

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 24, 2022  
8:02 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Sara Hannan, Co-Chair  
Representative Calvin Schrage, Co-Chair  
Representative Josiah Patkotak, Vice Chair  
Representative Harriet Drummond  
Representative Mike Prax  
Representative Ken McCarty  
Representative Kevin McCabe

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 298

"An Act establishing the Alaska Food Strategy Task Force; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 298 (CRA) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PRESENTATION: DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

- HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 298

SHORT TITLE: ALASKA FOOD STRATEGY TASK FORCE

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) SNYDER

02/04/22	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/04/22	(H)	CRA
03/15/22	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/15/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/15/22	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
03/17/22	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/17/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/17/22	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
03/24/22	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE LIZ SNYDER  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, responded to questions during the hearing on HB 298.

ARIELLE WIGGIN, Staff  
Representative Liz Snyder  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Confirmed a point made by the bill sponsor during the hearing on HB 298, on behalf of Representative Snyder, prime sponsor.

LAURA BROOKS, Director  
Division of Health and Rehab Services  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided information during the presentation on the Department of Corrections.

KELLY GOODE, Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided information during the presentation on the Department of Corrections.

MIKE MATTHEWS, Research Analyst  
Division of Administrative Services  
Department of Corrections  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered information during the presentation on the Department of Corrections.

BRANN WADE, Chief Classification Officer  
Division of Institutions  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered information during the presentation on the Department of Corrections.

SIDNEY WOOD, Acting Deputy Director  
Division of Institutions  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided information during the presentation on the Department of Corrections.

LAURA BROOKS, Director  
Division of Health and Rehab Services  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave a presentation, titled "Department of Corrections."

KELLY GOODE, Deputy Commissioner  
Office of the Commissioner  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered committee questions on the presentation, titled "Department of Corrections."

MIKE MATTHEWS, Research Analyst  
Division of Administrative Services  
Department of Corrections  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered committee questions on the presentation, titled "Department of Corrections."

BRANN WADE, Chief Classification Officer  
Division of Institutions  
Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave a presentation, titled "Department of Corrections."

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[8:02:10 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR CALVIN SCHRAGE** called the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Representatives Drummond, Prax, Hannan, and Schrage were present at the call to order. Representatives McCabe, McCarty, and Patkotak arrived as the meeting was in progress.

#### **HB 298-ALASKA FOOD STRATEGY TASK FORCE**

[8:02:48 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 298, "An Act establishing the Alaska Food Strategy Task Force; and providing for an effective date."

[8:03:07 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND moved to adopt Amendment 1 to HB 298, labeled 32-LS1398\A.4, Ambrose, 3/23/22, which read as follows:

Page 2, line 6:

Delete "two members from the senate"

Insert "one member from the minority caucus of the senate and one member from the majority caucus of the senate"

Page 2, line 8:

Delete "two members from the house of representatives"

Insert "one member from the minority caucus of the house of representatives and one member from the majority caucus of the house of representatives"

Page 2, lines 9 - 11:

Delete ";

(C) at least one member from the minority caucus of the senate or house of representatives"

[8:03:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND spoke to Amendment 1, explaining that it would ensure one member each from the minority and majority caucus of both the House and Senate. She said there would be no minimum or maximum of people. She opined that this equal representation was rational.

[8:04:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX [withdrew] his objection to Amendment 1.

[8:05:11 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:05 a.m. to 8:06 a.m.

[8:06:30 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE announced that there being no further objection, Amendment 1 was adopted.

[8:06:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE moved to adopt Amendment 2 to HB 298, labeled 32-LS1398\A.2, Foote, 3/21/22, which read as follows:

Page 2, line 18:  
Delete "and"

Page 2, line 19, following "development":  
Insert "; and  
(6) the commissioner of transportation and public facilities"

Page 4, line 2:  
Delete "six"  
Insert "seven"

Page 4, line 9:  
Delete the second occurrence of "and"

Page 4, line 10, following "communities":  
Insert "; and  
(7) improving transportation and infrastructure to transfer and deliver food in the state"

Page 4, line 11:  
Delete "six"  
Insert "seven"

Page 4, line 18, following "needs":  
Insert "and storage"

Page 4, line 21, following "system":  
Insert "and storage"

Page 4, lines 25 - 26:  
Delete "and food sovereignty"  
Insert ", food sovereignty, and local storage methods"

[8:06:58 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE spoke to Amendment 2. He said it would address the transportation aspect of food security, which people often forget about. It would add the commissioner of the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) "to the mix." The increase in focus areas from six to seven would serve the same purpose of adding the focus on transportation and infrastructure, he explained. Further, he highlighted the focus on storage, which he emphasized is important.

[8:09:16 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY stated support of Amendment 2. He noted that DOT&PF is in charge of some storage facilities throughout the state, and he suggested some of those buildings could be used for [food] storage.

[8:09:43 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND withdrew her objection to Amendment 2. There being no further objection, Amendment 2 was adopted.

[8:09:54 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY moved to adopt Amendment 3 to HB 298, labeled 32-LS1398\A.5, Ambrose, 3/23/22, which read as follows:

Page 2, line 21, following "board,":  
Insert "with due regard for broad geographic  
representation of the state,"

[8:09:58 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY spoke to Amendment 3. He said it is a reminder that the members of the task force are to be from all around the state.

CO-CHAIR HANNAN said she had no objection to the intent but questioned whether the use of the words "due regard" was a recommendation from Legislative Legal and Research Services.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY confirmed it came from Legislative Legal and Research Services.

[8:11:55 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN [withdrew her objection.] There being no further objection, Amendment 3 was adopted.

[8:12:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND moved to adopt Amendment 4 to HB 298, labeled 32-LS1398\A.1, Foote, 2/13/22, which read as follows:

Page 3, line 16, following "includes":  
Insert "growing and harvesting,"

[8:12:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND spoke to Amendment 4. She indicated that [the purpose for adding "growing and harvesting"] was that that is a necessary step before harvesting and processing.

[8:12:48 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY withdrew his objection.

[8:12:56 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN questioned whether it should read "growing, harvesting" and continue with the list already in the language.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND suggested commas instead of "and" later in the sentence, but then said she did not have a problem with the way it was.

[8:13:54 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE suggested leaving the punctuation up to Legislative Legal and Research Services.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND said, "Let's do that."

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE announced there being no further objection, Amendment 4 was adopted.

[8:14:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND moved to adopt Amendment 5 to HB 298, labeled 32-LS1398\A.6, Ambrose, 3/23/22, which read as follows:

Page 5, following line 13:

Insert a new bill section to read:

**"\* Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska enacted in sec. 2(c) of this Act is amended to read:

(c) The following commissioners, or their designees, serve as members of the task force:

- (1) the commissioner of natural resources;
- (2) the commissioner of fish and game;
- (3) the commissioner of health [AND SOCIAL SERVICES];
- (4) the commissioner of commerce, community, and economic development; and
- (5) the commissioner of education and early development."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 5, line 18:

Delete "Sections 1 and 2"

Insert "Sections 1 - 3"

Page 5, following line 18:

Insert a new bill section to read:

**"\* Sec. 6.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect July 1, 2022."

Renumber the following bill section accordingly.

Page 5, line 19:

Delete "This"

Insert "Except as provided in sec. 6 of this Act, this"

[8:14:21 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND spoke to Amendment 5. She noted that the current Department of Health and Social Services was being split into the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services, and Amendment 5 would ensure the commissioner from the Department of Health would be on the taskforce.

[8:15:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LIZ SNYDER, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor of HB 298, confirmed that Amendment 5 was following the advice of Legislative Legal Services.

[8:16:26 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX assumed that it could be anyone from the department, not specifically the commissioner.

REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER confirmed it could be the commissioner or the commissioner's designee.

[8:17:00 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN noted that there was reference made to the commissioner on page 2, line 16, and she queried whether "and Social Services" should be deleted from there, as well.

[8:17:59 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY asked about the timing of the bill's effective date along with the timing of the split of the departments.

[8:19:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER noted the bill had been written as advised by Legislative Legal Services in light of the executive order (EO) that split the department into two departments.

[8:19:19 AM](#)

ARIELLE WIGGIN, Staff, Representative Liz Snyder, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Snyder, prime sponsor of HB 298, confirmed that the language was recommended by Legislative Legal Services to ensure the commissioner of the new Department of Health would be specified in the bill.

[8:19:52 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY suggested that in addition to the change suggested by Representative Hannan on page 2, line 16, the committee could set an effective date of July 1, 2022.

[8:20:35 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE observed that the topic on page 2, line 16, is not actually an issue, because "that will essentially be replaced by this new Section 3, which becomes effective July 1, 2022." He asked, "Is it ... a delayed effective date of this new Section 3, which would override the original section, and that's why we're not deleting it from the bill?"

[8:21:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER responded yes, and she explained the idea is to allow for a transition period.

[8:21:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY questioned the need for expediency when there is "this council and the EO that is looking at the food." He suggested making the legislation correspond with the new Department of Health by making the effective date July 1, 2022.

[8:23:28 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER explained the idea is for the new task force to pick up where the governor's task force leaves off in the fall. Notwithstanding that, she said the formation of a task force takes time, and "time is of the essence."

[8:24:19 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE concurred with the idea of getting a start now to get a task force in place when needed.

[8:24:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY agreed that the government process is slow but reiterated his thoughts about the effective date and how it could "eliminate that confusion." He concluded, "But, if there's other ways to solve this, great."

[8:26:00 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE withdrew his objection to the motion to adopt Amendment 5. There being no further objection, Amendment 5 was adopted.

[8:27:55 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:27 a.m. to 8:28 a.m.

[8:28:36 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN moved to report HB 298, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 298(CRA) was reported out of the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:29:02 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:29 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

**PRESENTATION: Department of Corrections**

[8:30:53 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE announced that the final order of business would be a presentation on the Department of Corrections.

[8:31:17 AM](#)

LAURA BROOKS, Director, Division of Health and Rehab Services, Department of Corrections, gave a presentation titled "Department of Corrections." She picked up the presentation on slide 20, which gave a broad overview of Alaska's sex offender treatment program locations and associated statistics.

[8:33:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked if current harm reduction programs were functioning properly.

MS. BROOKS explained that a number of programs intended to help people were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which are now starting back up. She explained that there were currently five facilities, all of which were looking to be expanded by the state.

[8:35:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY asked if the programs spoken about were voluntary or not.

MS. BROOKS answered that the programs were mostly court-ordered programs administered by authorized individuals.

[8:37:09 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN asked what the capacity of the Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities capacities were.

MS. BROOKS said that she would follow-up with more information later.

[8:40:00 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY commented that he was familiar with the programs being spoken about and its differences from average anger management classes. He asked how inter-facility and program transfers affect the efficacy of the DOC programs.

MS. BROOKS confirmed the difference between the programs being spoken about and existing anger management programs and said that treatment goals are never abandoned, regardless of a person's transition status.

[8:41:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked about the criminogenic needs of the DOC.

MS. BROOKS explained that there are 8 criminogenic needs and the DOC must try to build an entire case plan around those needs. She emphasized the necessity of getting a risk assessment done at the beginning of a patient's journey and repeating them as time went on.

[8:43:57 AM](#)

MS. BROOKS resumed the presentation on slide 21, which listed DOC facilities that offered domestic violence programs and moved to slide 22, which detailed the various education programs offered in DOC facilities. She continued to slide 23, which gave an overview of the various primary employment training opportunities offered in DOC facilities.

[8:49:46 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY encouraged trade certification training in DOC facilities and questioned barista training.

MS. BROOKS clarified that barista training referred to coffee baristas and said that there were not currently any firefighting training programs being offered in DOC facilities.

[8:50:42 AM](#)

KELLY GOODE, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Corrections, answered committee questions on the presentation titled "Department of Corrections." She explained that firefighter training has a few regulatory and logistical hurdles that it would have to overcome in order to be offered as a program.

[8:51:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX shared his observation that individuals sent from the Fairbanks Correctional Center were experiencing more success than folks who went to the Job Service for a restaurant business referral.

[8:52:52 AM](#)

MS. BROOKS resumed the presentation on slide 24, which detailed reentry services currently being offered by the DOC.

[8:58:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY asked about the reentry programs mentioned in slide 24.

MS. BROOKS detailed reentry statistics and data collected by the DOC.

[9:01:37 AM](#)

MS. GOODE picked up the presentation on slide 26, which displayed two pie charts that gave a demographic overview of the DOC prison population.

[9:07:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND offered her perspective as a member of House Judiciary Standing Committee.

[9:10:39 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX added his own perspective as an individual with experience in working with DOC inmates and ex-convicts.

[9:11:10 AM](#)

MS. BROOKS added that she would like to see improved laws surrounding DOC demographics.

[9:12:13 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN commented that creating laws without the finances to do so would make the impossible to enforce.

[9:15:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND added her understanding that public defenders are "hugely overworked" and going elsewhere beside Alaska in seeking better salaries and benefits.

[9:16:31 AM](#)

MS. GOODE resumed the presentation on slide 27, which displayed two pie charts that detailed gender demographics within DOC facilities and moved to slide 28, which displayed the same graph that instead compared the race of individuals within DOC facilities. She moved to slide 29, which displayed a bar graph that compared the different types of sentences that inmates in DOC facilities were serving time for.

[9:17:48 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN asked what the "motor vehicle" category of offense referred to.

[9:18:15 AM](#)

MIKE MATTHEWS, Research Analyst, Division of Administrative Services, Department of Corrections, answered committee questions on the presentation titled "Department of Corrections." He answered that failure to stop was the most common qualification for a "motor vehicle" incarceration.

[9:20:23 AM](#)

MS. GOODE resumed the presentation on slide 30, which displayed a bar graph that compared various unsentenced offence populations within the DOC system and moved to slide 31, which displayed two pie charts that detailed sentenced population by

their offense class. She continued to slide 32, which displayed the same two pie charts that compared offender's crime type.

[9:27:37 AM](#)

BRANN WADE, Chief Classification Officer, Division of Institutions, Department of Corrections, gave a presentation titled "Department of Corrections." He picked up the presentation on slide 34, which detailed the placement process and eligibility criteria of a DOC offender and moved to slide 35, which provided in greater detail the same information as the previous slide.

[9:31:50 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE asked for more information regarding what Probationer Accountability with Certain Enforcement (PACE) referred to.

MR. WADE answered that he was not an expert on PACE and referred to information on slide 34.

[9:33:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX said that he was unsure as to how electronic monitoring worked and asked for more detail as to how it was implemented.

[9:34:05 AM](#)

MR. WADE responded that there are staff who monitor electronic monitoring, and they function within areas called "inclusion zones," which specify where a person under surveillance is allowed to be.

[9:36:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY asked how individuals who needed medical attention and covered by Medicaid were addressed by the DOC.

[9:36:51 AM](#)

MS. BROOKS responded that many individuals who were incarcerated by DOC or staying in a halfway house did not want to partake in their own medical care.

[9:38:33 AM](#)

MR. WADE resumed the presentation on slide 35, which detailed the various community programs that the DOC offers to individuals in its custody and moved to slide 36, which further detailed the same community programs offered by DOC to its individuals in custody. He continued the presentation on slide 37, which explained the complex eligibility criteria for placing individuals in different DOC facilities.

[9:43:45 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN asked about probation within the DOC.

MR. WADE explained that a person is subject to probation laws, regardless of the type of custody status they are in as long as they are serving probation. He explained how a furlough would interact with a person's probation sentence and further detailed the probation system.

[9:46:50 AM](#)

MS. GOODE asked if there were any sex offenders living in DOC halfway homes.

MR. WADE assured the committee that there were no sex offenders living in DOC halfway homes.

[9:47:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked why there were no Community Residential Centers (CRC)s in Anchorage.

MR. WADE replied that the lack of halfway homes in Anchorage was due to a local ordinance passed in 1995 and said that he was unfamiliar with the specific history of the issue.

[9:48:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY asked for clarification on the location of certain CRCs in Alaska.

MR. WADE confirmed Representative McCarty's understanding was correct.

[9:50:58 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR HANNAN asked how many CRC beds and facilities were in Anchorage.

MR. WADE answered that there were 13 facilities with 285 beds offered by the DOC.

[9:51:43 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND asked how many total beds in CRCs existed in Alaska.

MR. WADE replied that there were 519 beds in halfway homes statewide.

[9:52:42 AM](#)

MR. WADE resumed the presentation on slide 38, which detailed electronic monitoring programs offered by the DOC and concluded the presentation on slide 39, which displayed a list of acronyms used throughout the presentation.

[9:54:31 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE asked what "good time" earned meant.

MR. WADE answered that he would follow-up later.

[10:01:15 AM](#)

MS. GOODE thanked the committee members for their time and welcomed the chance for one-on-one addressing of questions from committee members later.

[10:02:12 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SCHRAGE thanked the presenters and delivered committee announcements.

[10:02:37 AM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.