

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

March 23, 2021

3:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mike Shower, Chair
Senator Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair (via Teams)
Senator Mia Costello (via Teams)
Senator Roger Holland (via Teams)
Senator Scott Kawasaki (via Teams)

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 71

"An Act relating to special request registration plates celebrating the arts; relating to artwork in public buildings and facilities; relating to the management of artwork under the art in public places fund; relating to the powers and duties of the Alaska State Council on the Arts; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 71 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 84

"An Act relating to the veterans' land purchase discount; establishing state land vouchers; relating to the permanent fund dividend; relating to the duties of the Department of Revenue; authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to accept state land vouchers; relating to eligibility for public assistance; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 84 OUT OF COMMITTEE

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Personnel Board

Craig Johnson - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska Police Standards Council
Daniel Weatherly - Anchor Point

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska Public Offices Commission
Dan LaSota - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 77

"An Act relating to charitable gaming online ticket sales and activities."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 47

"An Act relating to special registration plates for vehicles owned by persons with disabilities."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 71

SHORT TITLE: COUNCIL ON ARTS: PLATES & MANAGE ART

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) STEVENS

02/05/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/05/21	(S)	STA, FIN
03/09/21	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/09/21	(S)	Heard & Held
03/09/21	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
03/23/21	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 84

SHORT TITLE: LAND VOUCHERS; PFDS

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

02/12/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/12/21	(S)	STA, RES, FIN
03/02/21	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/02/21	(S)	Heard & Held
03/02/21	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
03/11/21	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

03/11/21 (S) Heard & Held
03/11/21 (S) MINUTE (STA)
03/23/21 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 77

SHORT TITLE: USE OF INTERNET FOR CHARITABLE GAMING
SPONSOR(s): LABOR & COMMERCE

02/10/21 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/10/21 (S) STA, L&C
03/23/21 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 47

SHORT TITLE: VEHICLE REGISTRATION/PERSONS W/DISABILITY
SPONSOR(s): GRAY-JACKSON

01/25/21 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/25/21 (S) STA
03/23/21 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

JUNE ROGERS, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 71.

JEFFREY SCHMITZ, Director
Department of Motor Vehicles
Department of Administration (DOA)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on SB 71.

DANIEL WEATHERLY, Appointee
Alaska Police Standards Council
Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Anchor Point, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council.

CRAIG JOHNSON, Appointee
Personnel Board
Department of Administration (DOA)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Personnel Board.

DAN LASOTA, Appointee

Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC)
Department of Administration (DOA)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Public Offices Commission.

MELODIE WILTERDINK, Staff
Senator Mia Costello
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 77 on behalf of the sponsor.

COLLEEN GLOVER, Director
Tax Division
Department of Revenue
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions related to SB 77.

SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 47.

KEITH FOGERS, Staff
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson
Alaska State Legislature

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the sectional analysis for SB 47.

PATRICIA MACADOO, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 47.

LEEANNE CARROTHERS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 47.

ANNETTE ALFONSI, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 47.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:33:16 PM](#)

CHAIR MIKE SHOWER called the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. Present at the call to

order were Senators Holland, Kawasaki, Costello, Reinbold, (all via Teams) and Chair Shower.

He explained the procedure when the committee is meeting remotely.

Roll call showed the presence and location of the members as follows:

SENATOR REINBOLD, Capitol Room 427, SENATOR COSTELLO, Capitol Room 117, SENATOR HOLLAND, Capitol Room 113, SENATOR KAWASAKI, Capitol Room 07, and CHAIR SHOWER in the Butrovich room, Capitol 205.

SB 71-COUNCIL ON ARTS: PLATES & MANAGE ART

[3:38:22 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 71 "An Act relating to special request registration plates celebrating the arts; relating to artwork in public buildings and facilities; relating to the management of artwork under the art in public places fund; relating to the powers and duties of the Alaska State Council on the Arts; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR SHOWER listed the individuals available to answer questions related to SB 71.

[3:38:55 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER opened public testimony on SB 71.

[3:39:11 PM](#)

JUNE ROGERS, representing self, Fairbanks, Alaska, stated that SB 71 recognizes the value of the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) very successful Alaska Artistic License Plate Program. A modest surcharge on these artistic plates will generate income for ASCA that can be directed to the required match to receive funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. The bill also allows ASCA to hold artistic competitions and pay the winning artist of the competition. Furthermore, the bill clarifies that the attorney general serves as legal counsel to ASCA and ASCA's authority over public art from the Percent for Art Program. She characterized the exemption of private sector funding from the Executive Branch Budget Act as laudable. It recognizes the need to protect this type of public support. She thanked the sponsor for introducing the legislation and the committee for its consideration.

[3:41:14 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER closed public testimony on SB 71.

SENATOR REINBOLD asked for DMV's position on the bill.

[3:41:48 PM](#)

JEFFREY SCHMITZ, Director, Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Administration (DOA), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that the celebrating the arts plates are the most popular of all the plates DMV has, but he believes that the \$50 fee will significantly decrease that demand.

SENATOR REINBOLD said she looked forward to discussing the potential closure of certain DMV offices on another day.

[3:43:11 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER solicited a motion.

[3:43:23 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved to report SB 71, work order 32-LS0310\I, from committee [with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s)].

CHAIR SHOWER found no objection and SB 71 was reported from the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee.

SB 84-LAND VOUCHERS; PFDS

[3:44:05 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 84 "An Act relating to the veterans' land purchase discount; establishing state land vouchers; relating to the permanent fund dividend; relating to the duties of the Department of Revenue; authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to accept state land vouchers; relating to eligibility for public assistance; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR SHOWER advised that public testimony was opened and closed on 3/11/21 and his intent was to move the bill from committee. Finding no questions or comments, he solicited a motion.

[3:45:18 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved to report [SB 84, work order 32-GS1612\A] from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

CHAIR SHOWER found no objection and SB 84 was reported from the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)
Personnel Board
Alaska Police Standards Council
Alaska Public Offices Commission

[3:46:49 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of Governor Appointees to Boards and Commissions. He stated his intention for the committee to hear from every nominee referred to the committee.

[3:48:07 PM](#)

DANIEL WEATHERLY, Appointee, Alaska Police Standards Council, Department of Public Safety, Anchor Point, Alaska, stated that he had been in law enforcement in Alaska for about 30 years, working primarily with the Alaska State Troopers. He wants to serve on this council to further its good work and to give back to the troopers and the state.

SENATOR REINBOLD stated that she thoroughly vetted Mr. Weatherly in the Judiciary Committee and he had her thumbs up.

CHAIR SHOWER said he too attended the judiciary hearing, and he had no further questions.

[3:50:07 PM](#)

At ease

[3:50:18 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER reconvened the meeting. He asked Craig Johnson to introduce himself, provide a brief background, and tell the committee why he would like to serve on the Personnel Board.

[3:50:18 PM](#)

CRAIG JOHNSON, Appointee, Personnel Board, Department of Administration (DOA), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that his interest in public service was not diminished after 15 years as a legislator. The Governor asked him to serve on this board and he has enjoyed serving for the past year. He said this board serves an important purpose as the ethics arm for the governor, lieutenant governor, and the attorney general. Additionally, it does job rankings and classifications. He said this service meshes with his legislative experience as a member of both the Rules Committee and the Ethics Committee. He thanked the committee for its consideration.

SENATOR REINBOLD extended good wishes to Mr. Johnson, thanked him for being willing to serve, and gave him a thumbs up.

CHAIR SHOWER asked if he had any skeletons in the closet that might pop up with additional scrutiny.

MR. JOHNSON posited that if he had any skeletons his opponents would have uncovered them when he ran for office and won five elections. He has received clearance to attend White House meetings as well as top-secret clearance to work on a military base in France. He concluded that he did not think he had done anything that would embarrass his children.

CHAIR SHOWER asked Dan LaSota to introduce himself, provide a brief background, and tell the committee why he would like to serve on the Alaska Public Offices Commission.

[3:55:47 PM](#)

DAN LASOTA, Appointee, Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC), Fairbanks, Alaska, stated that the Governor appointed him to this position in late 2020 and he has participated in all APOC meetings since then. He related that he has been in Alaska since 1987 when he was a graduate student at the Geophysical Institute in Fairbanks. Five years later, he was on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly and served in that capacity until 1999. He said his interest in public service stems from the idea that the public needs good representation. His belief is that public officials should be willing to listen to diverse views and to maintain ethical standards. He reported that he has experience with the many APOC reports as both a candidate and campaign manager. He assured the committee that his appointment to the democrat seat on the commission would not affect his decision-making. He wants to be seen as someone who tends to detail, is well briefed on cases, knows about statutory requirements, and is fair. He said he looks forward to continuing to serve, if confirmed.

[3:58:08 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER asked if he had any conflicts of interest to declare.

MR. LESOTA answered no.

SENATOR REINBOLD stated appreciation for APOC and its website and then asked what the process would be to offer suggestions for improvement.

MR. LESOTA gave credit to the APOC staff for the website and invited her to attend the next public meeting to offer her thoughts.

SENATOR REINBOLD highlighted that lobbyists are only naming the organization they are speaking for, which is not as transparent as in years past. She said she looks forward to the public meeting.

[4:01:07 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND expressed appreciation to all the applicants for being willing to serve.

CHAIR SHOWER asked Mr. LeSota if he had any criminal or ethical issues that might make service on the board difficult or if he had any skeletons in the closet.

MR. LESOTA answered no and then disclosed that he raised a potential conflict of interest related to his employment at the university but the chair of APOC ruled it was not a conflict. He said his belief is that the public should be aware of anything that pertains to the public's business.

CHAIR SHOWER said he appreciated the comment that it does not matter that he is a democrat when he makes decisions about whether or not a legislator is upholding the standards of legislative behavior. He then highlighted the issue of dark money flowing into the state that does not adhere to the same high reporting standard that candidates follow.

[4:05:32 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER opened public testimony on the nominees to boards and commissions.

[4:05:46 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER discerned that no one wished to testify and closed public testimony on the forgoing nominees to boards and commissions.

[4:06:00 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved to forward the following names of governor appointees from the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee:

Personnel Board

Craig Johnson - Anchorage

Alaska Police Standards Council
Daniel Weatherly - Anchor Point

Alaska Public Offices Commission
Dan LaSota - Fairbanks

Signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

CHAIR SHOWER stated that without objection, the names would be forwarded.

SB 77-USE OF INTERNET FOR CHARITABLE GAMING

[4:06:48 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 77 "An Act relating to charitable gaming online ticket sales and activities."

He noted who was available to answer questions.

[4:08:11 PM](#)

MELODIE WILTERDINK, Staff, Senator Mia Costello and the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, read the sponsor statement for SB 77 into the record:

In January of 2021, Governor Dunleavy asked the Legislature to extend the public health disaster emergency through the passage of Senate Bill 56. This was a comprehensive bill with numerous provisions, one of which included an extension of the public health disaster emergency.

This bill is taken from the Governor's bill and addresses Section 9 of the Governor's bill. It looks at charitable gaming online ticket sales.

The purpose of this committee bill is to give the legislative branch the opportunity to take the necessary time to determine whether or not we need to make our statutes more COVID-19 aware, as opposed to relying on an emergency disaster declaration in order to keep our state operational. The Senate Labor and

Commerce Committee intends to rely heavily on the administration to explain why certain sections in the disaster extension bill, such as the provisions now found in Senate Bill 77, are necessary.

[4:09:39 PM](#)

MS. WILTERDINK read the following sectional analysis for SB 77:

Sec. 1 - AS 05.15.060(a) Page 1, Lines 3-15, & Page 2, Lines 1-31, & Page 3, Lines 1-3 Is amended by adding a new subsection AS 05.15.060(a)(11) to establish standards for online ticket sales to ensure compliance with charitable gaming laws including age and location verification and data security standards.

Sec. 2 - AS 05.15.640 Page 3, Lines 4-16

Is amended by adding a new subsection AS 05.15.640(d) to allow permittees and operators of charitable gaming licenses to use the Internet to conduct charitable gaming activities for raffles, lotteries, dog mushers' contests, derbies, or types of classics defined in AS 05.15.690. This includes drawing winning tickets online.

Is amended by adding a new subsection AS 05.15.640(e) to specify that permittees and operators of charitable gaming licenses must verify that purchasers are of legal purchasing age, physically present in the state, and not physically present in an area that has prohibited charitable gaming

[4:11:17 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER asked if there were questions or comments.

SENATOR REINBOLD thanked the sponsor for taking the initiative to introduce certain provisions of the Governor's disaster bill in separate pieces of legislation.

CHAIR SHOWER advised that Senator Costello and other legislators are trying to get the legislative and executive branches to work together to make it possible to function in a situation like COVID-19 without having to declare a disaster. He asked Senator Costello to comment.

[4:12:50 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO, speaking as the chair of the Labor and Commerce Committee, thanked her staff, Melodie Wilterdink, for

carrying the bill. She said it places a provision from the Governor's disaster declaration in separate legislation to make the statutes more COVID-aware. She said she believes this will benefit the state and she looks forward to hearing Ms. Glover talk about the entities that would use this law should it pass.

[4:14:19 PM](#)

COLLEEN GLOVER, Director, Tax Division, Department of Revenue, Anchorage, Alaska, began her testimony by providing context for charitable gaming to be in the Governor's disaster declaration bill. She explained that it became apparent last summer that organizations that make up the gaming community were harmed by not being able to sell raffle tickets at public events. The current law allows promotion of these contests and derbies over the internet, but the raffles and games cannot be conducted online. The division issued temporary guidance saying that during the pandemic the sale and raffle would be allowed. When the original emergency declaration expired in November 2020, the administration worked to include that temporary regulatory exemption in Health Order 7 issued in mid-November 2020. She said that was extended every 30 days until the last one expired in February.

Responding to Senator Costello's request, she said she did not have specific examples, but the division did receive feedback from organizations that expressed concern that online raffles and games would not be allowed once the emergency order expired. She referenced the supporting testimony from charitable organizations and others in House Finance last week about the benefits of online raffles and gaming. She said there has been no opposition and the administration support the statutory changes reflected in SB 77, she said.

[4:17:11 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO referred to a requirement in the Governor's disaster declaration legislation and asked how the administration intended to verify the age of the player and that play was conducted from a location in the state.

MS. GLOVER replied the legislation called for the department to issue guidance through regulations and the division discussed the use of software to verify both age and location.

[4:18:33 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI advised that the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks expressed concern about the expiration of the emergency regulations for online gaming. In response, his office

researched Title 5 and found nothing prevents using electronic means to conduct raffles and gaming. The Department of Law and Legislative Legal Services worked on language for temporary guidance for gaming permittees and settled on the word "promote" as written in Title 5. He asked how that was implemented and if there were any problems with the emergency regulation.

MS. GLOVER replied the division posted "temporary guidance" on the division's website and shared it with the gaming community. There were no emergency regulations and the permittees were not required to prove age or location. The department felt it was important to help prevent charitable gaming organizations from losing proceeds, and thus did not implement many constraints. She acknowledged that, like many others, they did not expect the pandemic to endure for more than a year.

SENATOR KAWASAKI asked how smaller groups would be able to comply with the proposed statutory revisions, should they become permanent.

MS. GLOVER answered the division does not want to make it be too difficult for these organizations to comply, but they will need to have controls in place to prevent selling to individuals who are out of state or do not meet the age requirement. The division believes there are affordable software options for the charitable gaming community to use to meet the proposed requirements.

SENATOR KAWASAKI asked how long it would take to promulgate the regulations, should this become law. Specifically, he asked if online gaming could take place this summer the same way that it did last summer.

[4:23:59 PM](#)

MS. GLOVER replied the legislation authorizes the division to issue guidance and standards initially and follow up later with formal regulations.

CHAIR SHOWER asked if there is an effective date that allows the transition.

[Audio difficulties between the chair who was in the committee room and members who were attending the meeting via Microsoft Teams.]

[4:25:34 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI asked if SB 77 intends for the temporary guidance to continue at the discretion of the Department of Revenue (DOR).

[4:26:14 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO answered that the only intention in any of the bills the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee introduced was to look at the issues [from the Governor's disaster declaration bill] more closely and answer that question.

SENATOR COSTELLO noted that this was the first hearing on SB 77 and her sense, based on Ms. Glover's testimony, was there is a need for online charitable gaming to be an option going forward. Noting that there was not an effective date, she asked Ms. Glover if she would suggest adding an immediate effective date to the bill.

MS. GLOVER replied she believes it is always good to have an effective date on any legislation.

[4:27:42 PM](#)

At ease due to audio problems associated with Microsoft Teams.

[4:30:06 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER reconvened the meeting and relayed that he was able to hear the discussion the members were having and the discussion was recorded, but the members could not hear him. He described SB 77 as an important effort to prevent the need for a disaster declaration to conduct business.

[4:30:49 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER found no further questions and announced he would hold SB 77 in committee.

SB 47-VEHICLE REGISTRATION/PERSONS W/DISABILITY

[4:31:13 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 47 "An Act relating to special registration plates for vehicles owned by persons with disabilities."

He listed the individuals available to answer questions.

[4:31:54 PM](#)

SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 47, read the following sponsor statement into the record:

SB47 amends AS 28.10.181(d) to allow speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists to provide proof of disability to their clients. Currently, only chiropractors, physicians, physicians' assistants, or advanced practice registered nurses can provide proof of disability to their clients.

By expanding the ability for medical professionals in different fields to provide proof of disability to individuals, the opportunity to obtain special registration plates for vehicles is expanded for people with different kinds of disabilities.

Oftentimes, Individuals with disabilities are in more constant contact with their physical or occupational therapists than with physicians because their issues require more specialized care. It can be cumbersome for these people, who are already sufferings with disabilities, to make an additional visit to the physician purely for the purpose of acquiring their plaques. To provide ease and accessibility for these disabled people, it would be more efficient and effective to allow these additional types of professionals to provide proof of disability.

[4:33:31 PM](#)

KEITH FOGERS, Staff, Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Alaska State Legislature, delivered the following sectional analysis for SB 47:

Section 1: Amends AS 28.10.181(d) to include a person licensed as a speech-language pathologist, or as a physical therapist or occupational therapist under AS.08.84.

[4:35:13 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER found no initial questions and opened public testimony on SB 47.

[4:35:30 PM](#)

PATRICIA MACADOO, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, stated that she is a physical therapist who has done itinerant work in

the Bush since retiring from the US Public Health Service. She said the providers listed in the existing statute are not always available to people who live in the Bush. Handicap placards are not needed in the Bush, but one is needed when a village resident who has a mobility impairment visits a larger community such as Anchorage or Fairbanks. It is a problem if they cannot get a placard until they see a doctor and get the paperwork processed. She said it would be helpful if itinerant providers such as herself could provide the handicap placards. The criteria are set out in legislation so no one could set up their own criteria. She serves the southern and eastern villages of Norton Sound and frequently needs to beseech a physician in Nome to audit the record and issue a placard for someone they have never seen just to get a placard. This bill is long overdue, she said.

4:37:54 PM

LEEANNE CARROTHERS, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, stated that she is the Government Affairs Liaison for the American Physical Therapy Association, Alaska Chapter, but was speaking for herself as a licensed physical therapist. The association had not met and taken a stand on the legislation, but she anticipated it would do so very soon. Speaking with 35 years as a clinician and educator of physical therapy, she contended that physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech and language pathologists have the knowledge and skills to assess whether or not somebody meets the disability requirements to receive a disability parking permit or license plate. She said she is able to see patients without a referral and she believes that statutorily authorizing physical therapists to sign these forms will save time and money by eliminating the need to visit an additional provider. Passing the bill will allow rehabilitation therapists to practice at the level appropriate to their knowledge, skills, and experience, she concluded.

4:40:21 PM

ANNETTE ALFONSI, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, stated that she was representing herself and the Unmasking Brain Injury Project. She related her personal experience of being in a serious car accident and receiving a traumatic brain injury. She said she has planned and implemented annual brain injury education with continuing education credit for chiropractors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other health care professionals. She has worked in medical and dental offices and has received treatment from all the fields listed in the bill.

MS. ALFONSI said the disability parking placard form asks about walking distance and walking with assistance and she has found that physical therapists generally assess this aspect of walking more extensively than physicians do. She pointed out that it is within the scope of practice for an occupational therapist (OT) to do a driving test and workers' compensation accepts the results but OTs do not have the ability to provide the disability parking placard. She said she also worked with a speech therapist on cognitive retraining, but none of these therapists can issue the parking placard. She had to make another appointment to get the parking placard. She said this bill will save time and money and increase independence, healing, and economic viability. She urged passage of SB 47.

[4:43:21 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER thanked her for talking about how the bill will help people.

SENATOR REINBOLD described Ms. Alfonsi's testimony as impressive and valuable.

SENATOR KAWASAKI asked what the scope of practice is for speech pathologists.

MS. ALFONSI answered that speech therapists are able to provide cognitive assessments and cognitive retraining to address cognitive fatigue and neurological overload that may result from a brain injury. She described losing one's car in a parking lot due to cognitive fatigue brought on by stress and too much walking.

SENATOR KAWASAKI thanked her for the explanation.

SENATOR HOLLAND said he understands the importance of the bill based on Ms. Alfonsi's testimony.

CHAIR SHOWER related that he has a sister-in-law in this field, and it is amazing what these therapists can do to help people with traumatic brain injuries become productive members of society once again.

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked the testifiers for calling and the committee for hearing the bill.

[4:48:56 PM](#)

CHAIR SHOWER closed public testimony on SB 47 and held the bill in committee.

4:50:13 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Shower adjourned the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee meeting at 4:50 p.m.