

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 28, 2021

9:03 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Roger Holland, Chair  
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair  
Senator Shelley Hughes  
Senator Peter Micciche  
Senator Tom Begich

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 119

"An Act relating to oaths of office; and requiring public officers to read the state constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the United States Constitution."

- MOVED CSSB 119(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 34

"An Act providing for the establishment of public schools through state-tribal compacts."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 119

SHORT TITLE: OATH OF OFFICE

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) REINBOLD

04/07/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/07/21	(S)	EDC, JUD, STA, FIN
04/23/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/23/21	(S)	Heard & Held
04/23/21	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/28/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 34

SHORT TITLE: STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACT SCHOOLS  
SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) STEVENS

01/25/21	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
01/25/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/25/21	(S)	EDC, JUD
04/21/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/21/21	(S)	Heard & Held
04/21/21	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/23/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/23/21	(S)	<Bill Hearing Canceled>
04/28/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

STUART THOMPSON, representing self  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in favor of SB 119.

HEIDI TESHNER, Director  
Finance and Support Services  
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Described the impact of SB 119 on State Libraries, Archives, and Museums (SLAM).

SENATOR LORA REINBOLD  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of SB 119.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[9:03:23 AM](#)

**CHAIR ROGER HOLLAND** called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Hughes, Stevens, Begich, and Chair Holland. Senator Micciche arrived shortly thereafter.

#### **SB 119-OATH OF OFFICE**

[9:04:07 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 119 "An Act relating to oaths of office; and requiring public officers to read the state constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the United States Constitution."

[SB 119 was previously heard on 4/23/2021.]

[9:04:35 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND opened public testimony on SB 119.

[9:04:40 AM](#)

STUART THOMPSON, representing self, Wasilla, Alaska, read his testimony, which read as follows:

[Original punctuation provided.]

This bill is a good idea---being constitutionally and philosophically justified. It fixes the problem of politicians being---so sorry to say this---the foremost hypocrites about education in our society. All major professions in America insist on continuing education to maintain professional standing---except the profession of elected political official. Apparently whatever elected politicians think they know or are told by lobbyists is enough to wield power over their fellow citizens. Not good.

I recommend certain additions to this bill to effectively educate elected public officials on how to honor their oaths of office. Remember. Truly educated people can reason. People indoctrinated by others who think for them cannot. 1. Alaska Constitutional Convention Minutes---so lawmakers better understand the rationale and compromises behind Alaska Constitution construction.

2. "The Federalist Papers" and "The Anti-federalist Papers"----so lawmakers better understand the rationale and compromises behind US Constitution construction

3. John Locke's "Two Treatises on Government" (particularly the second) and Charles Montesquieu's "The Spirit of Laws"---two references that US Founding Fathers used to educate themselves about representative government and constitutions, and referenced in debates.

[9:06:52 AM](#)

MR. THOMPSON continued to read the following written testimony:

In case anybody needs more ideas on the value of education to address keeping the Alaska government's Oath of Office, here's some more points:

1. If given more time and a good setting, I can empirically prove that the modern definition used by elected public officials for the word "represent" is NOT the one used by our Founding Fathers. This miss-education sabotages the application of our Constitution's Article 1 Section 2 SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT.

2. Here's an excerpt from my Dereliction of Duty Complaint, presented to the Legislature's Rules committees, that applies: " Infraction #1: In the voting for the extension of the COVID Disaster Declaration, offending legislators demonstrate repudiation of our Constitution's Article 2 by refusing to wield legislative power---pursuant to the constitutional limitations and requirements of the Alaska Disaster Act. Instead of using Article 2 power to rationally and scientifically reduce or minimize the waning threat of COVID using far-sighted law, offending members are thrusting their duties & responsibilities onto the Governor. While this constitutional perversion could reasonably be laid at the door of systemic ignorance, it does not excuse legislators from competently knowing how to honor their oaths of office."

[9:08:29 AM](#)

MR. THOMPSON continued to read the following written testimony:

[Original punctuation provided.]

3. It is a shame that for all Alaska Government's pontificating and pumping money out to educate our Youth; elected officials don't help realize quality education by applying the most powerful social tool there is---leading by example. Leading by example would show our Youth the true objective of public education: that acquiring second hand knowledge; practicing what's learned so as to successfully apply it; and seeking new knowledge to make life glorious is a lifetime effort that they have only just begun. Thank you.

[9:09:22 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND determined no one wished to comment and closed public testimony on SB 119.

[9:09:36 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND advised members that the Boards and Commissions responded to his inquiry whether boards also included commissions and it does. He asked Ms. Teshner to discuss the impact SB 119 would have on the State Libraries, Archives, and Museums (SLAM).

[9:10:20 AM](#)

HEIDI TESHNER, Director, Finance and Support Services, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Juneau, Alaska, stated the state archives is located in the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museum. Currently, the state archives do not collect oaths of office. Instead, the departments and boards retain the oaths of office within individual offices of the executive branch. For example, the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel retains the oaths of office for all executive branch employees. The Office of the Governor, Boards and Commissions retains oaths of office for board members. As the bill currently reads, this current practice will continue. Thus, the oaths of office won't be stored at the state archives.

[9:11:30 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND related that this means that SB 119 will not have a fiscal impact from SLAM for costs to store oaths of office since those documents are not and will not be stored by the SLAM.

[9:11:52 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES moved to adopt Amendment 1, work order 32-LS0163\A.1:

**AMENDMENT 1**

32-LS0163\A.1  
Marx  
4/27/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE BY SENATOR HUGHES  
TO: SB 119

Page 3, following line 7:

Insert a new bill section to read:  
"\* **Sec. 8.** AS 29.20.600 is amended to read:

**Sec. 29.20.600. Oaths of office.** Before taking office a municipal official shall, after reading the Constitution of the State of Alaska, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States, affirm in writing that the duties of the office will be honestly, faithfully, and impartially performed by the official. The oath is filed with the municipal clerk."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

[9:11:58 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND objected for discussion purposes.

[9:11:59 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES explained that Amendment 1 makes it clear that local city councils and assemblies are held to the same standard as the local school boards and avoids any double standards at the local level. She said sometimes decisions made at the local level can have a greater "real life" impact on citizens than those made at the state or federal level. Thus, ensuring that the elected officials at the local level had that as a foundation seemed appropriate.

[9:13:19 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND removed his objection.

CHAIR HOLLAND found no further objection and Amendment 1 was adopted.

He solicited closing remarks from Senator Reinbold.

[9:13:45 AM](#)

SENATOR LORA REINBOLD, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 119, said reading the Declaration of Independence is important since it highlights the grievances the colonies had with England. It reminds people the founding fathers added the Bill of Rights due to the egregious violations of civil liberties and for protections against federal overreach. She encouraged people to go back and read foundational documents including the Alaska Constitution and the U.S. Constitution.

[9:15:45 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND asked for the will of the committee.

[9:15:50 AM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS moved to report SB 119, work order 32-LS0163\A as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

CHAIR HOLLAND found no objections and CSSB 119(EDC) was reported from the Senate Education Standing Committee.

[9:16:15 AM](#)

At ease

**SB 34-STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACT SCHOOLS**

[9:18:38 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 34 "An Act providing for the establishment of public schools through state-tribal compacts."

He noted the bill was heard previously.

[9:18:53 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND opened public testimony on SB 34; finding none, he closed public testimony.

[9:19:10 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND said SB 34 is a complex bill that will require a lot of work. He said he spoke with the commissioner of Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) about how critical it is to work with tribes. He stated his intention to work on this bill during the interim.

CHAIR HOLLAND held SB 34 in committee.

[9:19:52 AM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Holland adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 9:19 a.m.