

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 14, 2022

1:07 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Grier Hopkins, Chair
Representative Sara Hannan, Vice Chair
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Harriet Drummond
Representative Tom McKay (via teleconference)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Kevin McCabe
Representative Mike Cronk

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 357

"An Act naming the Bragaw Street overcrossing of the Glenn Highway the Insook Baik Bridge."

- MOVED HB 357 OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 203 (FIN)

"An Act designating the Alaska marine highway system and portions of the Parks, Glenn, Seward, and Sterling Highways as a part of the State's Purple Heart Trail and relating to signage and informational displays for the trail."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 357

SHORT TITLE: NAMING THE INSOOK BAIK BRIDGE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) TARR

02/22/22	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/22/22	(H)	TRA, FIN
03/15/22	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
03/15/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/15/22	(H)	MINUTE (TRA)
04/12/22	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
04/12/22	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --

04/14/22 (H) TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

BILL: SB 203

SHORT TITLE: PURPLE HEART TRAIL

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) REVAK

02/22/22 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/22/22 (S) TRA, FIN
03/03/22 (S) TRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/03/22 (S) Moved SB 203 Out of Committee
03/03/22 (S) MINUTE(TRA)
03/04/22 (S) TRA RPT 2DP 1NR
03/04/22 (S) DP: MYERS, KIEHL
03/04/22 (S) NR: SHOWER
03/21/22 (S) FIN AT 1:00 PM SENATE FINANCE 532
03/21/22 (S) Heard & Held
03/21/22 (S) MINUTE(FIN)
03/23/22 (S) FIN AT 1:00 PM SENATE FINANCE 532
03/23/22 (S) Moved CSSB 203(FIN) Out of Committee
03/23/22 (S) MINUTE(FIN)
03/25/22 (S) FIN RPT CS 4DP 1NR NEW TITLE
03/25/22 (S) DP: BISHOP, HOFFMAN, WIELECHOWSKI, VON
IMHOF
03/25/22 (S) NR: OLSON
04/11/22 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
04/11/22 (S) VERSION: CSSB 203(FIN)
04/12/22 (H) TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
04/12/22 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --
04/13/22 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/13/22 (H) TRA, FIN
04/14/22 (H) TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

PHILLIP MOON, representing self

Seattle, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357.

PETER BAIK, representing self

Seattle, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 357.

JOHN PHARR, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357

JACKIE KEMP, representing self

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357.

JOSHUA KIM, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357

SUN OH, representing self

Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 357.

JUDY KIM, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 357.

LISA RUSH

Alaska Black Caucus

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on behalf of the Alaska Black Caucus in support of HB 357.

KEY GETTY, President

Korean American Community of Anchorage

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357.

ROWENA ELLIS, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 357.

REPRESENTATIVE GARAN TARR

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, gave closing comments on HB 357.

EMMA TORKELSON, Staff

Senator Josh Revak

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on SB 203 on behalf of Senator Revak, prime sponsor.

THUNDER ATCHLEY, Staff

Senator Josh Revak

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 203 on behalf of Senator Revak, prime sponsor.

ANDY MILLS, Legislative Liaison
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on SB 203.

JOHN KNOTT, State Commander
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on SB 203.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:07:03 PM](#)

CHAIR GRIER HOPKINS called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. Representatives Hopkins, Hannan, Drummond, McKay (via teleconference) and Stutes were present at the call to order.

HB 357-NAMING THE INSOOK BAIK BRIDGE

[1:07:43 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO 357, "An Act naming the Bragaw Street overcrossing of the Glenn Highway the Insook Baik Bridge; naming the Congressman Don Young Bridge; and relating to signage and informational displays for the bridges."

[1:07:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS opened public testimony on HB 357.

[1:08:24 PM](#)

PHILLIP MOON, representing self, stated that he had been a family friend of Insook Baik's family for over a decade. He said that she is a loving family member and has a high level of integrity and work ethic. He said that she is heavily involved in charitable activities, including a Thanksgiving food drive in Anchorage, Alaska, and overseas disaster relief.

[1:10:04 PM](#)

PETER BAIK, representing self, stated that he is the son of Insook Baik and fully supports HB 357. He said that renaming the bridge would provide a symbol of hope to the community for what it means to be a good neighbor. He said that she sacrificed her time and spent long hours running her store and caring for her children as a single mother. She has served the community of Mountain View for decades.

[1:12:47 PM](#)

JOHN PHARR, representing self, stated that he has known Insook Baik for 30 years and described her as an astute businesswoman. He said that she has used the money gained from her business to support her community and help charitable causes. She has set up Thanksgiving food drives and undertaken missionary trips to areas in which her own safety was at risk in order to help the people of those areas.

[1:14:54 PM](#)

JACKIE KEMP, representing self, stated that she is the daughter of Insook Baik. She said that her mother immigrated to the United States from South Korea in the 1980s to provide a better life for her children. She said that Insook Baik chose to stay in Alaska due to the sense of community she felt. Insook Baik raised her three children to be proud of their Korean heritage and of their place as Alaskans. She said that Insook Baik taught her children to be thankful to God for what they have and uses that belief as the basis for her charitable contributions. She provides meals to those in need at Thanksgiving as a sign of thankfulness for where she is now and where she came from, and to inspire the community to give back to those in need. She said that Insook Baik is a picture of what it means to live the American Dream.

[1:18:42 PM](#)

JOSHUA KIM, representing self, stated that he is the former pastor of First Korean Presbyterian Church which is attended by Insook Baik. He said that during his time as her pastor, he saw her as a dedicated woman to her children and her community. He said that her service stemmed from her thankfulness that although she came to the United States with nothing, she was blessed and became successful. He said that she has served the

people of Mountain View during Thanksgiving every year since 2008 or 2009.

[1:22:42 PM](#)

SUN OH, representing self, stated that she has known Insook Baik for 35 years as a fellow member of her church. She said that Insook Baik has a heart that overflows with love for her children and her community. She posited that Insook Baik deserves to have the bridge named after her for her service to the community.

[1:25:12 PM](#)

JUDY KIM, representing self, stated that she is the wife of the First Korean Presbyterian Church's pastor and has known Insook Baik for 25 years. She described Insook Baik as a perfect mother and a perfect worker. She said that Insook Baik is the leader of the church's woman's group and is well respected within it. She is a woman of prayer that always goes to God with her troubles. She stated that naming the bridge after Insook Baik would be a great encouragement to the Korean community in Anchorage.

[1:27:56 PM](#)

LISA RUSH, Alaska Black Caucus, stated that she was representing the Alaska Black Caucus, which supports naming the bridge after Insook Baik. She said that the mission of the Alaska Black Caucus is to support education and political and economic well-being for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community. She said that Insook Baik is an example to the community of Mountain View of what it means to be a good citizen.

[1:29:50 PM](#)

KEY GETTY, President, Korean American Community of Anchorage, stated that the Korean American Community of Anchorage was founded in 1973. She said that many Korean Americans give their time, talents, and money in order to help make the community a better place. She said that Korean American involvement in the community in Anchorage has helped lessen its experience with Asian and Pacific Islander (API) discrimination. She said that Insook Baik is a key part of the Korean American community in what it means to give back, and naming the bridge after her would give hope to the community.

[1:34:22 PM](#)

ROWENA ELLIS, representing self, stated that she has known Insook Baik for 14 years and described her as a loving and caring person. She said that naming the bridge after her would be a great way to honor her contributions for the community.

[1:34:59 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS closed public testimony on HB 357 after ascertaining nobody else wished to testify.

[1:35:14 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARAN TARR, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor of HB 357, stated her gratefulness for the testifiers in sharing their experiences with how Insook Baik has contributed to the community of Mountain View, in Anchorage, Alaska.

[1:35:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN moved to report HB 357 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 357 was reported out of the House Transportation Standing Committee.

[1:36:06 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 1:36 p.m. to 1:39 p.m.

SB 203-PURPLE HEART TRAIL

[1:39:03 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS announced that the final order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 203, "An Act designating the Alaska marine highway system and portions of the Parks, Glenn, Seward, and Sterling Highways as a part of the State's Purple Heart Trail and relating to signage and informational displays for the trail."

[1:39:32 PM](#)

EMMA TORKELSON, Staff, Senator Josh Revak, Alaska State Legislature, gave information and answered questions regarding SB 203 on behalf of Senator Revak, prime sponsor. She stated

that work has been ongoing for 15 years to rename different areas of the state to honor those who have served in the military.

[1:40:14 PM](#)

THUNDER ATCHLEY, Staff, Senator Josh Revak, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Senator Revak, prime sponsor of SB 203, stated that the Purple Heart Trail designations of highways have extended across the U.S. since 1992 honoring those who have been wounded or killed in service to our nation. He said that SB 203 would extend the designation from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Homer, Alaska, and along the entirety of the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). Alaska has a strong presence of military service members and veterans, and appropriate signage would be placed along the route in order to provoke the thoughtfulness of those driving past.

[1:42:14 PM](#)

MS. TORKELSON gave the sectional analysis of SB 203. She stated that Section 1 would extend the Purple Heart Trail designation along over 4,000 miles of highway from Fairbanks to Homer and the Alaska Marine Highway System [routes]. Section 2 would require the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to erect appropriate signage along the designated path. She said that Section 3 would require DOT&PF to place informational signs at pullouts along the highway, and Section 4 would allow the department to accept gifts and donations for the purpose of placing the appropriate signage. Section 5 would give DOT&PF discretion over funding in the event of a large number of donations.

[1:44:32 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked what size the signs would be and how they would look on AMHS vessels.

MS. TORKELSON answered that the signs shown in the committee packet would be adapted for use on the vessels. In response to a follow-up question, she said that the process for becoming a Purple Heart City is different from that of having the Purple Heart Trail go through a city. She said that the extension of the trail gives an additional reason for a city to become a Purple Heart city, but Skagway, Alaska, is able to be one without being connected to the Purple Heart Trail.

[1:48:28 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES asked how adding AMHS would affect its federal funding.

MS. TORKELSON answered that it would not affect the federal funding of any highways that are part of the Purple Heart Trail. She added that it would also not change the names of any of the highways. In response to a follow-up question, she said that there is a \$255,000 fiscal note.

[1:49:54 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS asked whether that figure included the cost of adding signage to vessels.

MS. TORKELSON answered yes.

[1:50:29 PM](#)

ANDY MILLS, Legislative Liaison, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, added that it would be possible to secure more federal funding for highways designated as part of the Purple Heart Trail.

[1:51:31 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked whether new appropriations would be necessary to add new signs on new vessels being added to AMHS.

MR. MILLS answered that new vessels being added would have the signage included as part of their capital costs.

[1:53:00 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND commented that Alaska scenic byway-style signs seem more appropriate for this type of honor than the typical design of most highway signs. She called the design "ugly" and requested that DOT&PF come up with a new design.

MR. MILLS responded that engineers, not graphic designers, came up with the original designs, and they placed functionality first in the design. He said that the intention is to come up with more appropriate signage for use on the vessels.

[1:57:01 PM](#)

JOHN KNOTT, State Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart, stated that he is honored to support the extension of the Purple Heart Trail on behalf of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He said that it acknowledges the sacrifices and valor of those who have been wounded or killed and awarded the Purple Heart. He said that he is a recipient of the Purple Heart and supports the efforts being made to honor Purple Heart recipients. He returned to a previous question and said that he has worked with cities in the past to become Purple Heart cities, including Skagway.

[2:00:32 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN asked why Mr. Knott reached out to specific communities for potential Purple heart designation.

MR. KNOTT answered that a veteran's group from Skagway reached out to him. In response to a follow-up question, he clarified that there is no connection between the number of Purple Heart recipients in a city and its status as a Purple Heart city.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN commented that an entire age group from Hoonah, Alaska, served in the Vietnam War and is very active in veterans' groups.

[2:04:38 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS thanked Mr. Knott and all recipients of the Purple Heart for their service.

[2:05:07 PM](#)

CHAIR HOPKINS opened public testimony on SB 203. After ascertaining that no one wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

[SB 203 was held over.]

[2:05:48 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:06 p.m.