

HOUSE JOURNAL
ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

Juneau, Alaska

Friday

January 26, 2024

Eleventh Day

Pursuant to adjournment the House was called to order by Speaker Tilton at 11:04 a.m.

Roll call showed 38 members present. Representative Groh was absent, and his presence was noted later. Representative Carrick was absent.

The invocation was offered by the Chaplain, The Reverend Gordon Blue, of the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Representative Vance moved and asked unanimous consent that the invocation be spread on the journal. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

With the deepest respect for the religious beliefs of all Alaskans, I offer the following prayers:

Creator of life, redeemer of the afflicted and spirit of grace,

In this season, the Epiphany, the northern infancy of light, we celebrate our homes and ask your blessing upon them. Make this building the home of blessings for all Alaskans.

Teach us, O Lord, where wisdom is to be found, and show us the place of understanding. The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness tranquility and trust.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting one, grant to this Capitol the grace of your presence. As the earth puts forth its blossom, or bushes in a garden burst into flower, so later shall

righteousness and praise blossom before all the nations. Our people will abide in secure dwellings and in quiet resting places. Our boundaries enclose a pleasant land: Indeed, we have a goodly heritage.

Visit, O blessed Lord, this House with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who work here with the gift of your love; and grant that they may manifest your respect to each other and to all whose lives they touch.

Be present with your servants in this place, and we pray, preserve them in peace. Amen.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Representative D. Johnson.

CERTIFICATION OF THE JOURNAL

Representative Saddler moved and asked unanimous consent that the journal for the ninth and tenth legislative days be approved as certified by the Chief Clerk. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

COMMUNICATIONS

The following was received:

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Dept. of Education & Early Development
Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development
University of Alaska
Alaska Performance Scholarship Outcomes Report 2024
January 22, 2024
<https://acpe.alaska.gov/REPORTS>
(as required by AS 14.43.840)

Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development
Nonresidents Working in Alaska – 2022
February 2024
<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/reshire/index.cfm>
(as required by AS 36.10.130)

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**HB 146**

The Labor & Commerce Committee considered:

HOUSE BILL NO. 146

"An Act relating to fireworks; repealing restrictions on the sale of fireworks; directing the Department of Public Safety to adopt fireworks regulations; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends it be replaced with:

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 146(STA)
(Same title)

The report was signed by Representative Sumner, Chair, with the following individual recommendations:

Do pass (7): Fields, Carrick, Prax, Wright, Ruffridge, Saddler, Sumner

The following fiscal note(s) apply to CSHB 146(STA):

2. Zero, Dept. of Public Safety

HB 146 was referred to the Rules Committee.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**HB 227**

The House Special Committee on Energy considered:

HOUSE BILL NO. 227

"An Act relating to liability of an electric utility for contact between vegetation and the utility's facilities."

The report was signed by Representative Rauscher, Chair, with the following individual recommendations:

Do pass (4): Baker, McKay, Wright, Rauscher

Amend (3): Schrage, Armstrong, Prax

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Zero, Office of the Governor/Combined

HB 227 was referred to the Judiciary Committee.

INTRODUCTION OF CITATIONS

The following citation was introduced and taken up later as a Special Order of Business:

Honoring – U.S. Coast Guard Base Kodiak
By Representatives Stutes, McCabe, Eastman

The following citations were introduced and referred to the Rules Committee for placement on the calendar:

Honoring – Giana Pugh
By Representative Tilton

Honoring – North Star Council on Aging, 50th Anniversary
By Senator Kawasaki; Representatives Dibert, Stapp

Honoring – Fairbanks Fire Department, 120th Anniversary
By Senator Kawasaki; Representatives Stapp, Dibert

Honoring – Fairbanks Concert Association, 75th Anniversary
By Senators Kawasaki, Bishop; Representative Carrick

In Memoriam – Charles "Vern" Carlson, Jr.
By Senator Kawasaki; Representatives Stapp, Dibert

In Memoriam – Max Joseph Hundorf, Jr.
By Senators Kawasaki, Bishop; Representative Dibert

In Memoriam – Martha Ott
By Senator Kawasaki; Representatives Carrick, Prax

**INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING, AND REFERENCE
OF HOUSE BILLS****HB 293**

HOUSE BILL NO. 293 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act relating to the registration and titling of vehicles; relating to electronic registration and titling; relating to the powers of the commissioner of administration with respect to motor vehicles; relating to the transfer of vehicles; relating to motor vehicle liability insurance; relating to non-domiciled commercial driver's licenses and non-domiciled commercial learner's permits; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the State Affairs and Finance Committees.

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Zero, Dept. of Public Safety
2. Fiscal, Dept. of Administration

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 24 follows:

"Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill making various amendments to the statutes of the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

This is an omnibus bill that makes changes primarily aimed at modernizing DMV's processes and systems. These changes authorize and allow DMV to implement electronic vehicle titling and registration, enter into data-sharing agreements with law enforcement agencies or national driver data services, and issue non-domiciled commercial driver's licenses and learner permits. Other changes include the repeal of provisions concerning the long-shuttered vehicle emissions inspection program, cleanup of ambiguous or contradictory statutes, clarification on registration requirements, and new language

requiring that DMV review crash reports and request proof of insurance from persons who did not already provide it as required by law.

These changes will enhance organizational efficiency, remove barriers to modernization of key DMV systems and processes, and ensure DMV's communications and practices remain clear and relevant in both the State and National contexts.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor"

HB 294

HOUSE BILL NO. 294 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act relating to electronic monitoring of fishing vessels; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the House Special Committee on Fisheries and the Finance Committee.

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Zero, Dept. of Fish & Game

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 24 follows:

"Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to electronic monitoring (i.e., video cameras and gear sensors that capture information on fishing location and catch) of fishing vessels. State law provides authority for the Board of Fisheries (Board) to establish by regulation onboard observer programs for fishing vessels in fisheries based on its

determination that enumerated criteria are met. The Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is authorized to implement an onboard observer program required by the Board. This bill would authorize the Board to require electronic monitoring as an alternative or additional option to onboard observers in State fisheries and would authorize the Commissioner of DFG to implement electronic monitoring programs required by the Board.

Electronic monitoring has been increasingly adopted to collect catch data in Federal fisheries. While onboard observers have traditionally been the primary way to collect independent information on a vessel's activities and catch, placing observers on vessels can create challenges due to the additional cost and space required onboard. Electronic monitoring offers an efficient, less intrusive, and more cost-effective alternative. Establishing the Board and DFG's ability to implement an electronic monitoring program now would allow use of current technologies while positioning the State to use new technologies once they are widely available.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor"

HB 295

HOUSE BILL NO. 295 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act relating to salmon hatchery permits; and authorizing the sale of salmon to permitted persons for stocking lakes."

was read the first time and referred to the House Special Committee on Fisheries.

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Zero, Dept. of Fish & Game

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 24 follows:

"Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to the sale of salmon by private nonprofit hatcheries (PNP) to private persons for purposes of stocking lakes. Salmon hatcheries are governed by AS 16.10.375 - 16.10.480. The Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is empowered by AS 16.10.400 to issue permits to nonprofit corporations for construction and operations of salmon hatcheries.

This bill is intended to provide an exception to the limitations on sale of salmon by PNP hatcheries. Sale of salmon eggs are not included in the exception. The bill would clarify that nothing in a PNP hatchery permit may prohibit the sale of salmon by a hatchery to a person for the purpose of stocking lakes in the State. A person who wishes to purchase salmon under this bill would need to first obtain a fish transport permit under 5 AAC 41.005, which is required to collect, transport, possess, propagate, export from the State, or release into waters of the State, any aquatic organisms. Permitting provides DFG the ability to evaluate proposed stocking locations, land ownership, and possible impacts to wild fish populations. This process will ensure that fish sold to the public will not adversely affect Alaska's wild fish populations.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor"

HB 296

HOUSE BILL NO. 296 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act relating to the powers of the board of agriculture and conservation; relating to loans and limitations under the Alaska Agricultural Loan Act; relating to federal crop insurance

contributions; relating to municipal and state procurement preferences for agricultural products harvested in the state and fisheries products harvested or processed in the state; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the Resources Committee.

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Zero, Dept. of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development
2. Zero, Dept. of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development
3. Fiscal, Dept. of Natural Resources

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 24 follows:

"Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to agricultural loans issued under the Alaska Agricultural Loan Act, crop insurance premium subsidies under the Alaska Crop Insurance Support Program, and a five-year expansion of the Alaska Product Preference Program.

This bill promotes development of Alaska's agricultural economy through amendment of legacy programs. It does this by increasing access to and availability of agricultural loans, revising crop insurance premium subsidies for covered producers, and stimulating State spending on Alaskan agricultural and fisheries products through a temporary repeal of the percentage preference cap applicable to State purchases.

Specifically, this bill updates the Alaska Agricultural Loan Act by repealing outdated maximum loan limits for agricultural loans and allowing the Board of Agriculture and Conservation (Board) to set certain loan limits in regulation. It creates new powers for the Board that include making loans that cover shipping costs to and within the State and refinancing certain agricultural loans. The bill also reduces the number of members of the Board required for a quorum, thereby making it easier for the Board to conduct business.

The bill would amend the Alaska Crop Insurance Support Program to revise the subsidy provided for covered producers of agricultural

products through participation in the Federal crop insurance program. Enacted in 1984, the Federal crop insurance support program requires the State to enter into an agreement with the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation under which the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) agrees to pay a portion of the Federal crop insurance program's premiums paid by producers of agricultural commodities in the State. The bill would amend the Federal crop insurance program's statutory payment structure to provide a staggered five-year subsidy to agricultural producers in the State whose crops are covered by revenue protection policies. The bill will incentivize increased planting by lowering risks for farmers; increase access to capital for farm improvements by guaranteeing revenue in the event of unfavorable growing or harvest conditions or price declines; and lead to a larger supply of in-state feedstocks that will enhance food security through reduced imports and end-use prices, larger herd sizes and therefore increased throughput that will improve the economic viability of meat processing facilities.

The bill would enact a five-year repeal of the procurement preference percentages applicable to the purchase of Alaskan agricultural and fisheries products under State and municipal product preference programs. In place of the percentages, the bill will require the State, school districts, and municipalities that purchase products with State funds to purchase an available Alaskan agricultural or fisheries product if the product is of "like quality" compared with a similar product harvested outside the State. To mitigate potential increased costs due to mandatory purchase of Alaskan products, the bill contains three protective measures: a five-year sunset that reverts the amended provisions back to current law, a requirement that Alaskan producers submit accurate wholesale pricing lists in response to solicitations, and an annual reporting requirement to the legislature. Alaska's farmers often struggle to enter retail channels because of corporate requirements for regular and dependable deliveries to secure shelf space. By providing access to market through institutional buying power, Alaskan producers will have the ability to scale up with less risk and have the ability to reach a level of production that can meet the requirements of retail customers. The bill will also increase economic activity by keeping State funds circulating within Alaska rather than being sent to food producers based outside of Alaska.

Changes to the Alaska Agricultural Loan Act and the Alaska Crop Insurance Support Program contemplated by this bill have a July 1, 2025 delayed effective date to allow the respective agencies time to adopt implementing regulations. Amendments to the State and municipal product preference programs would be effective July 1, 2024, and sunset June 30, 2029.

In summary, this bill reduces risks for Alaska's producers in three ways: by increasing access to capital, providing revenue protection for farmers, and providing a market for producers who wish to scale up their operations. By reducing these risks, the bill will incentivize increased Alaska grown and harvested production, create in-state economic activity, and strengthen overall food security for Alaskans.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor"

HB 297

HOUSE BILL NO. 297 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act establishing the sport fishing angler access account; establishing the sport fishing angler access surcharge; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the House Special Committee on Fisheries and the Finance Committee.

The following fiscal note(s) apply:

1. Fiscal, Dept. of Fish & Game

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 24 follows:

"Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill to establish a sport fishing license surcharge for the purpose of increasing non-boating angler access to fishing resources. This bill adds a surcharge ranging from \$4 to \$40 to sports fishing licenses purchased depending on the type of license purchased.

This bill will create parity in angler access to fishing resources between shore access and motorized access. Currently, the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act directs the majority of its funding to boating access projects and cannot be used for projects that primarily support subsistence or personal use. Consequently, funding requests for non-boating angler access compete directly with other eligible programs for State funding. The imposition of the surcharge will alleviate some of the pressure on these funding requests and increase the ability of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to support subsistence and personal use access to fisheries.

Under the terms of the bill, a sport fishing angler access surcharge is assessed on all sport fishing licenses purchased in the State. The bill waives the surcharge for disabled veterans and active members of the Alaska National Guard, along with individuals eligible for a \$5 license due to financial issues. The surcharge is \$4 for residents and special nonresident military licenses. The surcharge for all other nonresidents varies between \$5 for a one-day license to \$40 for an annual nonresident license. The funds collected under the bill will be deposited into the Sport Fishing Angler Access Account within the Fish and Game Fund. The purpose of this account is to directly benefit anglers through the development and improvement of access, services, and facilities for lakes, ponds, or waterways not related to motor or power boat use.

Fishing access is of critical importance in Alaska. While federal funds assist with ensuring motorized fishing access, many Alaskans utilize trails and shore-side assets to engage in recreational and subsistence fishing. Establishment of a sport fishing angler access surcharge will allow DFG to fund critical services supporting recreational and subsistence fishing, including the construction and maintenance of

trails, development and construction of angler access facilities, and the increasing of public awareness of access to angling opportunities through publication of guides, brochures, maps, internet sites, and other aids.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor"

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Representative Saddler moved and asked unanimous consent that the notice and publication requirements be waived and the citation, Honoring – U.S. Coast Guard Base Kodiak, be taken up as a Special Order of Business. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

Representative Saddler moved and asked unanimous consent that the House approve the citation. There being no objection, the following citation was approved and sent to enrolling:

Honoring – U.S. Coast Guard Base Kodiak
By Representatives Stutes, McCabe, Eastman

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Representative Saddler moved and asked unanimous consent that the following members be excused from a call of the House. There being no objection, the members were excused as noted:

Representative Allard – from 1:30 p.m., January 26 to 8:00 p.m., January 28

Representative Vance – from:

8:00 a.m., February 2 to 9:30 p.m., February 4

1:30 p.m., February 16 to 9:30 p.m., February 18

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Representative Sumner – from 7:00 p.m., January 29 to 9:30 a.m., January 31

Representative McCabe – from 7:00 p.m., February 8 to 11:00 p.m., February 11

HB 203

Representative Sumner, citing Uniform Rule 35, moved and asked unanimous consent to replace Representative McKay as prime sponsor for the following:

HOUSE BILL NO. 203

"An Act relating to wage payments."

There being no objection, it was so ordered.

HB 243

Representative Rauscher added as a cosponsor to:

HOUSE BILL NO. 243

"An Act reducing the draw permit application fee for bison to \$5; and providing for an effective date."

HB 265

Representative Rauscher added as a cosponsor to:

HOUSE BILL NO. 265

"An Act changing the term 'child pornography' to 'child sexual abuse material.'"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

House committee schedules are published under separate cover.

The following meeting today was changed:

Labor & Commerce Committee

CANCELED

****The presence of Representative Groh was noted.**

ADJOURNMENT

Representative Saddler moved and asked unanimous consent that the House adjourn until 11:00 a.m., January 29. There being no objection, the House adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Crystalline Jones
Chief Clerk