

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

March 11, 2021

3:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Chair
Representative Matt Claman, Vice Chair
Representative Geran Tarr
Representative Andi Story
Representative Sarah Vance
Representative James Kaufman
Representative David Eastman

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 62

"An Act relating to solemnization of marriage."

- MOVED HB 62 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 44

"An Act relating to the practice of accounting."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 106

"An Act relating to missing persons under 21 years of age."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 62

SHORT TITLE: MARRIAGE WITNESSES

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) CLAMAN

| | | |
|----------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 02/18/21 | (H) | PREFILE RELEASED 1/15/21 |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 02/18/21 | (H) | STA, JUD |
| 02/25/21 | (H) | STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120 |
| 02/25/21 | (H) | -- MEETING CANCELED -- |

03/04/21 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/04/21 (H) Heard & Held
03/04/21 (H) MINUTE (STA)
03/09/21 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/09/21 (H) Heard & Held
03/09/21 (H) MINUTE (STA)
03/11/21 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

BILL: HB 44

SHORT TITLE: PRACTICE OF ACCOUNTING; LICENSURE

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) THOMPSON

02/18/21 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
02/18/21 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/18/21 (H) STA, L&C
03/11/21 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

LYNETTE BERGH, Staff
Representative Steve Thompson
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reviewed the changes to HB 44, proposed in the CS, Version B, on behalf of Representative Thompson, prime sponsor.

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented CSHB 44 (STA).

KAREN BREWER-TARVER
Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions pertaining to CSHB 44 (STA).

THOMAS NEILL, Chair
AICPA Uniform Accountancy Act Committee
Seattle, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions pertaining to CSHB 44 (STA).

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:04:25 PM](#)

CHAIR JONATHAN KREISS-TOMKINS called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. Representatives Story, Claman, Kaufman, Eastman, and Kreiss-Tomkins were present at the call to order. Representatives Vance and Tarr arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 62-MARRIAGE WITNESSES

3:05:16 PM

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 62, "An Act relating to solemnization of marriage."

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS noted the outstanding amendments on HB 62.

3:05:46 PM

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN moved to adopt Amendment 2, labeled 32-LS0272\A.4, Dunmire, 3/8/21, which read:

Page 1, following line 2:

Insert new bill sections to read:

"* Section 1. AS 25.05.261(a) is repealed and reenacted to read:

(a) Marriages may be solemnized by any person in the state.

*** Sec. 2.** AS 25.05.261(c) is repealed and reenacted to read:

(c) Nothing in this section creates or implies a duty or obligation on a person authorized to solemnize a marriage under (a) of this section to solemnize any marriage."

Page 1, line 3:

Delete "**Section 1**"

Insert "**Sec. 3**"

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 2, line 24:

Delete "AS 25.05.041(a) (3) and 25.05.041(a) (5)"

Insert "AS 22.15.100(3); AS 25.05.041(a) (3), 25.05.041(a) (5), 25.05.081, 25.05.281, and 25.05.371 are repealed."

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN, prime sponsor of HB 62, objected.

[3:05:52 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN stated that Amendment 2 would accomplish two things: remove the form and \$25 fee that are required to sign a marriage license; and clarify that no person is obligated to solemnize a marriage. Based on the discussion on Amendment 1 to HB 62 [on 3/9/21], he [moved to] withdraw Amendment 2. [There being no objection, Amendment 2 was withdrawn.]

[3:06:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN moved to adopt Amendment 3, labeled 32-LS0272\A.6, Dunmire, 3/8/21, which read:

Page 1, line 3, through page 2, line 24:

Delete all material and insert:

"* Section 1. AS 25.05.301 is amended to read:

Sec. 25.05.301. Form of solemnization. In the solemnization of marriage no particular form is required except that the parties shall assent or declare in the presence of each other and the person solemnizing the marriage and in the presence of at least two competent witnesses that they take each other to be husband and wife. A competent witness for this purpose is a person of sound mind capable of understanding the seriousness of the ceremony. At the time of the ceremony, the person solemnizing the marriage shall complete the certification on the original marriage certificate. The person solemnizing the marriage and the two attending witnesses shall sign the original marriage certificate and the necessary copies. **The person solemnizing the marriage may not also act as an attending witness.**"

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN objected.

[3:06:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN explained that Amendment 3 would clarify that the person solemnizing the marriage may not additionally act as the witness.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN expressed his opposition to the proposed amendment because the purpose of the bill is to remove the witness requirement. Eliminating the witness requirement would particularly help with destination weddings, for which, under

current law, two additional people must fly to Alaska to fulfill that obligation. He explained that Amendment 3 would maintain the witness requirement; furthermore, it would keep the officiant from acting as a witness, which is allowed under current Alaska law. Because the proposed amendment adds to the witness requirement rather than removing it, he reiterated his opposition to Amendment 3.

[3:08:34 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN acknowledged that there are occasions when the person presiding over the wedding also signs as the witness; however, he shared his belief that such occurrences do not satisfy the original intent of the statute. He pointed out that other more significant areas of law require a witness signature, later adding that the decision to marry a person [could] impact family court, inheritance, probate court, and many other things. He maintained that it's appropriate to require marriage witnesses because it's a legally significant decision.

[3:09:40 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Vance, Kaufman, and Eastman voted in favor of Amendment 3. Representatives Story, Claman, and Kreiss-Tomkins voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 3 failed by a vote of 3-3.

[3:10:31 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE moved to adopt Amendment 4, labeled 32-LS0272\A.5, Dunmire, 3/8/21, which read:

Page 1, line 1, following **"Act"**:

Insert **"relating to the Legislative Ethics Act;
and"**

Page 1, following line 2:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* Section 1. AS 24.60.030(a) is amended to read:

(a) A legislator or legislative employee may not
(1) solicit, agree to accept, or accept a benefit other than official compensation for the performance of public duties; this paragraph may not be construed to prohibit

(A) lawful solicitation for and acceptance of campaign contributions;

(B) [,] solicitation or acceptance of contributions for a charity event, as defined in AS 24.60.080(a)(2)(B);

(C) [, OR] the acceptance of a gift under AS 24.60.075 or 24.60.080; or

(D) a legislator from accepting a benefit in exchange for solemnizing a marriage under AS 25.05.261(a)(4);

(2) use public funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government asset or resource for a nonlegislative purpose, for involvement in or support of or opposition to partisan political activity, or for the private benefit of the legislator, legislative employee, or another person; this paragraph does not prohibit

(A) limited use of state property and resources for personal purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and either the cost or value related to the use is nominal or the legislator or legislative employee reimburses the state for the cost of the use;

(B) the use of mailing lists, computer data, or other information lawfully obtained from a government agency and available to the general public for nonlegislative purposes;

(C) the legislative council, notwithstanding AS 24.05.190, from designating a public facility for use by legislators and legislative employees for health or fitness purposes; when the council designates a facility to be used by legislators and legislative employees for health or fitness purposes, it shall adopt guidelines governing access to and use of the facility; the guidelines may establish times in which use of the facility is limited to specific groups;

(D) a legislator from using the legislator's private office in the capital city during a legislative session, and for the 10 days immediately before and the 10 days immediately after a legislative session, for nonlegislative purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and if there is no cost to the state for the use of the space and equipment, other than utility costs and minimal wear and tear, or the legislator promptly reimburses the state for the cost; an office is considered a legislator's private office under this subparagraph if it is the primary space in the capital

city reserved for use by the legislator, whether or not it is shared with others;

(E) a legislator from use of legislative employees to prepare and send out seasonal greeting cards;

(F) a legislator from using state resources to transport computers or other office equipment owned by the legislator but primarily used for a state function;

(G) use by a legislator of photographs of that legislator;

(H) reasonable use of the Internet by a legislator or a legislative employee except if the use is for election campaign purposes;

(I) a legislator or legislative employee from soliciting, accepting, or receiving a gift on behalf of a recognized, nonpolitical charitable organization in a state facility;

(J) a legislator from sending any communication in the form of a newsletter to the legislator's constituents, except a communication expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate or a newsletter or material in a newsletter that is clearly only for the private benefit of a legislator or a legislative employee; or

(K) full participation in a charity event approved in advance by the Alaska Legislative Council;

(3) knowingly seek, accept, use, allocate, grant, or award public funds for a purpose other than that approved by law, or make a false statement in connection with a claim, request, or application for compensation, reimbursement, or travel allowances from public funds;

(4) require a legislative employee to perform services for the private benefit of the legislator or employee at any time, or allow a legislative employee to perform services for the private benefit of a legislator or employee on government time; it is not a violation of this paragraph if the services were performed in an unusual or infrequent situation and the person's services were reasonably necessary to permit the legislator or legislative employee to perform official duties;

(5) use or authorize the use of state funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government asset or resource for the purpose of

political fund raising or campaigning; this paragraph does not prohibit

(A) limited use of state property and resources for personal purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and either the cost or value related to the use is nominal or the legislator or legislative employee reimburses the state for the cost of the use;

(B) the use of mailing lists, computer data, or other information lawfully obtained from a government agency and available to the general public for nonlegislative purposes;

(C) storing or maintaining, consistent with (b) of this section, election campaign records in a legislator's office;

(D) a legislator from using the legislator's private office in the capital city during a legislative session, and for the 10 days immediately before and the 10 days immediately after a legislative session, for nonlegislative purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and if there is no cost to the state for the use of the space and equipment, other than utility costs and minimal wear and tear, or the legislator promptly reimburses the state for the cost; an office is considered a legislator's private office under this subparagraph if it is the primary space in the capital city reserved for use by the legislator, whether or not it is shared with others; or

(E) use by a legislator of photographs of that legislator."

Page 1, line 3:

Delete "**Section 1**"

Insert "**Sec. 2**"

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN objected.

[3:10:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE explained that Amendment 4 would add a subparagraph (D) to Section 1, which would allow a legislator to accept a benefit in exchange for solemnizing a marriage under AS 25.05.261(a)(4). She said in discussion with the bill sponsor, they agreed that an acceptable form of benefit would include

transportation to the wedding and/or dinner at the reception; however, they also considered extreme examples of benefits that would appear questionable to the public. She welcomed a committee discussion regarding appropriate benefits for a public official who solemnizes a marriage.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN reviewed examples of benefits that he and Representative Vance had identified as reasonable for a public official to accept: a helicopter ride to perform the ceremony at a remote location; a meal after the wedding; a boat ride, during which the ceremony takes place. He explained that because the definition of benefit is broad, it raised further questions. He said he liked the notion that a public official solemnizing a wedding should not have to pay to participate; however, he questioned where the line would be drawn. He reiterated that he liked the concept but expressed concern that the proposed amendment could make it too easy for someone to accept a three-day cruise. He suggested addressing that concern in the House Judiciary Committee to allow for reasonable benefits, which are incidental to performing the service, to be accepted.

[3:14:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN considered a scenario in which a legislator received a one-thousand-dollar honorarium or three-day cruise. He asked if the legislator would be required to disclose that income in the public record.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN was unsure of the answer. He said if he were offered a three-day cruise that cost \$1,000, he would call Jerry Anderson, Select Committee on Legislative Ethics, and ask how to proceed.

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN noted that he had called Jerry Anderson to discuss this particular amendment. He shared his understanding that a benefit of \$1,000 should be declared publicly. He stated his belief that if legislators were expected to declare honorariums, the transparency would help them make good decisions on whether to accept such benefits.

[3:17:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAUFMAN sought to clarify how the committee would forward on Amendment 4.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN noted that he and Representative Vance both serve on the House Judiciary Committee. He relayed their plan to move HB 62 out of the House State Affairs Committee and consider this discussion in Judiciary. He restated his support for the concept; however, he emphasized that the concept must be right. He said the process of getting the concept right would involve discussions with Jerry Anderson and further work on the intent language to allow someone to accept a reasonable benefit but not a cash payment.

[3:18:33 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE expressed her interest in considering how the public would view legislators' activity. She said she would like to avoid "[setting] public officials in a place above the average person in Alaska who is going to perform a ceremony." She pointed out that legislators are held to higher scrutiny in the public eye and expressed her desire to maintain accountability and transparency. She [moved to] withdraw Amendment 4 with the intent to reconsider it in the next committee of referral. [There being no objection, Amendment 4 was withdrawn.]

[3:19:32 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that HB 62 would be tabled and brought back before the committee before the end of the meeting.

HB 44-PRACTICE OF ACCOUNTING; LICENSURE

[3:19:54 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 44, "An Act relating to the practice of accounting."

[3:20:10 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 44, labeled 32-LS0302\B, Fisher, 3/8/21, as the working document.

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN objected for the purpose of discussion.

[3:21:14 PM](#)

LYNETTE BERGH, Staff, Representative Steve Thompson, reviewed the changes to HB 44, proposed in the CS, Version B, on behalf of Representative Thompson, prime sponsor. She explained that Version B removes the language "or compilation" on page 8, line 4; removes the language "the board" and inserts "the department" on page 8, line 28; and removes the language "or compilation reports" on page 20, line 5. She said these changes were made at the request of the Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants.

[3:23:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN withdrew his objection. There being no further objection, Version B was before the committee.

[3:23:44 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON, Alaska State Legislature, prime sponsor, introduced HB 44, Version B. He stated that the bill originated after members of the Alaska Board of Public Accountancy (ABPA) contacted his office to share that they had been asked to update Alaska statutes to meet the Uniform Accountancy Act and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' (AICPA's) Code of Professional Conduct by the National Association of the State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and AICPA. The national organizations provided ABPA with a summary of areas where Alaska's statutes do not meet the national standards. The board reviewed those statutes over the past several years and developed a rough draft for the bill to address the issues. He conveyed that HB 44, Version B, incorporates these changes and would update the public accountancy statutes to bring Alaska more in line with national standards while continuing to protect the public interest by ensuring that only qualified persons are licensed, and that appropriate standards of competency and practice are established and enforced. He deferred to Ms. Bergh to provide a sectional analysis of the bill.

[3:26:07 PM](#)

MS. BERGH noted the length of the sectional analysis [included in the committee packet], which covered 44 sections. She said many of the items in the sectional are redundant as common language was added or removed. She offered to provide a summary of the sectional analysis, which would highlight the changes and be less time intensive.

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS welcomed the sectional summary.

MS. BERGH presented a summarized sectional analysis of the bill [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

The changes in HB44 are intended to better align Alaska accountancy statutes with national standards, using the Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) as a guiding document. These changes will help ensure a uniform approach to regulation of the accounting profession in Alaska. Throughout the current accountancy statutes, there are antiquated industry terms and definitions.

HB 44 updates the following terms:

- "out-of-state exemption" is removed entirely to allow for firm mobility
- "Partnership, limited liability company, corporation, or other legal entity" are replaced with the term "firm"; the updated definition of firm will now include sole proprietors
- "quality review" is replaced with "peer review"
- Sections 37-43 updates/adds new definitions for the following accountancy terms:
 - o "attest function"
 - o "compilation service"
 - o "permit"
 - o "practice of public accounting"
 - o "report"
 - o "state"
 - o "preparation of financial statements"

[3:28:27 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE referred to language in Section 3, on page 2, line 11, which states that the board "may" renew a license granted under Section 3 if the licensee meets the listed criteria. She then directed attention to language in Section 5, on page 2, line 18, which states that the board "shall" grant a permit. Referring back to page 2, line 11, she asked what discretion the board would have to renew a license under Section 3 if the licensee met the statutory criteria.

MS. BERGH deferred to Karen Brewer-Tarver or Thomas Neill to speak to the technicalities of the bill.

[3:30:07 PM](#)

KAREN BREWER-TARVER, Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants, said the board would renew a license as long as the firm met all of the criteria. She clarified that if all the conditions are met, the board does not have discretion [on whether or not to renew a license].

[3:31:31 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE asked whether, since the board does not utilize discretion, the word "shall" would be more appropriate and protect against potential litigation.

MS. BREWER-TARVER said she would have to think more about that question. She offered her understanding that "shall" could be used but "may" would allow for more discretion. She explained that the Uniform Accountancy Act is a template act, which NASBA and AICPA create for state boards to look to for best practices. She deferred to Thomas Neill for further information.

[3:33:39 PM](#)

THOMAS NEILL, Chair, AICPA Uniform Accountancy Act Committee, advised that the Act is a template for all 55 licensing jurisdictions to align with to allow for CPAs and CPA firms around the country to act with some uniformity. Regarding the question of "may" versus "shall", he recalled seeing some jurisdictions go both directions. He offered to look more specifically at the entirety of Alaska statutes to consider the cross-references and follow up with a more definitive answer at the next hearing on the proposed legislation. He noted that the Uniform Accountancy Act doesn't delve into this level of specificity, further noting it is left to each state jurisdiction to enact mobility as best fits its statutes/rules.

[3:35:17 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN referred to paragraph (3) on page 2, line 16, which states that the board may renew a license issued under Section 4 if the licensee "complies with the requirements of this chapter". He asked to what degree the board is competent to make that determination.

[3:36:05 PM](#)

MR. NEILL remarked:

As I've seen through most state legislative acts relative to how a CPA gets the license, they usually have a cross-reference like this to make sure that they are complying with the entirety of what's drafted in that section of that state's Uniform Accountancy Act.

MR. NEILL said with regard to complying, when a CPA applies for a license in Washington there is a set of criteria to consider, which looks at whether the licensee has met the continuing education requirements; whether the licensee has other licenses in or outside the state; whether the licensee has met the peer review requirements. He shared his understanding that the language in question is part of a methodology or criteria to make sure that the licensee is eligible for licensure.

[3:37:35 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN noted that "may" and "shall" are both used throughout Alaska statutes. He suggested that it would be helpful to hear perspective from Legislative Legal Services, in addition to [Mr. Neill's] perspective, on this discussion. He opined that changing the language to "shall" could be problematic if it were inconsistent with the practices and statutes of other professions throughout the state. He posited the courts would conclude that the legislature changed the language for some specific reason. He emphasized the importance of consistency across professions.

REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON offered to follow up with a legal opinion.

[3:38:53 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that HB 44 was held over.

[3:39:10 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS moved that the House State Affairs Standing Committee delegate the duty of drafting and introducing committee sponsored legislation to the committee chair for the duration of the Thirty-Second Alaska State Legislature.

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN objected.

[3:40:01 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS explained that he had no real interest in introducing legislation that's overly divisive. Additionally, he expressed his desire to consult with every member before introducing a committee sponsored bill to avoid surprises. He further noted that he had no immediate anticipation of introducing any committee sponsored legislation, as it had been used sparingly in past years.

[3:40:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN shared his belief that the current expectation that the [committee] majority would make that decision is conducive to discussion and would ensure that the majority of the committee membership supported [the committee-sponsored legislation].

[3:42:22 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAUFMAN expressed his appreciation and respect for Chair Kreiss-Tomkins for proposing this motion. Nonetheless, he said he would find it difficult to vote [for a motion that would] "hand away authority."

[3:42:54 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Tarr, Story, Claman, and Kreiss-Tomkins voted in favor of the motion to delegate the duty of drafting and introducing committee sponsored legislation to the chair of the House State Affairs Standing Committee. Representatives Eastman, Vance, and Kaufman voted against it. Therefore, the motion was passed by a vote of 4-3.

HB 62-MARRIAGE WITNESSES

[3:43:57 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS announced that the next order of business would be a return to HOUSE BILL NO. 62, "An Act relating to solemnization of marriage."

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS advised the committee to provide closing remarks on the bill.

[3:44:17 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN stated that the bill is centered on whether it's beneficial to require marriage witnesses. He maintained that if there were no witnesses to the signing of a marriage license, it would provide the opportunity to question what took place and the surrounding circumstances. He expounded on the value of preserving marriage witnesses, suggesting that they could aide in future litigation. He conveyed the "profound impact" that marriage has on individuals' legal standing and financial future and expressed his opposition to removing the witness requirement.

[3:45:51 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE remarked:

...marriage is seen as an institution and I'm very traditional when it comes to protecting the institution, but the Libertarian in me says that should be between that couple and god and the government should stay out of it. However, a marriage license is required by the state because there are legal benefits to being married. ... And the reason that I can't support this is because there are legal benefits to marriage that involve insurance and money and things like that. My question is why are we lowering the threshold to provide proof of this union that contains great benefit?

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE went on to share that her preference would be to increase the threshold to provide proof that the individuals [getting married] are who they say they are. For those reasons, she said she would not be supporting the bill.

[3:47:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAUFMAN expressed his appreciation for the reduction in government that is present in the bill. With respect to the documentation of marriage, he opined that now, [people] are documented more than ever. He noted his support for ensuring the identity of the couple and suggested including that in a future amendment. Nonetheless, he shared his plan to support the bill with the notion that it would be amended in the House Judiciary Standing Committee.

[3:48:44 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN informed the committee that HB 62 was created because Alaska businesses had expressed that government regulations made it difficult to engage in the business [of marriage]. He conveyed that people want to get married and celebrate their union in the beauty that Alaska offers; however, the two-witness requirement creates a burden on business. He noted that the bill does not remove the requirement that the wedding officiant must sign the marriage certificate, which satisfies the purpose of a witness. He pointed out that the witness requirement does not increase or decrease the seriousness of the vows that people enter into when they choose to get married. He further highlighted the common practice of documenting marriage with pictures and videos, which remove any potential risk of uncertainty regarding who got married. He reiterated that HB 62 is attempting to bring Alaska into the Twenty-First Century and would allow businesses to continue to provide valuable services and increase tourism in the state. For all those reasons, he urged support for the bill.

[3:51:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN moved to report HB 62 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note.

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE objected.

[3:52:03 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Kaufman, Tarr, Story, Claman, and Kreiss-Tomkins voted in favor of reporting HB 62 out of committee. Representatives Eastman and Vance voted against it. Therefore, HB 62 was reported out of the House State Affairs Standing Committee by a vote of 5-2.

[3:52:45 PM](#)

CHAIR KREISS-TOMKINS provided closing comments on "housekeeping" items.

[3:53:23 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.