

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

March 25, 2019

5:02 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mike Shower, Chair
Senator John Coghill, Vice Chair
Senator Lora Reinbold
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Scott Kawasaki

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

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

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SJR 6

SHORT TITLE: CONST AM:APPROP. LIMIT; RESERVE FUND

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/30/19	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/30/19	(S)	STA, JUD, FIN
03/21/19	(S)	STA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/21/19	(S)	Heard & Held
03/21/19	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
03/25/19	(S)	STA AT 5:00 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

LILA JENSEN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SJR 6.

MIKE LITZOW, representing self
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SJR 6.

LINN MCCABE, representing self
Big Lake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SJR 6.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[5:02:37 PM](#)

CHAIR MIKE SHOWER called the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Coghill, Kawasaki, Micciche, Reinbold, and Chair Shower.

SJR 6-CONST AM:APPROP. LIMIT; RESERVE FUND

[5:03:05 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6, Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to an appropriation limit; relating to the budget reserve fund and establishing the savings reserve fund; and relating to the permanent fund.

He stated that the purpose of the meeting is to continue public testimony.

[5:03:44 PM](#)

LILA JENSEN, representing self, Anchorage, stated that she is an Alaska Native and lifelong Alaskan. She said she supports SJR 6 and a spending cap to ensure there is money in the future for our children.

[5:04:39 PM](#)

MIKE LITZOW, representing self, Kodiak, stated that he is speaking in opposition to SJR 6 because it would effectively short-circuit the democratic process by curtailing the power of the voters in just one direction. He said it would allow budget cuts but would then lock those cuts in place, which is beyond the democratic process. For example, if a legislature passed a budget that failed to meet the constitutional obligation of education, voters would be unable to reverse that policy. He opined that that puts policy disagreements beyond the democratic process and as such the proposal to amend the constitution is

fundamentally undemocratic. He urged the members to set aside their individual views on the policy implications, recognize the anti-democratic aspect of the proposal, and reject it as such.

[5:05:54 PM](#)

LINN MCCABE, representing self, Big Lake, stated support for SJR 6 that, if passed by the voters, would cap government spending and create a savings plan for Alaska. It is time to stop the practice of not knowing how much will be spent each year, she said. She reported that when the governor returned from an energy meeting in Texas, he advised that resource developers are reluctant to commit to Alaska because they don't know what taxes to expect when the budget has a shortfall and they are expected to fill it. She emphasized the need for a spending cap and reiterated her support for SJR 6.

[5:07:19 PM](#)

At ease

[5:25:15 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER reconvened the meeting. Finding no others who wished to comment, he closed public testimony and encouraged written testimony be submitted to senate.state.affairs@akleg.gov.

[SJR 6 was held in committee.]

[5:26:05 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Shower adjourned the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee meeting at 5:26 p.m.