

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

March 14, 2024

8:02 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative CJ McCormick, Chair
Representative Kevin McCabe, Vice Chair
Representative Tom McKay
Representative Thomas Baker
Representative Justin Ruffridge
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Donna Mears

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 345

"An Act relating to safety ladders at municipal harbor facilities; relating to the harbor facility grant fund; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 345 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 347

"An Act relating to assessment of property, boards of equalization, and certification of assessors; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 151

"An Act relating to proposals for borough incorporation submitted to the legislature by the Local Boundary Commission."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 345

SHORT TITLE: HARBOR FACILITIES AND SAFETY LADDERS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) STORY

02/20/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/20/24 (H) CRA
03/14/24 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 347

SHORT TITLE: PROPERTY ASSESSMENT
SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) COULOMBE

02/20/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/20/24 (H) CRA
03/12/24 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/12/24 (H) Heard & Held
03/12/24 (H) MINUTE(CRA)
03/14/24 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 151

SHORT TITLE: FORMATION OF BOROUGHES
SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) CRONK

04/03/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/03/23 (H) CRA
03/14/24 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented HB 345.

MIRANDA WORL, Staff
Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the sectional analysis for HB 345, on behalf of Representative Story, prime sponsor.

MATT CRESWELL, Harbor Master
City and Borough of Juneau
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 345.

LAURA EDFELT, representing self
Haines, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 345.

REPRESENTATIVE JULIE COULOMBE

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave an overview of the proposed CS for HB 347, Version B, as prime sponsor.

FRANK BERGSTROM, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

ROY JOSEPHSON, representing self

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

JENNIFER CANFIELD, representing self

Haines, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

RAY KREIG, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

BLYTHE CARTER, representing self

Haines, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

JON FAULKNER, representing self

Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

GREG ADLER

Goldstein Development Company

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

LARRY NORENE, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 347.

ED MARTIN, representing self

Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 347.

SHERRY STRIZAK, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

KATIE BEGLY, representing self
Haines, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

MARK SMITH, representing self
Haines, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

MAYA MORIARITY, representing self
Seward, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 347.

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, presented HB 151.

DAVE STANCLIFF, Staff
Representative Mike Cronk
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the sectional analysis for HB 151, on behalf of Representative Cronk, prime sponsor.

SANDRA MOLLER, Director
Division of Community and Regional Affairs
Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 347.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:02:44 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK called the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Representatives McKay, Baker, Ruffridge, Himschoot, Mears, McCabe, and McCormick were present at the call to order.

HB 345-HARBOR FACILITIES AND SAFETY LADDERS

[8:03:49 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 345, "An Act relating to safety ladders at

municipal harbor facilities; relating to the harbor facility grant fund; and providing for an effective date."

[8:04:01 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY, Alaska State Legislature, prime sponsor, presented HB 345. She paraphrased the sponsor statement [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

House Bill 345 would promote water safety in our communities by mandating the installation of safety ladders on municipal floating docks receiving a harbor facility grant. Installation of safety ladders would reduce the risk of death by drowning for people using these busy docks.

Municipal docks are largely used by Alaskans for access to fishing for personal use and commercial purposes, such as commercial and sport fishing, tourism and delivery of cargo. They are also heavily used for subsistence and recreational fishing and boating. Given the necessity and popularity of Alaska's harbor floating docks, it is not surprising that accidents happen.

When a person falls in the water next to a floating dock, it can be difficult to get back onto the dock. Without a ladder, it is next to impossible. Wave action, heavy clothes, hypothermia and nothing but piers to grab onto can result in drowning.

Safety ladders are easy to install, inexpensive, and are paid for by the municipality receiving the harbor improvement grant. Alaska has the highest rate of drowning deaths in the nation. To make access to deeper water safer, installing safety ladders at municipal docks just makes sense. I urge support of this bill.

REPRESENTATIVE STORY noted that the bill had a zero fiscal note because the municipalities would pay for the ladders from a grant. When purchased in bulk, the cost would be approximately \$210 per ladder.

[8:08:22 AM](#)

MIRANDA WORL, Staff, Representative Andi Story, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Story, prime sponsor of HB 345, presented the sectional analysis [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Section 1: Amends AS 29.60.810 by adding new subsection (5) which requires that a municipality or regional housing authority that owns a harbor facility and submits an application for a harbor facility grant for major maintenance, repair, construction or expansion of the facility to have safety ladders on its floats or install them on the proposed new float once built.

Section 2: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2024.

CHAIR MCCORMICK opened invited testimony.

[8:09:21 AM](#)

MATT CRESWELL, Harbor Master, City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ), gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 345. He explained that there's no code requirement for floating docks and harbors to have safety ladders. Throughout Southeast Alaska, it was common practice to install safety ladders when recapitalizing any particular harbor. 30 months ago, CBJ started installing self-rescue ladders that were paid for by operating funds and a grant from the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC). Nearly 200 ladders had been installed in total. He reported that currently, there is a safety ladder within 100 feet of any boat in the Juneau harbors. The goal is to reduce that to 50 feet. He said the bill would be a good first step to incorporate safety ladders in the design process.

[8:13:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked how much the ladders cost.

MR. CRESWELL answered a little over \$200 per ladder when buying in bulk. Installation is 15 minutes of staff time per ladder.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked whether the ladders impact boat mooring.

MR. CRESWELL explained that the ladders are positioned in between the middle of the boat stalls to avoid impeding proper

mooring. He added that all 200 ladders are on a quarterly preventative maintenance cycle.

8:16:03 AM

LAURA EDFELT, representing self, gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 345. She read from the following written remarks [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Good morning Everyone,

I would like to thank Andi Story for presenting this very important bill. I would also like to thank you all for being here and listening about this bill. I would like to encourage you to support it. It will save lives. My name is Laura Barnes. I am a friend and colleague of Anna Foltz. Anna was an amazing person. She had a vibrant personality that everyone enjoyed. She loved Alaska and enjoyed swimming in our cold water. She said it was invigorating and made her feel alive. Normally she would have someone with her but on October 17 2021, she went by herself to a dock close to her home to watch the northern lights. She then decided to take a swim not realizing how cold the water was at that time of year. Unfortunately she drowned. Because she couldn't get back on to the dock. The investigating officer told us that if there had been an egress safety ladder on the dock Anna would be alive. Anna was 38 in good health and strong swimmer. The officer said they found evidence that Anna had tried to get back onto the dock but couldn't. Again, had there been an egress safety ladder she would be alive.

If you search the internet you will find many articles about this terrible problem and see that Alaska has the highest drownings in the nation. With your help we can solve it.

I would like to take a moment to read a letter from Anna's mom Ellen.

"Hello, my name is Ellen Foltz. I had the privilege of seeing beautiful Alaska in June of 2021 when my daughter, Anna, convinced me to embark on a jet ski adventure up the Inside Passage with Dangerous Water

Adventures. I was very reluctant to do it but it turned out to be one of the best things I have ever done in my life. Going on an exciting adventure with my only daughter. Little did I know that June, when I hugged her good bye, it would be the last time i saw her. Anna drowned 3 months later, in Indian Cove, the night of Oct 17. The forensics verified that she had tried to climb up the barnacled pilling of the dock, trying to get out of the frigid water. That image of my child struggling in the cold water will haunt me to the end of my days.

Today, March 14, oddly enough is her birthday. Anna would have been 41.

I strongly urge that Bill 345 supporting the installation of safety ladders through harbor grants be passed to help reduce tragic, accidental drownings such as Anna's."

In closing, I would like to leave you with a thought. Have you ever been to a pool that didn't have an egress ladder in every corner? Of course not. A pool is shallow, has warm water, people present and generally a lifeguard. It's because in most cases it is legally mandated by federal, state and even city law that a pool have an egress ladder in every corner. SO why is it that Alaska's largest pool, our harbors, don't have safety ladders?

These are tragic deaths that can be easily prevented. So, I strongly urge you to support Bill 345 and help save lives, because the next life list could be someone you care about.

Thank you

[8:21:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT shared that several people had been lost in Sitka to similar incidents. From a municipal perspective, she opined that the state harbor grant would be extremely beneficial.

[8:22:25 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:22 a.m.

[8:23:31 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK invited final comment from the bill sponsor.

REPRESENTATIVE STORY shared her belief that the bill would help save lives and thanked the committee for hearing it.

[8:24:04 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:24 a.m.

[8:24:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE moved to report HB 345 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 345 was reported from the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:25:09 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:25 a.m. to 8:32 a.m.

HB 347-PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

[8:32:21 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 347, "An Act relating to assessment of property, boards of equalization, and certification of assessors; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee, adopted as the working document on 3/12/24, was the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 347, Version 33-LS1430\B, Dunmire, 3/8/24 ("Version B").]

[8:32:40 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JULIE COULOMBE, Alaska State Legislature, prime sponsor of CSHB 347, Version B, gave a brief overview of the proposed legislation. She said the bill would help communities by providing a path of transparency and fairness around property assessment. It would set standards for Alaskans to know the rules for assessing property values; change the default for those who hear tax appeals to an appointed board of equalization; stop a municipality from raising the assessed value during the appeal process; ensure assessors have the required experience and certifications; and require the Alaska State Board of Education to explain disagreements with any fee appraisals. Ultimately, she said the bill was an opportunity

for taxpayers to have a "fair shake" in the tax assessment process.

[8:33:53 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK opened public testimony on HB 347.

[8:34:38 AM](#)

FRANK BERGSTROM, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. He opined that it's incumbent upon the government to provide documentation as to why it's taking the people's money. Further, a fee appraisal should be definitive, he said.

[8:35:25 AM](#)

ROY JOSEPHSON, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. He shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Haines. He stated that HB 347 would be a start in the right direction.

[8:38:57 AM](#)

JENNIFER CANFIELD, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. She shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Haines. She reiterated her support for HB 347 because it would prevent increases in assessments during an appeal and ensure due process.

[8:41:24 AM](#)

RAY KREIG, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. He emphasized the importance of ensuring credibility in the assessment process and stated his strong support for the bill.

[8:43:40 AM](#)

BLYTHE CARTER, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. She shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Haines. She expressed her hope the standards and statutes establishing transparency, protection of individual rights to due process, and common decency in HB 347 would serve to prevent tragedies in the future.

[8:46:25 AM](#)

JON FAULKNER, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. He opined that the bill may not go far enough in protecting the public from arbitrary and capricious actions. He shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Kenai, asserting that the assessors failed to recognize economic obsolescence.

[8:49:55 AM](#)

GREG ADLER, Goldstein Development Company, testified in support of HB 347. He stated that the bill is needed because the CBJ had not been following the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) guidelines. He opined that assessor reform is needed because property owners are being stonewalled, and due process is not provided.

[8:52:57 AM](#)

LARRY NORENE, representing self, testified during the hearing on HB 347. He highlighted the language in Section 4 of the bill and suggested adding "the [board of equalization] shall provide due process to all parties." Specific to Section 5, he asserted that the language had been deliberately changed, making it more difficult [for the board] to understand the grounds for assessment adjustment. Furthermore, he opined that the process lacked oversight and said he supported the addition of "the board must accept an appraisal."

[8:56:28 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:56 a.m.

[8:57:57 AM](#)

ED MARTIN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 347. He discussed the calculation of mill rates and shared his belief that the Board of Equalization should be composed of all public [members] with the assessor present to answer questions. He shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment and overvaluation. He urged the committee to hold the bill for further testimony.

[9:01:03 AM](#)

SHERRY STRIZAK, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. She emphasized the need for standards that meet prevailing market conditions to allow buyers and sellers to know expected

pricing levels. She added that assessor certification would provide assessors with the proper Level 3 certification in accordance with the Alaska Association of Assessing Officers (AAAO). Most importantly, board members would hear residents' concerns and ensure assessments are not over- or under-valued. She concluded that assessor reform is needed to protect residents from exorbitant assessment values.

[9:02:49 AM](#)

KATIE BEGLY, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. She stated that the bill includes much needed protections and shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Haines. She urged the committee to pass HB 347, which would protect her right to access her elected official and seek redress of injuries enacted by the processes of the local municipality.

[9:05:10 AM](#)

MARK SMITH, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. He shared a personal anecdote pertaining to the property assessor in Haines.

[9:07:51 AM](#)

MAYA MORIARITY, representing self, testified in support of HB 347. She shared a personal anecdote pertaining to property assessment in Seward. She agreed with a previous testifier's suggestion to make the verbiage regarding fair market value easier to understand and apply. She advised that a local realtor's market value assessment, as well as the tax assessment of area homes, should be used as evidence for overvaluation.

[9:11:15 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK closed public testimony on HB 347.

[9:11:39 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE noticed that Haines was heavily represented in the testimony, which she described as a "message of caution." She said she hoped that the committee could see that the bill would create guidelines and provide protections to taxpayers.

[9:12:38 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCKAY asked whether a public member should be added to Section 4 of the bill.

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE said she always approached her bills as working documents and recognized that [the addition of a public member] could be an important addition.

[9:13:08 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 9:14 a.m.

[9:14:20 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK announced that the proposed CS for HB 347, Version B, would be held over.

HB 151-FORMATION OF BOROUGHES

[9:14:48 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 151, "An Act relating to proposals for borough incorporation submitted to the legislature by the Local Boundary Commission."

[9:15:09 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK, Alaska State Legislature, prime sponsor, presented HB 151. He paraphrased the sponsor statement [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Unfortunately, and hopefully through simply oversight, the public process and the "Will of the people" failed to be included in a 2005 piece of legislation that became codified in 2006. (AS 29.05.115.)

HB 151 simply corrects the deficiency by requiring that a full public process be carried out before the legislature receives a proposal from the Local Boundary Commission under Title X, Section 12 of the Constitution.

As laid out in Article I, Section 12 if the legislature receives a proposal by the Local Boundary Commission, there are only two options. First, the

legislature may reject the proposal with a majority in the House and the Senate.

Second, the legislature can choose to take no action, in which case the proposal remains law.

Under this method of forming government the LBC without any legislative public hearings, establish a new Borough unless rejected by the legislature.

It is extremely important under present law that the legislature know the "Will of the people" contained in any proposal submitted.

Presently the LBC is required to hold two public hearings in the area being proposed and under no obligation to follow the opinions of those giving testimony at the hearings.

HB 151 ensures the legislature will know the level of public support before making any decision concerning a proposed Borough.

[9:16:53 AM](#)

DAVE STANCLIFF, Staff, Representative Mike Cronk, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Cronk, prime sponsor of HB 151, presented the sectional analysis [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Section 1:

Adds new language to existing statute AS 29.05.115 (a)

Ensures that before the Legislature takes action on incorporation of a Borough, they will know that voting age residents within the area support it.

MR. STANCLIFF expounded on the Alaska Constitution and emphasized that the legislature is within its rights as an elected body to determine how the Local Boundary Commission (LBC) would act and conduct its procedures.

CHAIR MCCORMICK sought questions from committee members.

[9:21:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked how to best determine that a majority of residents of voting age within the area support the

proposal. He opined that a public hearing may not be the best method.

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK deferred to Mr. Stancliff.

MR. STANCLIFF explained that the LBC can hold two hearings and is under no obligation to take directive from the opinions provided by testifiers.

[9:25:29 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT pointed out that the second way to form a borough - the local option - is through signature gathering. She asked whether this option is suggested in the bill.

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK deferred to Mr. Stancliff.

MR. STANCLIFF gave further historical context. He explained that the committee's options would be to return to the public process or stick with the language that requires a majority. The language could be made more "open," he said, to avoid a "precise number." He acknowledged that the process could be a lot more public than it is now.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT sought to confirm that per [AS 29.05.115 subsection] (b), the LBC should not initiate the action of forming a borough. She asked what would cause [subsection] (a) to occur.

MR. STANCLIFF recounted an attempt to force a borough where it was not wanted.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT asked whether it would be an "insane idea" to remove [subsection] (a) all together.

MR. STANCLIFF explained that if subsection (a) were removed entirely, nothing would change, so the LBC would not be required to involve the public in the creation of a borough aside from two public hearings.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT clarified that if subsection (a) were removed, the local option would remain intact.

MR. STANCLIFF shared his belief that the bill sponsor would be open to that idea. He emphasized that the goal was to involve the public as much as possible.

[9:33:10 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE described the formation of a local improvement district (LID). Similarly, he shared his understanding that the LBC would have to determine how they know that the majority of voting age citizens support the proposal.

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK asserted that the legislature is responsible for determining the role of boards and commissions. In response to Representative Ruffridge's previous question, he said if it were up to him, a majority would be determined by a vote of the people.

[9:37:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS sought to confirm that the current public process involves two required public meetings of the LBC and any public legislative hearings.

MR. STANCLIFF said that is partially correct. If the LBC receives a request from a government entity or anyone to form a borough, two public hearings are held, and the commission alone makes the decision by a vote of all five members. The LBC is then required to submit the request to the legislature. Unless the legislature votes down the proposal by a majority in both bodies, the request becomes law.

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS expressed concern that obtaining "a majority of residents of voting age" would create a very high bar in terms of participation.

MR. STANCLIFF said maybe someone on the committee could come up with a better way to assess the community's preference. He suggested that the list of permanent fund dividend (PFD) applicants could be polled.

[9:42:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE spoke to the difficulty of determining the will of a people group and advocated for a multi-faceted approach that includes an educational component. He opined that currently, there is no way to determine whether the process was done "rightly and well."

MR. STANCLIFF made reference to a commissioner who is politically active. He agreed that the process should be long, detailed, and unrushed, and that the members should be unbiased,

adding that the legislature may find a biased, five-member board with constitutional authority very difficult to deal with.

[9:46:39 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE said he could see where this particular law needs some "massaging" to ensure that the board is not politically motivated. He opined that control should be given to the citizens.

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK emphasized that the voice of the people should be prioritized.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE clarified that his point was that the LBC knows how survey the will of the people instinctively. He added that the bill would just put that sentiment "in words on a piece of paper."

MR. STANCLIFF reflected on the actions of a recent LBC meeting.

[9:53:46 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT recalled a similar scenario in which the state Board of Education took action without prior notice on a consequential matter. She requested an explanation of the local option process and whether certain aspects pertaining to citizen input could be replicated in the bill.

[9:55:15 AM](#)

SANDRA MOLLER, Director, Division of Community and Regional Affairs, Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development (DCCED), described the local option process, which involves a vote of the people in the affected areas through the Division of Elections (DOE).

[9:57:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT shared her understanding that the local option involves an election and asked whether a similar election could be implemented in HB 151.

MS. MOLLER answered yes, a similar process would be acceptable.

[9:59:41 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCORMICK announced that HB 151 would be held over.

10:00:03 AM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.