

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

May 3, 2023

8:01 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Justin Ruffridge, Co-Chair
Representative Mike Prax
Representative CJ McCormick
Representative Tom McKay
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Andi Story

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Jamie Allard, Co-Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Albiona Selimi - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

HOUSE BILL NO. 144

"An Act relating to education tax credits; and providing for an effective date by repealing the effective date of secs. 1, 2, and 21, ch. 61, SLA 2014."

- MOVED HB 144 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 139

"An Act relating to funding for correspondence study programs."

- MOVED CSHB 139(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 144

SHORT TITLE: REPEAL EDUCATION TAX CREDITS SUNSET

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) RUFFRIDGE

03/29/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/29/23	(H)	EDC
04/19/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/19/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/19/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/21/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/21/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/21/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
05/03/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 139

SHORT TITLE: CORRESPONDENCE STUDY PROGRAM FUNDING

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) RUFFRIDGE

03/27/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/27/23	(H)	EDC, FIN
04/05/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/05/23	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
04/07/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/07/23	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
04/12/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/12/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/12/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/17/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/17/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/17/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/19/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/19/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/19/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/21/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/21/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/21/23	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
05/03/23	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

WITNESS REGISTER

ALBIONA SELIMI, Appointee
 University of Alaska Board of Regents
 Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:01:58 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR JUSTIN RUFFRIDGE called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Representatives Prax, McKay, Himschoot, Story, and Ruffridge were present at the call to order. Representative McCormick arrived as the meeting was in progress.

Consideration of Governor's Appointees: University of Alaska
Board of Regents

[8:03:15 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE announced that the first order of business would be a confirmation hearing for Albiona Selimi, appointee to the Alaska Board of Regents.

[8:03:36 AM](#)

ALBIONA SELIMI, Appointee, University of Alaska Board of Regents, testified as an appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents. She provided a brief background and related that she is entering her junior year at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). Having served in student government for 2 years at UAA, she said, she knows how important students are to the success of the university as well as the economic future for the state of Alaska. She added that she is honored and humbled to be considered to serve as student regent for the University of Alaska, and she appreciated the opportunity to speak to her passion about student leadership.

[8:04:26 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE invited questions from committee members.

[8:04:38 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY thanked Ms. Selimi for her passion for education and observed that her resume had shown she was highly involved in university life. She asked how she envisioned serving in the position to ensure connections with the student body, and how best to bring their voice to the board.

MS. SELIMI explained that while serving in student government she learned to lead events that brought together students, staff, faculty, and administration, bridging the gap between students and administration. Faculty, she said, was very important and maintaining an open ear and willingness to

collaborate is important when trying to communicate efforts between board of regents and other universities.

[8:05:58 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT asked Ms. Selimi about her ideas on how to engage the student body with the board of regents.

MS. SELIMI responded she would love more open communication with the respective student governments of the universities. She said she believed that serving in UAA student government, the ability to engage ideas and concerns of the students comes from having respective communication.

[8:06:44 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX thanked Ms. Selimi for applying and for her interest in the position. He referred to her relating the importance of students to the university, and from the perspective of the institution, he asked what the student regent would bring.

MS. SELIMI responded that the student experience is important to relay, and a student who would serve on the board of regents could provide a more realistic perspective about communicating the needs of the students and the university.

[8:07:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY asked Ms. Selimi for her thoughts on what made a difference for her and her earlier education experience that made her choose the university.

MS. SELIMI explained that her high school teachers were paramount to her success, and expressed her belief that all educators in Alaska are passionate. She added that her history teacher in particular encouraged her to explore political science, and without that encouragement, she said she would not have pursued it as much.

[8:08:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCORMICK thanked Ms. Selimi for donating her time and wondered whether she could speak to issues she took on as student council for UAA, and how that experience might be used to take up similar issues with the board of regents.

MS. SELIMI replied that she served as the university's activity chair, and she said she was more focused on planning activities for the students. She added that some of the issues, such as textbook costs, have been very big the last couple of years.

[8:10:00 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE opened public testimony on the University of Alaska Board of Regents confirmation hearing. After ascertaining that there was no one who wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

[8:10:44 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE moved to advance the confirmation of Albiona Selimi, appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents, to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. He reminded members that signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees, and the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[8:11:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY noted that Ms. Selimi was the recipient of the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS), which was in the process of being modernized and asked whether Ms. Selimi had followed the corresponding bill. In addition, she asked Ms. Selimi when she was first aware of the scholarship and how she came to the decision to take the curriculum requirements to earn that degree.

MS. SELIMI replied she had not followed the bill closely; however, she shared her understanding that a resolution was passed in support of the bill. In response to a follow-up question, she explained that her high school made it a priority to inform students about the APS from their very first year so they could tackle the requirements early, she said.

REPRESENTATIVE STORY thanked her for working hard to earn the APS.

[8:13:06 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:13 a.m. to 8:16 a.m.

HB 144-REPEAL EDUCATION TAX CREDITS SUNSET

[8:16:35 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 144, "An Act relating to education tax credits; and providing for an effective date by repealing the effective date of secs. 1, 2, and 21, ch. 61, SLA 2014."

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE confirmed no amendments were received on HB 144 and invited additional questions or comments from the committee. Seeing none, he asked for the will of the committee.

[8:17:30 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:17 a.m.

[8:18:00 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCORMICK moved to report HB 144 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 144 was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

[8:18:29 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:18 a.m. to 8:21 a.m.

HB 139-CORRESPONDENCE STUDY PROGRAM FUNDING

[8:21:31 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 139, An Act relating to funding for correspondence study programs."

CO-CHAIR RUFFRIDGE noted that at the prior hearing on 4/21/23, a motion was made to adopt Amendment 8 to HB 139, as amended, and then [by a vote of 4:2], Amendment 8 had been tabled. He inquired whether Representative McKay wished to bring Amendment 8 off the table. [The committee had adopted Amendment 3 to HB 139.]

[8:22:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCKAY withdrew his motion to adopt Amendment 8 to HB 139, as amended.

[8:22:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCORMICK moved to report HB 139, [as amended], out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 139(EDC) was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

[8:23:26 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:23 a.m.