leadership positions.

I do believe there's a question out there?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is Senator Hoffman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Going back to the second bullet point regarding screening process policies, the daily screening of legislators, what does that entail, and what type of test are you talking about? There's so many different tests out there, and some of the tests you don't get the results for within seven days, others you don't get within three days, and others are 24-hour results. I'm wondering what type of test are we referring to in this second bullet point regarding daily testing?

CHAIR STEVENS: Really good point, Senator Hoffman. If we can hold off on that. We're going to go to Megan and have her explain her memo, and then we'll go through each of these items beginning with the Mask Policy and then the Screening Process and then the Code so that we'll have a chance to get through all of them. Can you hold off on the answer to that, Senator?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: I can hold off as long as the answer is correct.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Well, it will be, I'm sure.

Let's go to Megan. I know this is little out of order, but Megan's -- our attorney's comments are very important -- it's the Uniform Rule Changes Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic from Megan Wallace, dated October 27th. I hope you have that. I don't want to adopt that now, but I do think it's important that we discuss that a little bit before we go into the specifics of each of these policies.

So, Megan, are you with us?

MS. WALLACE: Yes, Chair. For the record, Megan Wallace, legal services director.

Members should have the memo that Senator Stevens was referencing before you in your packet. What this memo discusses is really a continuation of some of the discussions that were happening last spring and in May, when the Legislature briefly reconvened, in terms of what the options are for the Legislature procedurally if changes to the manner in which the Legislature conducts business needs to be modified in order to take into account for undertaking business during a pandemic.

The first bullet point in my memorandum discusses options for both committee meetings or for session. It's difficult for me to predict what the will of the Legislature

come next session will be, but it appears that it's likely that there is going to be a desire to increase remote participation during committee meetings.

As most of you are familiar with, Uniform Rule 24(a) requires that a report be signed by a majority of the members of the committee. That rule has historically been construed to require members to be physically present to vote to move a bill from committee.

Other than that, our Legislature has been conducting or allowing for remote participation of committee members fully for quorum purposes, for debate purposes, for adoption of amendments. All other matters besides voting a bill out from committee is something that the Legislature already does on a regular basis.

So if committees are going to be meeting with more members being remote, particularly where you may not have enough members physically present to reach a majority to pass out a bill, one option would be to change Uniform Rule 24(a) to allow for members to vote remotely to pass out a bill.

And then the other larger piece is if there's a desire or it becomes impractical or impossible for the Legislature to meet in Juneau to conduct its business on the floor, it wouldn't be unheard of for the Legislature to consider allowing for remote floor sessions.

In the memorandum you'll see there's a couple different footnotes. If you want to explore some NCSL information regarding what other states are doing, there's been at least 25 states who have authorized remote participation in some form, including committee meetings and floor sessions. It's been working in some states, to the extent that they need it to, and it's been considered a matter of Legislature procedure.

While I could not guarantee that there's no risk of challenge should the Alaska Legislature authorize remote participation, I am fairly confident that an Alaska court would not step in the way of the Alaska Legislature making procedural rules so that it could continue to conduct its business amid a pandemic.

The bullet point regarding potential remote participation during floor sessions largely are derived from SCR 16, which the Senate passed at the end of last session. The House did not have the opportunity to (indiscernible), but each of those bullet points in terms of the specific rules for or guidelines for remote session are all policy decisions that either Leg Council could make recommendations to the next incoming Legislature, or the next Legislature could make those decisions. I'm happy to answer questions anyone has about those - I won't go through them

individually.

The second bullet point, which is on page 3 of my memo, addresses things that were not outlined in the remote piece of this discussion, which would be additional policy decisions for the Legislature to consider if it became necessary or there was a desire to really alter Legislature procedure, as we know it and as has been historically done, so that the amount of time that legislators spend on the floor congregated or the length of what it takes to get the Legislature's business done can be abbreviated.

The bullets that I outline were derived from me going through the rules and looking at things to be truncated or modified if those were goals that the Legislature decided it wanted to explore.

These lists are not exclusive. One thing that was not mentioned in the memo, that was brought to my attention after the fact, was an additional recommendation in terms of limiting floor activity or reducing length of session, another smaller change such as revising the rules to remove the need for title change resolutions during session, which have been really a formality in most recent history.

Again, this is a non-exclusive list of items that could each individually be considered, or also there's room for modification of each of those bullet points. That's generally what the memo goes through and I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Megan. I really appreciate you giving this so much thought and giving us so many options here of things we can talk about.

I want to make it clear again. There is no intention to take any action on this memo from Megan at this time and to realize that this is not a permanent change. This is a temporary change in the face of the pandemic or any other pandemic or any other issue that may come along in the future, but this is a tool in the toolbox that can be used if things get worse, and they very well might.

What Megan is doing and what Jessica is doing is to plan for the worst, a plan for what could happen and hopefully does not, so temporary. And interesting that 25 states have passed something like this.

Let's open this up for discussion just on this memo at this time. Does anybody have any thoughts or concerns? I know there are a lot of concerns about some of the rules there. Would anybody like to speak to this at this time?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Chairman, this is Natasha.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator von Imhof, please go ahead.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Thank you.

Megan, I really appreciate you taking the time to write this memo, and I think it's something that it's good to have in our toolbox, just like Senator Stevens said.

I am hoping, though, that we don't utilize it right away and that we have discussions just about the possibility of instead all going to Juneau instead and creating a bubble if that's the case. I think it's better that we're all together. This is an interesting platform today, but I would like to see everybody's smiling facing underneath their mask or at least the twinkling of their eyes, if you will, under their masks.

One of the ways this could be helpful is that if we do have someone who is sick and quarantining for a couple weeks in Juneau, maybe they could participate in a way that's meaningful while they're self-isolating.

But other than that, I'm hoping that we don't go home on a regular basis and just decide to stay home for two or three days and participate remotely. I think we all need to be down in Juneau. At least that's how I feel now, today, October, 29th. Thanks.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator von Imhof. You're right, and I think there's no way to avoid, no matter how bad things get, our getting together in Juneau to at least make these decisions on what we're going to do.

Should someone come down with COVID, one of the legislators, they could certainly participate from their home base in Juneau. I know that a lot of issues here we're talking about, travel and that sort of thing, it's quite concerning. But if people do travel and become positive in their hometown and then cannot return to the Legislature -- there's got to be a tipping point there. If the Legislature is unable to act, that really is a concern of mine.

Thank you very much, Senator von Imhof. I appreciate those comments.

Any further thoughts?

SENATOR STEDMAN: I have a couple, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Stedman.

SENATOR STEDMAN: A couple of concerns: One is that we maintain our operations in Juneau, and we have, as mentioned, some flexibility in case somebody is stuck in their apartment for a couple weeks or what have you, and we have tight controls on the building.

But I don't want us to head down the road where we could have some of our elected officials just decide that they don't want to sit in Juneau and want to sit home, or they want to work and do this telephonically. We've had some concerns about that the last couple years, and I think we

need to be very careful with that. Clearly Juneau is set up to handle the legislative work far better than any other location. And if we have problems, I personally feel Juneau has the ability to isolate itself off much more than a lot of other areas if need be.

I'd also like to, hopefully our colleagues will work with us, be careful on the travel during session. But I think it's pretty hard to be too restrictive because we also run the risk that some of our colleagues just might do what they want to do. We've seen that also last year on the floor trying to deal with the mask issues.

There are just some concerns. But let's not set up a process where some of our colleagues could be employed somewhere and then call in whenever they are in the mood on a particular issue.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Stedman, very good point. I understand what you're saying. That's not the goal here, and I'm not sure how we --

Jessica, do you have any response to that?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, I'm sorry, I don't really have a response because it will really come down to the legislators and the leadership. I don't want to use the term "policing," but it's not really anything that a policy can control, because, as Senator Stedman said, even if there was a policy in place, legislators do have their own funds and could decide to travel regardless.

I think the best we can do--and maybe Megan has an idea as far as what procedurally could be done--is just letting people know what the expectation is and hope that they can abide by it.

SENATOR STEDMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Jessica. I'm sorry to put you on the spot like that. I appreciate you jumping in there.

Senator Stedman.

SENATOR STEDMAN: I'd like to just remind everybody that the current presiding officer had trouble with some of the elected officials even having the courtesy of telling her or the rules chairman that they weren't going to be in town.

CHAIR STEVENS: Exactly. We did experience that. And I hate to call people out on the spot here, but presiding officers, do you have any comments on this issue, the president or the speaker?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens, this is Senator Giessel.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please, Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: I appreciate both Senator von Imhof and Senator Stedman's comments. As members of leadership,

and senators, as well as yourself, Senator Stevens, recall the Concurrent Resolution 16 that was passed.

To speak to one of Senator Stedman's concerns, we had that concern that Juneau was not abandoned as the seat of government. So on page 2 of that concurrent resolution, lines 1 through 3 it actually states, "In accordance with the Constitution, Juneau is the capital and the seat of government, and the Legislature must continue to meet in the seat of government to the fullest extent possible."

The resolution calls out, the content of it is page 2 of Megan's memo, that first bullet point starts out, "Upon agreement of the presiding officers of both houses, we would authorize session by videoconference."

So it wouldn't be a whimsical decision on the part of a single presiding officer. It would be, of course, discussions with both leadership teams in the House and the Senate; at least that's certainly how Bryce and I worked. It was not just us making those decisions.

I will also share -- just reminding senators, who I know know this, but possibly House members don't -- we did deploy cameras into LIOs, and I would let Jessica update which LIOs have it. But the requirement that those legislators are not traveling to Italy, let's say, and tried to call into a floor session, they would actually be required to be in an LIO in Alaska.

If there was a reason that they would be quarantining in their own home, either in their personal residence, in their city of residence or in Juneau, that would require special permission from the presiding officer. So we tried to contain those concerns in that joint resolution. And as Megan pointed out, the Senate did pass it unanimously, and that's a footnote on page 2 of her memo.

Those are just a couple comments to things that have already been stated. Thank you, Senator Stevens.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel. I appreciate those comments. We will later hear from Tim on the updated cameras in the LIOs. I have asked him, in his presentation later, to remind us, where we are right now and the ability we have to communicate as we are in this meeting.

Mr. Speaker, do you have any thoughts, any comments since this is an issue you have been dealing with along with the president?

SPEAKER EDGMON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope you can hear me okay.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, I can hear you clearly.

SPEAKER EDGMON: Okay. Great. I guess a couple of points: to reiterate what Cathy was saying, we did spend a lot of time on the subject matter that eventually became SCR

16 back in April, I think going into May.

As we all know, looking back on the past session on March 29th, we went into an extensive recess. And that might be an item that, number two, limited floor activity might consider as a bullet point 2 if we do pass a vehicle that separately alters uniform rules.

A second point is pretty amorphous, maybe convoluted at best, but the work that lies ahead of us next session is going to be very, very challenging. I would not like to see anything that would come out of a policy that could be leveraged against us, assuming that another governing coalition stays the same and the mindset about taking the approach of earning reserve and really making difficult choices that would require us to spend some time in Juneau to get through all this, that we don't have a situation where I would (indiscernible).

Jessica, in your memo, I would take out the verbiage "and adjourn after conducting work safely." Because there could be the scenario where we do go down, we get our work done early, March perhaps, but then we just sort of (indiscernible) until the sessions conclude, given the fact that we -- who knows -- may have to come back for some unforeseen business. Other than that, I'm supportive of the discussion and the direction that we're going in.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, you bring up some very good points, the challenges we will face next year. If it does get really bad and we have to meet at a distance, as we are meeting right now, you can see the difficulty of this. I'm trying to give everyone a chance to speak. It's going to take even more time, 40 members of the House, if you're all on a system like this, it will be extremely difficult, but we still have to be prepared for the worst.

I'll give anyone else an opportunity to speak to this. We're not going to take action on Megan's memo, but we will eventually in time. I think we need to pass it later with modifications that might be needed, but we're not going to adopt that at this point. I just wanted to make sure you were aware of that process and the impact it has on the policies we'll be considering.

Any last comments on Megan's memo?

SENATOR COGHILL: Senator Coghill. One note to think of.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Coghill, yes.

SENATOR COGHILL: Megan, as we go through this, on the contingency that we have to have the LIOs for example, if we do the SCR 16 again, I think it would be wise that we still have the ability to compel attendance. I think that's going to be something that is going to be very important to do. I

know that could slow the process down, but I think, as we go forward, the fear that Senator Stedman shared can be waylaid somewhat by the ability to compel attendance, just for what it's worth.

CHAIR STEVENS: Good point. Thank you, Senator Coghill. That certainly is a consideration. And I think the public expects everyone to be in Juneau or to be other places, at their desk and perform their duties. So it's good to know that we can compel attendance.

MS. GEARY: We're going to have a brief at ease.

CHAIR STEVENS: With no further comments on Megan's memo -- which we're not going to take action on -- let's move on to the other things that I would like to have us at least consider, and that is the Mask Policy, the Screening Process Policy, and the Pandemic Code of Conduct Policy.

Representative Stutes, can we have a motion on the Mask Policy?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Mr. Chair. I move that Legislative Council approve the Legislative Council COVID-19 Mask Policy.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you.

Jessica, would you explain that for us, please?

MS. GEARY: Sure. Chair Stevens, the Mask Policy is a pretty standard policy that we've seen in municipal governments. We used some of the language from our Juneau mask mandate. In essence, it says that when you are unable to maintain 6-foot distance and you are in a legislative facility, that you must have a cloth face covering. And, of course, you can take it off to eat or drink.

There are a few exceptions at the bottom, which I think are just common-sense exceptions. If a person declines to wear a mask because of a medical condition or disability, this policy does not require them to produce medical documentation.

The enforcement piece is, "Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person who violates the face covering requirement may be removed from legislative property. Enforcement as applied to legislators will be left to the members and legislative leadership."

So that's it. It's a very basic policy. I am happy to answer any questions that any members might have.

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, thank you, Jessica. I will object to the motion for purposes of discussion and I'll go into that.

Anybody have any comments on the Mask Policy that is before you?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: I do.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering how pertinent this is going to be. I mean, it's a very simple policy to avoid. "Oh, I can't wear a mask. I had radiation and it affected my breathing, and I certainly can't wear a mask." It's pretty evident to me that anybody that chooses not to want to wear a mask, this policy is going to be very ineffective.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, I see your point. Certainly people can ignore it, but I think we have an obligation to be an example. The governor was caught at a fundraiser not wearing a mask, and it raised all sorts of concern and a lot of people spoke about it. I think, as legislators, it's really important that we be a role model for everyone in the state and that we do things as properly as we possibly can. But, yes, that's a good point; people can ignore it if they choose to.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Just one --

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, go ahead.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: One more comment. It's already been exhibited by legislators not being good examples because they simply don't believe in wearing a mask, so that's all I'll say.

CHAIR STEVENS: Very good point. I think all of us -- or many of us are very concerned about the conditions we might face and our people on the floor not wearing a mask, the impact it could have on each and every one of us. There are some controls over that, constitutionally, and maybe we'll have Megan explain this. But constitutionally everyone has a right -- every elected official has a right to be on the floor, to be able to vote, to be able to speak.

There are other considerations that we have talked about, the rules chair, assigned seating. So we are talking about additional seating on the floor, maybe behind plexiglass. So anybody who does not follow that Mask Policy could be moved to another position on the floor where they would not be a threat to the rest of the folks that are on the floor. Just a thought.

Any comments on that or thoughts?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman, this is Senator Hoffman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During the last legislative session, our Senate secretary did not wear a mask. She wore a face covering, which was basically plexiglass. I'm wondering does this use of that comply with the regulations? And, more importantly, I guess, is that use of a face mask that's covering your nose, mouth, and your eyes proven to be effective stopping the spread of COVID?

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Hoffman. I'm not

sure how effective it is.

Staff have any comments on the effectiveness of those shields? Jessica, do you have any thoughts on that?

MS. GEARY: Sure. So the shields are definitely very effective. They have the droplet barrier at the bottom of the shield, which prevents any droplets from coming out. So I think they're even a better option than the mask, and they would certainly meet the requirements of this policy. We do have some of those available to members if they choose to have them, I think it's just each member's comfort level.

Right now the medical advice that we have is that cloth face coverings also are an adequate way to prevent the spread, but only if both people are wearing them. So I think either way you go -- I'm not going to give medical advice -- but I think they're both adequate and would meet the test of this policy.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: There's always a problem of people wearing masks. It's difficult to communicate, and, of course, I know when the president was wearing a mask on the floor, it's hard to really see what's going on, and maybe a shield would be more effective.

Senator Giessel, you have some thoughts on that?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: I do, Mr. Chairman. I follow this rather closely. The shield actually is -- the shield is what Senator Hoffman was describing. It's not a piece of plexiglass, it's actually plastic; it's called a shield. That's actually more effective than the face mask. Some droplets do penetrate through the widely available what's referred to as medical masks.

What is ineffective -- and I think that need to be called out here -- is the scarfs that people put over their nose and mouth. Sometimes it's like a neck gator or just a simple scarf. The testing on that shows that droplets do get through that pretty prolifically.

If we want this to be effective, I would suggest that there be an exemption for allowing just the scarf over the nose or mouth, that it actually be a mask or -- either a medical-type mask or a cloth mask such as was provided by the Juneau folks for us when we went back in May. Those are my comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel. So you would be comfortable with a shield, as well as a mask then; is that right?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: The shield would actually be optimally preventative of any droplets being distributed. The problem is -- and I think our Senate secretary expressed it -- Liz indicated it was actually uncomfortable to wear for

very long.

CHAIR STEVENS: I see. Okay. Good point. Well, thank you all so much for those thoughts. And any further comments?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is Senator Hoffman again.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: The enforcement issue that Representative Stutes brought up is a serious concern of what type of enforcement measures do we have. And I know we have constitutional rights to speak, but I think at the national level there's also the right to travel.

But airlines have issued no-fly to individuals that haven't been wearing masks, and I read the article, I believe yesterday, that they're close to 1,000 people that are on a no-fly list, they are losing their rights to travel. And that is the hammer that the industry has or the airline industry is utilizing. So it is a very serious issue.

We have laws that prohibit individuals from smoking in public buildings because of health hazards, and I believe that COVID is probably far more of a concern regarding health hazards. The enforcement issue needs to be looked at very, very seriously in light of the health issues and trying to weigh the enforcement of, say, people that are smoking, for health reasons and not allowed in certain areas and those that are not willing to wear masks to spread COVID as it relates to health matters. I think that they are not comparable. I think COVID is a far more risky situation, and we should be treating as such when we develop our enforcement policies.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Hoffman. Clearly the point you made on air travel is particularly valid. No legislator can fly to Juneau without wearing a mask on an airplane, so what would be the objection to wearing a mask on the floor?

Megan, if you're still with us, could you touch on the constitutional issues, and maybe if you have any thoughts on enforcement, I'd appreciate that.

MS. WALLACE: Sure. Again, for the record, Megan Wallace, legal services director.

Enforcement, as everyone has acknowledged, is the most difficult piece of this and the other policies as it applies to legislators because they are elected officials, elected to a legislative body to pass laws on the floor during session.

I hesitate a little bit because it feels like in 2020 we've used this word unprecedented so many times. "This is unprecedented. This is unprecedented." But this is another unprecedented circumstance. So we haven't seen

challenges to prohibiting a member from exercising his or her right to vote on the floor because they didn't wear a face covering.

Alaska is not the only state that is grappling with how to enforce mask policies and other mitigation efforts. We're seeing legislators across the country kind of push the bounds of these kinds of policies. And, as Jessica mentioned, we are all collectively watching what is happening in other states because, while it doesn't always translate exactly to Alaska, it does help us look at issues and analyze them and see how courts in other states are addressing these legal issues that come to be.

The best that I can tell you, my advice would be that if a member were to be prevented from entering the floor to vote because he or she didn't wear a face covering, the ultimate risk of challenge or litigation over that decision is relatively high, and how a court would come out on that is a more difficult thing to predict.

It's that balancing of the health and welfare of members around that other member -- is the court going to give weight to that or more weight to the inability of that elected official to exercise his or her vote?

It's my anecdotal understanding that in one state a member has been expelled from the Legislature for refusing to wear a mask. And under Article 2, Section 12, the members are -- they judge the qualifications of each -- of the other members. So there's a remedy in Article 2, Section 12 to expel members. And it would be -- I suppose that, one argument against restricting someone from the floor for failure to wear a face mask would be if members don't want that person to participate in the body anymore, that the remedy is exclusively to expel that member, and anything short of that is impermissible.

But I suspect that there are other lesser forms of enforcement that the Legislature could explore in terms of regulating the conduct of its own members. The committee on committees could take action and remove folks from committee memberships, or they could be seated in different places on the floor. There's a litany of other options that might be available to the extent that the body wants to enforce it.

That's kind of a long-winded answer, but ultimately it's just a very high risk of litigation if members were kept from floor sessions.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. No, not long-winded, really appropriate, and thank you for the time. And so alternate seating on the floor would comply with the constitutional requirements -- what else do we have to do? If we have alternate seating, they have to have a microphone and a

button for voting. Is there anything else we have to do?

MS. WALLACE: Through the Chair, Senator Stevens, as it relates to the procedural rules for voting and seating assignment, the largest -- or the most important rule, as it relates to that issue, in my opinion, is Uniform Rule 34, subsection -- or paragraph 5, which requires that a member may only vote when at a member's desk, and so wherever that desk is assigned is the place where the member is required to vote.

So, for example, a member couldn't -- if a member was assigned a desk in the chamber, they couldn't vote from any other location. So they couldn't be directed to sit somewhere else and cast their vote there if that's not their desk, by rule. But that's a legislative procedural rule, and that would be something that the Legislature, as it relates to an earlier discussion about procedural changes, that it might consider. If reassignment of someone's seat or reassignment of where that person must cast their vote if they don't comply with a mask or other mitigation policy, that might be something that is considered if other uniform rules of procedural changes are considered.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Megan, for that.

Any further comments on this Mask Policy before we move ahead?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Senator Stevens, this is Senator von Imhof.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please, Senator von Imhof.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: So just real quick, I do appreciate discussion regarding the floor. But if a particular legislator refuses to wear a mask at any time, whether it be in the hallway, in the stairwell, in the Leg lounge, if it's open, in any of the committee meetings, anything -- we're just sort of accommodating the floor issue. But if a legislator refuses to wear a mask at all, that's sort of another layer or another response, and we don't necessarily have to have an answer to that right now. But, you know, it's one thing not to have a mask in your office, but the moment you leave even to go to the bathroom, I believe that we should be wearing a mask at this time.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator von Imhof. I think this policy would demand that everyone wear a mask in the hallways and in committee meetings. The reason we're spending time with the "on the floor issue" is because it's a constitutional matter, that the Constitution does say, as Megan pointed out, that everyone should have a right to vote. So, yes, a very good point. Thank you very much, Senator von Imhof.

Any other discussion?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: This is Representative Johnson. I have a comment.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please, Representative Johnson.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Okay. So I guess I'm going to have to be a no vote on this because I think the enforcement -- it's a great suggestion, but we don't have the keys to do it. Someone can just go in and get their little medical chip or whatever. Even if they just say they have a medical reason, there's nothing to this. This is kind of the worst of the worst. It's a great suggestion, but it's not particularly meaningful.

Now, what we can do is we can talk about what staff can do, and we can talk about who we let in the building, and we can talk our bubble. But when it comes to regulating legislators, we're going to have a heck of a time doing that, and I don't know if now's the time to pick that up and try to do it. That's just where I'm at on this.

It's not that I have a problem wearing a mask, and I'll be wearing a mask in the building. But, I just want to put that out there because that's my concern, that it's not strong enough, and it's too weak as it is, and it's just -- it's not going to get us where I think we need to go.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thank you, Representative Johnson.

Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, I can appreciate what Representative Johnson is saying, but -- and I understand the constitutionality of not preventing a legislator from voting, but they're not constitutionally guaranteed, say, access to the lounge or anyplace else like that, so we could restrict them from going into the lounge. Am I correct on that? And restrict them from accessing places in the building other than the floor, can we do that?

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, I think so. If you read this policy, it means anybody in the Capitol Complex legislative space has to wear a mask, face covering. And other things like handwashing and sanitizing, and it's hard to follow that up.

I appreciate what both Representative Johnson said and Representative Stutes, but my responsibility, as chair of Leg Council, is to make sure that every legislator feels safe entering that building. And if that means that we become heavy-handed and say everyone wear a mask, I think that's what we have to do.

I mean, you cannot allow everyone just to go back -- to act as if we were in January of 2020. We're not there now. Hopefully this will not last long, but we have to protect those members who -- some of our members have health

issues, and it's quite a concern there. Anyway, just my thought as well.

Any further comments on this Mask Policy?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes, Senator Stevens, this is Senator Giessel.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Mr. Chairman, to some degree I'm responding to Representative Johnson's comment. I think that the definition of face coverings -- I'm looking at the Mask Policy and after, purpose -- number one, purpose -- there's an asterisk, and it says, "Face coverings must be made of cloth, blah, blah, blah."

I would recommend amending this to be much more specific. "Face coverings mean a clean medical mask or surgical mask or approved face shield. Also included is a clean cloth mask made of cotton material, multiple layers of tightly woven fabric, a minimum of two layers. Not acceptable are bandanas or N-95 masks."

The N-95 -- just as a parenthetical comment -- the individual wearing that is exhaling air that is not filtered. So they are not effective. So I would amend this to be much more specific about what we're expecting for face coverings.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel. I take that as then an amendment to the Mask Policy draft, and it would be a clear definition of what those masks are. So are you making that as an amendment, Senator Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: I am. And I am, by the way, using CDC language here. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. So we have an amendment before us.

A discussion on that amendment, Representative Stutes?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes, I think that aside from putting "bandanas," we should include the word "gators" as well.

CHAIR STEVENS: Are you okay with that, Senator Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Absolutely, yes.

CHAIR STEVENS: -- to gators? At this point do we also need to add shields in?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens, I did include shields in the first sentence. "Face coverings mean a clean medical or surgical mask or approved face shield."

Now, what Jessica described is not simply that shield that covers over your mouth and the bottom is open. What Jessica was describing is the face shield that has a closed bottom so that air is not escaping from the inside of that shield.

CHAIR STEVENS: Very good. So we'll have some discussion on that amendment, and then I'd ask Senator

Giessel to restate it so we all know exactly what we're voting on.

Any further discussions on the amendment to define what these masks and shields are?

MS. GEARY: Senator Stevens, this is Jessica. And I have a question for Senator Giessel. We've seen as a replacement of N-95, there has been a lot of other mask types named KN-95, which I believe is perhaps just a less expensive version. And if we're saying no N-95, is there another way to exclude any exhaust style -- I guess I'm just relying on your medical expertise to define what you mean by "no N-95."

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Jessica, a way to encompass this would be to say -- and under the "not acceptable" I'm going to add in what Representative Stutes mentioned. "Not acceptable are bandanas, gators, or masks which have valves, such as the N-95." So that would cover the less expensive, if that's what you're referring to, the less expensive type of mask. Anything with a valve that is allowing the free exhale of air would not be acceptable.

MS. GEARY: Thank you for that.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. That's great to have that information.

Further discussion on the amendment before us?

[10:32:29 AM](#)

If we could then have a roll call vote on the amendment, Jessica.

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?

Representative Foster?

Representative DeLena Johnson?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: No.

MS. GEARY: Representative Jennifer Johnston?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSTON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Representative Kopp?

Representative Thompson?

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Vice-Chair Stutes?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 yeas, 1 nay.

CHAIR STEVENS: So the motion -- the amendment passes with a vote of 9 to 1.

So let's go back to the original motion that Representative Stutes made to -- well, let's see. Yes, so I think we're at a point now of going back to the original motion on the Mask Policy.

Any further discussions on that motion?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Mr. Chairman, this is Senator Giessel. I just wanted --

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: -- to add parenthetically I just e-mailed Jessica Geary the words that I used in my amendment so she'll have them, but otherwise I have no other comments about this other than I think it's a good policy. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel.

Any further comments on this motion, the main motion before us?

Then could we have a roll call, Jessica?

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?

Representative Foster?

Representative DeLena Johnson?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: No.

MS. GEARY: Representative Jennifer Johnston?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSTON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Representative Kopp?

Representative Thompson?

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Vice-Chair Stutes?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 nays, 1 -- 9 yeas, 1 nay.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. So the motion passes with 9 votes to 1.

Let's then move on to the next issue, which is the Screening Policy. Representative Stutes, could I have a motion?

10:36:31 AM

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Mr. Chair. I move the Leg Council approve the Capitol COVID-19 Screening Process Policy.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. And then I will object at this point for purposes of discussion and ask Jessica to discuss this matter, the screening process with us. Jessica.

MS. GEARY: Thank you. Again, for the record, Jessica Geary, executive director, Legislative Affairs Agency.

So this policy is expanding on the screening process that we had at the end of May, earlier this year. And so the screening is simply a series of questions and a temperature check. And whether the temperature check will be through a thermal infrared camera or a no-touch thermometer, I don't think those details don't matter quite as much.

But I think the important thing to note is that we're talking about closing down the entrances to the Capitol with the exception of the ground floor lobby, which is the proposed screening station location. And so it's a pretty simple policy. I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR STEVENS: So maybe, Jessica, you could talk a little bit about -- we're going to be discussing the RFP, potential of hiring a company to come in that does this professionally. Could you go into a little more detail on what they would be doing if the Leg Council approves that RFP at another meeting?

MS. GEARY: Absolutely. And thank you for bringing that up. I briefly mentioned it earlier, but one of the things that we are looking into is hiring a third-party contractor to perform the screening.

And then to Senator Hoffman's question from earlier, the testing -- we're specifying a rapid molecular-based test, so I think results within a half an hour. I am not one-hundred percent on the specifics, but it is the recommended molecular-based test.

The idea is that the contractor would be a medical professional in full PPE and would -- after the screening questions, if there were a member or staff or member of the media who screened positive for symptoms, they would be escorted to a private room to get a rapid test, and then, if they tested positive, they would be asked to leave the

building, and there are some other discussion points on that. That's sort of the gist of it at this point.

I think there's a statement down at the bottom that's important. But the screening process may be updated without the need for additional Legislative Council action in accordance with guidance from our health officials. We have the CDC, State of Alaska, and then our local City and Borough of Juneau. So we at Legislative Affairs are keeping up on those changes and the most recent guidance available to us.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Jessica. Just a couple of comments. What we found is that, when we were doing this before when we were in session, it took a lot of staff time from legislative staff and not able to do the jobs they do have to do, their full-time jobs, and probably best not to have them giving orders to legislators that they have to do this, they have to do that. So it seems like it would make sense to have an outside contractor do that.

As I understand it, if someone tests positive when they come in, they'd be whisked away into another place, tested again. And then if they are still positive -- and maybe I have this wrong -- but they would be escorted back to their apartment or to a hotel. These people that we hire, the contractor, then would make sure they are fed, they have meals delivered to them and will take care of them and including testing as well. So I think it's a better situation than the one we experienced earlier in this year.

Any comments anyone has on the screening process at this time then?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have a question for consideration.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: I understand the policy if someone has a fever, to go to a private area for a rapid test. I'm wondering for those that have family down there, if they subject themselves, such as immediate family members to a rapid test, could they be allowed into the building and not just to do the screening but actually get the rapid test within 20 minutes for spouses and maybe immediate family members? I think that that is something that should be considered.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator. I don't know the answer to that.

Jessica, do you have any thoughts?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Senator Hoffman, I think that that is a policy decision whether or not we would expand that to spouses and family members if the Legislature is paying for the actual test. I believe since we pay for spouses and dependents to travel to Juneau to be a family

unit, I would think we would expand that or extend the offer for a test to them. The frequency of which we would offer testing to those who are non-legislators or legislative employees, that's the piece that I wouldn't be able to answer right now.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Under the current policy, if you have a fever and you get a rapid test, then you leave the building, would that rapid test continue to allow you access to the building under this current policy?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Senator Hoffman, I'm not sure I fully understand your question. Would you mind repeating it?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: So under the second paragraph, where individuals have a fever, they go to a private area and have a rapid test. Then they're allowed into the building. Then they leave to do some errands outside the building and they come back into the building. Does that first rapid test allow them access to the building again, or are they required to have another rapid test?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Senator Hoffman, that negative test would allow them access to the building. The idea for the screening is upon first entry each day of the Capitol, and it isn't envisioned that legislators would have to go through the screening multiple times throughout the day.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: So I guess my question is to the members of the council, is it asking too much to have your spouses or family members come into the building as long as they inconvenience themselves to admit to have a rapid test?

CHAIR STEVENS: Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: So, Senator Hoffman, is it whether or not the legislator tests positive? Even if they test negative, then you want the family tested as well?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: No, they would have to be testing negative with the rapid test in order to access the building.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Could I comment, Senator Stevens? This is Senator Giessel.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, is that Senator Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes, this is Senator Giessel. These rapid tests -- first of all, as Jessica pointed out, this is going to be the issue of the council determining how much -- I'll be blunt -- how much they want to invest in it. These rapid tests are not free. They detect active infections.

And so the question of family members submitting to this and then being allowed free access to the building, that active infection could develop over several days and crop up at any time. I guess the fundamental question we

have to ask is, how much free entrance and egress do family members need to have in the building -- so that's a fundamental philosophical question -- and how much we're going to invest in testing lots of family members. You know, kids come into the building selling Girl Scout cookies and all the rest of that. So just a comment. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: So just a little story here. We had a principal of our high school who was exposed to it, a father and a child -- a child, I think, who were positive. He was tested immediately and was negative, tested again and was negative, tested again and was positive. So these tests can change pretty quickly.

And, Senator Giessel, that's your field. Do you have any comments on that? It seems like it's a little difficult when you depend so much on one test which could be inaccurate and could change in time.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: You're absolutely correct, Senator Stevens. It's not that those first two tests were erroneous; it's that the level of the viral infection had not reached the point that the rapid test will detect it and that it has become an active infection.

The common thought now, of course, is that the person, even with that negative test, is actually shedding some virus, but we can't assume that. But you're right; it has to be an active infection, and it could take several days to develop.

So if the legislator tests positive, that spouse is probably going to test positive in a few days. Vice versa. If the spouse tests positive, that legislator should be tested every day thereafter. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Chair Stevens, this is Representative Johnson. I have a couple questions, if I might?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please go ahead, Representative Johnson.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: So I just wanted to make note, first of all, that the governor has staff in the building as well, that we shouldn't forget about that piece. And it would be something I would be interested in hearing more about, what the governor's -- the Executive Branch's plan is for their policy as far as being in the building. That would be helpful, I think, somewhat.

And then the other question I have is, if you have a legislator that does test positive -- and we just talked about the desk that legislator has to vote from, could we have a different place either in the building or --if someone tests positive, could we have someplace that has full A/V

communications so they could speak on the floor, they could vote from, but they could still -- even if they're positive, be there and participate?

I mean, the idea of excluding someone from the floor, I still have concerns with that. I recognize that we're getting into -- this could be -- any reasonable person wouldn't go to the floor if they are known to have an actual infection. But how do we actually enforce that? Obviously once they're organized with the rules chair and so on, but this is my question for Legislative Affairs and for the council in general: Is there a way to have an assigned place that could be an alternative for someone that tested positive, that they would not get excluded from voting, that they could go to?

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Representative Johnson. Let me tackle the first part of that question. The governor's administration, I've been in contact -- close contact with the governor's chief of staff, Ben Stevens, and he understands that the rules apply to all -- the entire building, apply to the governor's floor as well.

We did allow the governor's administration to enter up the stairs and in the back door. We did that in February and March, and that seemed to be a reasonable thing to do at the time.

Now, I think the things we're considering here would require them to come through the front door with everyone else so there would be no access to that building at all without complying with our rules, with the rules that we decide. So there's been no objection to that on the part of the chief of staff. He understands that we have to make a policy here, and their policy would dovetail with ours.

As for the second question on someone testing positive, I believe -- and help me out here, Jessica -- but I believe they would not be allowed in the building if they tested positive; is that right?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, this kind of gets into the constitutional area we were speaking about earlier. And this is really a policy decision whether or not we can set up an area that is designated as the legislator's desk that they can vote from while positive and participate in floor sessions. The simple answer -- well, it's not a simple answer. The answer is, yes, technically we can make that happen, but it would be a policy call whether or not that would be allowed to happen.

CHAIR STEVENS: And if we did decide to allow folks to participate online from home, if we should pass that, then they would be allowed to vote. And if we passed that, they would be allowed to vote from their homes or from their

apartments or from their hotel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens, this is Senator Giessel. Could I comment on that?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: What that's reflecting back on is the Senate Concurrent Resolution 16 that provided for exactly what you just described, a positive-tested person who is now being either housed in their own apartment in Juneau, or if we have this second contractor, that contractor would provide separate housing for the individual.

So this reflects back on Megan's memorandum that we've talked about earlier. It would be highly foolish to allow a person who has tested positive to have access to the building. That just flies in the face of reason. Those are just my comments. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator. And as we saw just recently, the athlete whose team won, and he went back on the field testing positive, and there's been no end of comments in the press about that. So I would hope that anybody that does test positive would stay out of the building.

Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: I was just going to make a comment. You know, I would agree with Senator Giessel, because even if there were a spot set up in the Capitol, you could not restrict these people, say, from using the restroom, you know, they would be in the hallways. There would be a degree of exposure no matter how cautious we were.

CHAIR STEVENS: Right.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have a question regarding Joint Resolution 16.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: The question is, did we adopt that for the 31st Alaska Legislature -- or does that apply to all the 31st, as well as all future Legislatures?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, of course, it did not pass the House. It passed the Senate; it did not pass the House. We are the 31st Legislature. We can have rules for ourselves, but we can't force a 32nd Legislature, once they are organized, to follow those rules. I think -- any reasonable person I think would.

But, Jessica, am I right there, or maybe, Megan?

MS. GEARY: I would say you are correct. If Megan wants to comment, she can.

MS. WALLACE: Yes, again, for the record, Megan Wallace, legal services director.

That's correct, reference to SCR 16 at this point is more, even just for discussion purposes, to highlight a resolution that was drafted and considered by at least one

body. And it highlights that new details can be considered via resolution and are policy decisions for the incoming Legislature.

At this point it would only be Leg Council's recommendation to the incoming Legislature as to what procedures -- procedural changes to make, but that certainly is a decision that when this committee is ready could make those recommendations for the incoming Legislature.

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, this is Representative Thompson. I'm going to have to go offline. This was a scheduled appointment. I'm sorry.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thanks so much for being with us. I appreciate your time.

All right. So I'm ready to move on. We have the motion on the screening policy ahead of us, in front of us. Any further discussion?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens, this is Senator Giessel.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: This is Senator Hoffman again.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Hoffman.

SENATOR HOFFMAN: I think that the Leg Council should deal with the preview that we have. Whatever the Legislature decides on voting procedures, whether someone has COVID or not -- that had been raised by Representative Johnson -- should be decided by the Legislature. And whatever recommendations we have I think are inconsequential because the Legislature for the 32nd Legislature is going to be completely different than the one that we're currently presiding over.

So my recommendation is leave all recommendations to the 32nd Legislature at their discretion, and we decide what we want to make for the remainder of this year and stick to that for our safety purposes.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Well, thank you, Senator Hoffman. Yes, I understand what you're saying. So we'll stick with these decisions we make, but I think it's good to let the 32nd know what we have done and have a good, solid policy, well thought out. If they choose not to follow any of those issues, they certainly have that right. It's a long process here, but at least the 32nd Legislature will know what we -- what this Leg Council and this Legislature feels should be done.

Further discussion on the matter of screening process?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens, this is Senator Giessel.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: I'm looking at the screening

process. There's a middle section of bullets, and they're hollow bullets, they're just circles. It's pertaining to "Notification will occur as follows: legislator, appropriate presiding officer, partisan staff." It says, "Legislator and appropriate presiding officer."

I would recommend adding the rules chair to that list for partisan staff as well. Since it is under the purview of the rules chair for hiring authority for partisan staff during session, I think they should be included. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel. That's a reasonable thing to add.

Is there any objection to changing "partisan staff" by adding "the rules chair" along with -- it says "legislator and appropriate presiding officer and the rules chair." Any objection to that? Okay. Very well. Thank you for that.

Any further comments on screening process?

All right. Then I call for a vote -- first, I'll remove my objection and ask Jessica to take a roll call, please, on the screening process.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, do we need to have a motion to approve the amendment or --

CHAIR STEVENS: We can if we want just to make sure everything is done properly.

Then, Senator Giessel, that is your amendment then; is that true?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I make that motion.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thank you. Then let's go ahead -- any discussion on that?

Let's move ahead then to a vote on that amendment, which is to add the rules chair.

And roll call vote, please, Jessica.

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?

SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Representative Foster?

REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Representative DeLena Johnson?
REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: No.
MS. GEARY: Representative Jennifer Johnston?
Representative Kopp?
Vice-Chair Stutes?
VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?
CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 yeas, 1 nay.
CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. For a vote of 9 to 1, then
the amendment passes.

11:46:48 AM

We have the amended motion in front of us then for
the discussion on that amended motion. And let's go to roll
call vote on the screening process, Capitol COVID Screening
Process.

A roll call vote, please, Jessica.
MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?
SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?
PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?
SENATOR HOFFMAN: No.
MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?
SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?
SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?
SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Representative Foster?
REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Representative DeLena Johnson?
REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: No.
MS. GEARY: Representative Johnston?
Representative Kopp?
Vice-Chair Stutes?
VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?
CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 8 yeas, 2 nays.
CHAIR STEVENS: And by a vote of 8 to 2, the motion
passes.

And I will move on to the next item, which is the
Legislative Council Pandemic Code of Conduct Policy.

11:46:48 AM

Representative Stutes, a motion, please.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Mr. Chair. I move the Legislative Council approve the Legislative Council Pandemic Code of Conduct Policy.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. And I'll object for purposes of discussion.

And, Jessica, would you talk about this issue with us, please.

MS. GEARY: Again, for the record, Jessica Geary. This Pandemic Code of Conduct Policy is for those who interact with the legislative bubble within the Capitol, basically you're just stating you will follow best practices, you will complete the daily health screening, you'll take responsibility for your own health, the health of your staff, and the health of others, you will isolate in the event of a COVID-19 positive test, be tested frequently as offered.

And then the one other thing is make every effort to quarantine in place for 14 days before your intended arrival in Juneau -- that's been recommended by local health officials, as quarantine is still our best defense against this virus -- and then arrive in Juneau with a negative test or test upon arrival and isolate pending results.

I think the rest of it's pretty self-explanatory. It's socialize in small groups, comply with enhanced social event management policies, and avoid all nonessential trips out of the capital city. With that I will open it up to questions.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thank you very much.

Jessica, any questions or comments at this point?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: This is Representative Johnson. Mr. Chair, I've got a question.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator von Imhof.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Thank you. I appreciate having this ready to go at this point, but I don't feel comfortable voting on this today, kind of what Senator Hoffman said. I get that I'm sort of sending a mixed message, but this is a lot more extensive about going in and out of the capital. It was one thing to talk about masks and screening, but it's another thing to start talking about travel, what you can and cannot do and whatnot. This is pretty extensive at this point, and I'm not really ready to vote on this. I think there's a lot more conversation -- it's okay to have a conversation about it today and listen to everybody's thoughts.

Is that what your intention is, Senator Stevens, is talk about it or are we voting on something?

CHAIR STEVENS: Unless there's a general disagreement, my intention is to put it to a vote.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Okay. Senator Stevens, with all due respect, I think this is pretty extensive, and I'm not happy about voting on this today.

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, thank you. I understand that. It is a big issue we've been dealing with for some time. This has not been a secret at all. But I understand your discomfort, and I'd appreciate knowing what others feel about it.

If anybody has a comment?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Mr. Chair, I have a question. This is Representative Johnson.

CHAIR STEVENS: Representative Johnson, go ahead, please.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: So I was just looking at this, and it talks a lot about people traveling into Juneau, but it also occurs to me that if we're going to talk about the Capitol bubble, that we need to have all the staff, whether they resided in Juneau or legislators that are in Juneau, need to be tested too. There's no guarantee that just because we're incoming, that we're the only ones that might test positive.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thank you for that.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, can I respond to that?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please.

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Representative Johnson, this policy states as a condition of working and being present in the Capitol Complex and all other legislative spaces, legislators and legislative staff shall -- so the intent is that people that live in Juneau as well. Anyone that has business to conduct in the Capitol Complex would be subject to the same rules as those traveling from outside.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: So they would be tested? So the Juneau legislators and the Juneau legislative staff and so on would also be tested?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Representative Johnson, that is the intent, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. So anybody coming into the building would be tested. And in our discussions, you know, depending on how bad things get, it could be closed. The building could be closed, and only the legislative staff and media would be allowed in the building, I think general discussion about whether lobbyists and the public would be allowed, but that all depends on how bad things get.

Any further discussions on this code of conduct?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman, this is Senator Hoffman.

I would also request that we take time to review this and not vote on it today.

SENATOR STEDMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Stedman.

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes, I think we need to talk about the time frame -- we've got three months until we start up. I'd like to hear a little bit about the pros and cons of taking action today versus working with this policy with several people concerned about implementation today. What's the time sensitivity of this issue?

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, I'm not sure that there is a great need to decide this now. We can decide it later. We can look at it and bring it back and massage it a little bit and have everyone have more input into it.

Jessica, do you see this as a big concern in timing?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, I think we definitely have some time, this needs to be taken care of prior to the convening of the 32nd Legislature. I would say as long as we have some policy decisions in place by December, I think that should be just fine.

What we might run into an issue with is some of these items in this Code of Conduct Policy dovetail with the RFP and the contractor. So that's the only thing I might mention. If there was an aversion to the testing or the screening, those are the types of things that I think are important to note.

SPEAKER EDGMON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes. Is that the speaker, Mr. Speaker?

SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes, it is. Thank you. I'm looking at this page of this conduct policy, and maybe it's because I live in a community that's been pretty strict with its restrictions -- in fact, I was just talking to city council folks this morning on doing something similar to this. I think we're one of the first communities, if not the first community to have restrictions in the entire state.

I'm pretty comfortable with what I read here, and I don't see anything that would change if we were to vote on this later, although I'm certainly not averse to giving people more time to digest things here in front of us.

I do know that we're in the process of considering a third-party contractor, which I think is really important. I'll raise my hand and say put me down as a yes vote on this today and not waiting until later.

I think it's also important that we make a statement that we're taking things very seriously, and the fact is that we're going into the session that's going to be, by all accounts, abbreviated because of COVID. And, again,

I'm willing to wait to vote on this -- my preference would be to vote on it now. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Representative Edgmon. I appreciate your comments.

So I have heard from four folks who are uncomfortable with moving this forward. Is there anyone else who is uncomfortable with taking action on this now at this time?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Senator Giessel, please.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: First of all, I would support what the speaker, just said. I also suggest that it's possible something could arise prior to the convening of the 32nd Legislature. Of course, I'm referring to the headline, the front page story in the ADN today about the governor and the extension of this emergency declaration.

The speaker and I have talked with Megan about this. We have a legal opinion on it. That disaster declaration can only be extended by the Legislature. I think that having something like a Code of Conduct Policy -- it's before us -- suggested is prudent to do sooner than later. I agree with the speaker. There's nothing in here that's new.

I do have a couple comments on a couple pieces, just some nuances, but we're not talking about that right now. I do want to get those in before we finish talking about this, though. But I don't think we should kick the can down the road very far. If we are going to delay it -- today is Thursday -- I would suggest we meet again no later than Monday to put this in place because I think it might be needed prior to the mid-January date. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel. My job is to count noses, and at this point, this motion would not pass, I don't believe. I think there is great sense as to what everyone has said: take a little more time to look at it carefully to study the issue and we can easily handle this at our very next meeting. So unless there's a serious objection, my intention is to remove this from the agenda at this time.

Any objection to that?

SENATOR COGHILL: No objection, Mr. Chairman, but I do have a question that may clarify something for me.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, please, Senator Coghill.

SENATOR COGHILL: Arriving in Juneau, can you get a test at the airport like we do here in Fairbanks when you come into town?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair --

CHAIR STEVENS: I believe you can.

Do we have an answer from Jessica on that?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Senator Coghill, yes, you can get tested upon arrival at the airport.

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes, I still think it requires some quarantining until you get the results, but I just want to make sure that that was clear. I think this will help us when we get back to the issue. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Coghill.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: I think Senator Coghill's question needs fleshing out a bit more. So the idea of the test is it's not a guarantee that you don't have the virus. A negative test says that your viral load is negative for a threshold of diagnosis. It doesn't mean that tomorrow or next day you would not reach that threshold of viral infection and now have an active case.

That's the purpose of No. 2 policy, second bullet, "Make every effort to quarantine in place before your intended arrival in Juneau." That way, if you have isolated -- and I argue with the 14 days, it should actually be 10, but we'll talk about that later. Regardless, you've isolated, you get to Juneau. Sure, you have a test at the airport then and it's negative, it's probably substantial, it's probably a valid response. But to not have done some kind of isolation, take a test in Juneau and say, "Okay. I'm good" is false.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Giessel.

I, too, was questioning that 14 days, and so we need to review that issue and then figure out where we're going there. I realize I've asked a lot of you to go through all of these. But it's an enormous amount of things for us to cover.

Jessica, just a question, maybe a little off the subject. Have we had any legislators or staff test positive? That you know of?

MS. GEARY: Yes, we have. I am not aware of any legislators. We have had staff that have tested positive.

CHAIR STEVENS: All right. So it is among us, and the imperative is that we deal with this fairly shortly. My intention then is to remove this from our agenda and to deal with it very quickly in the future.

Everyone spend as much time as they can reviewing this, figuring out what you require, what you demand, what your needs are before we consider it at our next meeting.

C. LEGISLATURE LITIGATION UPDATE

CHAIR STEVENS: So we'll move on then -- I've asked Megan to give us an update on litigation.

Megan, are you prepared for that?

MS. WALLACE: Yes. Again, for the record, Megan Wallace, legal services director.

My update will be fairly brief. As everyone should recall, the only active piece of litigation that is still ongoing right now concerning the Legislature is a forward-funding lawsuit that the Legislature brought against the governor regarding the failure to appropriate the forward-funded education appropriations made in 2018.

You'll also recall that the Legislature was successful at the superior court level and received an order of summary judgment in favor of the Legislature. That order was appealed by the governor, and the case is now sitting in the Alaska Supreme Court.

Our briefing schedule did get a little delayed as a result of the pandemic. Initially, our briefs were due in early 2020, but, as a result of many mitigation orders issued by the Alaska Supreme Court as it relates to court operations, our deadlines got extended. But throughout the summer and early fall briefing in the case is now complete, and there is a request for oral argument that is before the court, but we have not yet received a date for oral argument scheduling.

And generally, I think -- sometimes I've heard predictions of decisions six months to a year after a case is briefed. It's difficult to predict, though, in light of the pandemic and the changes to court procedures and election cases and other urgent matters that might come before the Supreme Court whether or not our case will get bumped.

So as it stands right now, we don't have dates, and it's difficult to predict a decision. I would be hopeful that we would get something in early 2021. That's certainly not a guarantee. I'm happy to take questions if anyone has any.

CHAIR STEVENS: Well, thank you, Megan. It's good to know that that's the only piece of litigation we are dealing with at this point.

Any questions of Megan on the forward-funding of education funds?

Okay. Well, thank you so much, Megan. I appreciate your time, and I appreciate everyone spending this time. It's gotten to be pretty long here. I realize that. We have three contracts to approve, and then I've asked Tim Banaszak to give us an IT update, and then we can conclude this meeting.

V. CONTRACT APPROVALS

A. RFP 639 - ALASKA STATE CAPITOL CHILDCARE PROVIDER

CHAIR STEVENS: So let's move ahead to the approval of these contracts. Representative Stutes.

[11:46:48 AM](#)

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Legislative Council authorize the award of RFP 639 for a child care provider in the Capitol Complex to Discovery Preschool for a three-year contract and three optional two-year renewals.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. And I will object for purposes of discussion.

JC Kestel, do you have some comments on this contract? JC, are you with us?

MR. KESTEL: Thank you, Chair Stevens. Yes, I'm here. For the record, my name is JC Kestel, procurement officer for the Legislative Affairs Agency.

In August the Legislative Affairs Agency issued RFP 639 to solicit child care providers to operate a child care center in the Thomas Stewart Building here at the Capitol Complex. RFP 639 closed on September 18, 2020, and Discovery Preschool's proposal was the only one that was received for review by the PEC.

The PEC is a Proposal Evaluation Committee that was comprised of Senator Jesse Kiehl; Katrina Matheny, chief of staff for Senator Stevens; Tyra Smith-MacKinnon, staff for Speaker Edgmon; Greg Smith, staff for Representative Story; Jessica Geary, executive director of the Legislative Affairs Agency; and Santé Lesh, administrative operations manager for Legislative Affairs Agency.

The PEC individually reviewed Discovery's proposal and met as a group to discuss the results. The PEC is making a recommendation of an award of RFP 639 to Discovery Preschool to provide a child care program at the Capitol Complex.

I'd be happy to answer any questions about the RFP process, and Jessica Gary is available to answer questions regarding the child care program.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you very much, JC. I appreciate all of your efforts and with that RFP process.

Any questions of JC or of Jessica? Hearing and seeing none, I'd remove my objection and ask Jessica to take a roll call.

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?
PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?
SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?
SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?
SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yeah.
MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?
SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Representative Foster?
REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Representative DeLena Johnson?
Representative Johnston?
Representative Kopp?
Vice-Chair Stutes?
VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?
CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 yeas, 0 nays.

CHAIR STEVENS: So by vote 9 to 0, that motion passes,
and that contract has been approved.

B. LEASE EXTENSION FOR HOMER OFFICE SPACE

CHAIR STEVENS: We'll move on to the second contract,
which is for the Homer office space.

Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move
that the Legislative Council approve the lease extension
for Homer office space in the amount of \$54,961.92.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you for that motion. And I'll
object for purposes of discussion.

And, JC, again, you're up for this one. Can you
tell us what's going on in Homer?

MR. KESTEL: Thank you, Chair Stevens. For the
record, again, my name is JC Kestel, procurement officer
for the Legislative Affairs Agency.

The current lease agreement between the
Legislative Affairs Agency and Mr. and Mrs. Ellington for
office space currently occupied by the Legislature in
Homer, Alaska is due to expire October 31, 2020, with no
renewal options available.

Under Alaska Statute 36.30.083, there is a
provision where we may extend a real property lease for up
to ten years if a minimum cost savings of at least
10 percent below the market rental value can be obtained

for the extension. The market rental value must be established by a real estate broker's opinion of the rental value or by an appraisal of the rental value.

The agency contracted with a real estate broker to determine the market value of the property located in Homer. We received their fair market rental analysis, and it is their opinion that the market rental value for the property, with full service lease, is \$1.75 per square foot as of October 1, 2020.

Per Alaska Statute 36.30.083, the agency offered Mr. and Mrs. Ellington a rate of \$1.56 per square foot for a new five-year lease extension with 5 one-year renewal options that are at our option to exercise to Mr. and Mrs. Ellington, and they have accepted our offer.

Based on the above, I recommend approving the lease extension for the Homer office space located at 270 Pioneer Avenue in Homer, Alaska for a price of \$1.56 per square foot. The lease extension exceeds 35,000 in one fiscal year, therefore, Legislative Council's approval is required.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. I appreciate all of your efforts, JC, in getting that. It looks like a pretty good deal for us.

Any discussion on this motion to approve the Homer office?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: I have a question.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Representative Stutes.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

What was the previous square footage rate that we were paying for that same space?

MR. KESTEL: Through the Chair, Representative Stutes, the previous price per square foot was rounded to \$1.72 per square foot.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Representative Stutes.

Again, well done, JC. Appreciate your efforts there.

Any further discussion?

I will then remove my objection and ask for a roll call, Jessica.

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?
SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?
SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Representative Foster?
REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Vice-Chair Stutes?
VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.
MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?
CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 yeas, 0 nays.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. By a vote of 9 to 0 then, we have approved the lease of the Homer office space.

C. RENEWAL NO. 2 OF THE SUBLEASE FOR UTQIAGVIK OFFICE SPACE

CHAIR STEVENS: Moving on to the sublease, renewal No. 2 of the sublease for Utqiagvik office space.

Representative Stutes, a motion, please.

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Certainly, Mr. Chair. I move that Legislative Council approve renewal No. 2 of the sublease for Utqiagvik office space in the amount of \$35,599.80.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you. And I'll object for purposes of the discussion, and, again, ask JC to give us a brief explanation and answer any questions that may come up.

MR. KESTEL: Thank you, Chair Stevens. The current sublease renewal agreement between the Legislative Affairs Agency and Arctic Slope Telephone Association Cooperative for office space in Utqiagvik terminates December 31, 2020.

There are two sublease renewal options available under the sublease agreement, each for a one-year period. We have exercised one of those renewal options. Legislative Affairs Agency would like approval to proceed with renewal No. 2 for the period of January 1st, 2021, through December 31, 2021.

If Legislative Council approves renewal No. 2, this will be one more renewal of the sublease option available for the agency. The renewal period exceeds 35,000 in one fiscal year, therefore, Legislative Council's approval is required.

I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, JC.

Any questions on this sublease?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Senator Stevens, this is Senator von Imhof.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator von Imhof.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: So is this for a legislator to use, like legislative offices, or is this for an LIO for citizens to come and testify and so forth?

MR. KESTEL: Through the Chair, Senator von Imhof, the space in question is a Legislative Information Office. There are no legislators located there.

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Okay. Thank you. So, Senator Stevens, follow-up, I'm assuming then there's not necessarily offices, per se, it's just a space for citizens to come and speak and testify for committee hearings; is that correct?

CHAIR STEVENS: Let's ask Jessica to comment on that.

Do you have any thoughts, Jessica, on that issue of who's in that space and what it's used for?

MS. GEARY: Through the Chair, Senator von Imhof, we have a an Utqiagvik LIO officer that works out of that office, and then the public can come and testify for legislative hearings, and it's a way for them to interact with their Legislature.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you.

Any follow-up, Senator von Imhof?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: No. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Okay. Thank you very much. Any further discussion on the issue of this office space?

I'll remove my objection and ask for a roll call vote, please.

MS. GEARY: Senator Coghill?

SENATOR COGHILL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senate President Giessel?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Hoffman?

SENATOR HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator Stedman?

SENATOR STEDMAN: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Senator von Imhof?

SENATOR VON IMHOF: Yeah. Yes.

MS. GEARY: Speaker Edgmon?

SPEAKER EDGMON: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Representative Foster?

REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Vice-Chair Stutes?

VICE-CHAIR STUTES: Yes.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens?

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

MS. GEARY: 9 yeas, 0 nays.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Jessica.

By a vote of 9 to 0, that office space has been approved.

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens --

CHAIR STEVENS: So I was asked to add a last-minute update on --

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens --

CHAIR STEVENS: -- what's happening here in our various LIOs and how we're going to be dealing with working together in this way.

Tim, are you with us, Tim Banaszak?

MS. GEARY: Chair Stevens, Tim is here, but I skipped Representative DeLena Johnson on that roll call. I would like her vote on those issues, if that's okay.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes.

Representative Johnson, are you with us?

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON: Yes, sorry. It took me a minute to get to my mute button. I would be a yes vote on the last two votes, or it sounds like they passed, so I wanted to let you know that I'm here for the next one.

CHAIR STEVENS: Sorry we missed you on that. We'll add your name in the positive side on those last two votes then. Thank you.

And that's what you needed to add, Jessica?

MS. GEARY: Yes. I apologize for that. Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you.

IT UPDATE - TIM BANASZAK

CHAIR STEVENS: And, Tim, if you could give us an update, Tim Banaszak.

MR. BANASZAK: Certainly. Mr. Chairman and committee members, Tim Banaszak, for the record, IT manager for the Legislative Affairs Agency for the Legislature.

So I think we were talking a little bit about maybe some of the videoconferencing here. I have a couple of points and want to be respectful of everyone's time with a lot of folks around the table today.

So just a quick recap on the videoconferencing. We're obviously using it today. There's a lot of folks that have been involved in testing this. There's a state contract that allows us to take advantage of this videoconferencing. We also have kind of the older, traditional videoconferencing

that has been used. That contract and technology is really being phased out, and so this is really timely.

I think that the COVID social distancing and folks having to work more remotely has really accelerated the pace of adoption of this technology, and so far we're fairly pleased with what we're seeing.

We have spent quite a bit of time this summer with our counterparts across the 50 states, through the NCSL organization, what's working, what isn't working, where are there the gotchas, where are the problematic issues, the technology issues, the logistical issues.

There's no perfect solution, but we're pretty adept and nimble, I think, in Alaska because of the nature of our remote environment that we have to operate in. So we're already ahead, I think, quite a bit with a lot of the technologies that the Legislative Information Office, under Tim Powers' leadership, has provided throughout the LIOs throughout the state.

Really we're looking at trying to supplement some of those technologies. It has taken a fair amount of resources and equipment and investigation, but I think that we do have some options available to us.

The Senate president mentioned earlier -- I think there was a brief discussion on these technologies that we're using here. Early on, at the behest of some of the leadership, we wanted to explore these technologies. So we've had the opportunity to test, and going into session will be really important that we can support different scenarios that may face us. How many can be together? Do we have to have people remotely? There's logistical issues, the policy issues, the constitutional issues with that. But we want to make sure that we've got some offerings and some technologies that are available, and I think you're seeing a little bit of that today.

There's certainly a cost associated with that. There's resource overhead in order to maintain that. We have quite a few people on the line today just to make sure that this technology works. We had one hiccup in the middle of this and had to bring on our Chair back into the meeting through Kodiak. So those are just things to be aware of. They're not show-stoppers, but it's just the nature of what we're doing.

Most of us -- I think probably all of us have been involved with videoconferencing throughout the summer and the different platforms. This is the platform that's been adopted for governments to use. So

it meets our security criteria, our requirements, and our due diligence. While there's other technologies out there, certainly it's not something that we would want to use and assure both the public and our organization that would suffice for our environments.

There's a couple of other technologies and projects that have been underway. You may recall the Capitol Camera Project that we had to really enhance. It's a blending of efforts between for Gavel to Gavel and AK Leg TV. That project is moving along quite nicely, on time and on budget. That's going to give us some improved camera capabilities for both on-the-floor sessions, during the floor sessions, as well as out in the committee rooms as well. So that effort is going forward on time and on budget, and we fully anticipate that to be available in time for session.

And it will also help -- given that we can remote control some of that equipment, it will also further support social distancing, where if we get into a situation where we need to limit the number of people on the floor in a committee room, it still will support and ensure that we've got the public well-connected through the tools and technologies for audio and video, which will be really important, and, as the speaker brought up, really important issues coming up this year.

We're trying to do everything we can, exploring the different technologies, but I think we're going to be pretty well positioned to address what we need to and just stay close with the council here. And if you have a quick panic request or something coming through, we're trying to be nimble. We want to be ready and be prepared. But just know that the 50 states are working together and no one has this figured out one-hundred percent, but I believe we can be proud of where we are in the Legislature here and what we're doing across Alaska.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you very much, Tim. Could you discuss the security issues? I'm hearing things about Zoom, that anybody can get on and interrupt meetings. Do we have that security in this platform that keeps that from happening?

MR. BANASZAK: Mr. Chairman, so security is really a risk management approach. That's how you have to treat security. There's no one-hundred percent. Any system could be hacked and attacked and breached; with enough time and enough money and enough persistence, you can do that.

At the outset of the comments here, what I

will say for this videoconferencing technology is that it has been certified for government use at the federal level, the individual state level. And what that means to us is we can have the assurances and the confidence that the reasonable level of investment to protect the platform has been done, and we've done our due diligence and our research on it, and it avoids things like people just coming into meetings or people getting access to your accounts or things like that.

And the technology that we use, no technology can come into our environment unless it's been approved for government. And when I speak of "government," I mean government at the federal and the state level. And we benefit from that as well. So we're trying to keep that safe border around there so that we can address the obvious things.

As an IT professional, I would never sit here and say we're one-hundred percent, but I think that the council can be assured that we have made the investments and that this is a good platform.

When you hear these other platforms that come along, sure, they're usable. Sometimes easier to use in some cases, but we really want to make sure we use a platform that we can have the confidence is appropriate for legislative business.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you, Tim. Any questions? Any further questions?

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Yes, I have a question --

CHAIR STEVENS: So, Tim, it does seem like a little training would be effective. I mean, I've used Zoom this summer a lot, and it is pretty easy to raise your hand and make sure everyone is taken care of. If things get worse and there's a larger outbreak by the time we come together, if we pass the ability to meet at a distance, we have the capabilities, and do we need further training individually to know how to use this platform?

MR. BANASZAK: The two short answers are yes and yes. Training is always helpful, and then more capabilities and capacity also would be really important.

You know, there was the recent additional bandwidth being allocated out to set up across Alaska. So things like just the resources, capability. This call has been fairly stable. The video streams have been good. But, yes, training, resources -- this is a few of us that are on a call today. Imagine this scaled out through multiple committee meetings going on at

once, floor sessions going on at once. You don't want to be moving this technology all around. It needs to be in place. We need to have the resources and the staffing to be able to have multiple technologies effective so that when you gavel into a committee meeting, you know that folks can conduct business and then have a good meeting and close out.

And, Mr. Chairman, I think there may have been another question in there.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Senator Stevens.

CHAIR STEVENS: Yes, Senator Giessel.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Thank you. That is one of the challenges is we can't raise our hand. I'm on a phone, right?

My question is for Tim regarding the cameras -- did you say what LIOs you have them deployed in and are they functional?

MR. BANASZAK: Through the Chair, Madam President, I didn't list those here today, but we did get a half a dozen of those. So today we have Mat-Su, Kodiak, Fairbanks on line, Anchorage is on line, we have Kenai Peninsula, and we have one more I think. And then we --

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Is it Ketchikan?

MR. BANASZAK: Yes. Thank you very much, Ketchikan. So to the first part of your question where we have those installed, we have them at those locations; and then, secondly, we've tested those there.

We have -- with the success of this, we have purchased -- anticipating that we may need some of these units around in different perhaps rooms in the Capitol, perhaps ad hoc in different locations, if we have to go off-site for some reason, we've purchased a handful of these so that potentially, if this platform seems to be successful, we could perhaps include the rest of the LIOs as well, depending if that's a decision we want to make going forward.

PRESIDENT GIESSEL: Thank you.

CHAIR STEVENS: Thank you Senator Giessel. Thank you, Tim. Any further questions? So thank you very much, Tim. I appreciate that update.

VI. ADJOURN

CHAIR STEVENS: I appreciate everyone's steadfastness here in sitting through this very, very long meeting. We've accomplished our agenda. If there's nothing further for this meeting, then we are adjourned at 12:37pm.