

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
May 15, 2023  
10:48 a.m.

10:48:19 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Foster called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 10:48 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Neal Foster, Co-Chair  
Representative DeLena Johnson, Co-Chair  
Representative Julie Coulombe  
Representative Mike Cronk  
Representative Alyse Galvin  
Representative Sara Hannan  
Representative Andy Josephson  
Representative Dan Ortiz  
Representative Will Stapp  
Representative Frank Tomaszewski

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Co-Chair

ALSO PRESENT

Representative Justin Ruffridge, Sponsor; Sylvan Robb, Director, Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development; Jeff Stepp, Staff, Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson; Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency; Brodie Anderson, Staff, Representative Neal Foster.

SUMMARY

HB 112      PROFESSION OF PHARMACY

CSHB 112(L&C) was REPORTED out of committee with nine "do pass" recommendations and one "no recommendation" recommendation and with one new

fiscal impact note from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

SB 81 am OFFICE VICTIMS' RIGHTS: COMP, APPTMT

SB 81 am was REPORTED out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation and with one previously published fiscal impact note: FN1 (LEG).

Co-Chair Foster reviewed the meeting agenda.

#hb112

HOUSE BILL NO. 112

"An Act relating to the Board of Pharmacy; relating to the practice of pharmacy; relating to pharmacies; relating to prescription drug manufacturers; relating to prescriptions for epinephrine; relating to the administration of epinephrine; and providing for an effective date."

10:49:21 AM

Co-Chair Foster asked for a brief recap of the bill. He noted no amendments had been received.

REPRESENTATIVE JUSTIN RUFFRIDGE, SPONSOR, briefly reviewed the bill that would update statutes for the practice of pharmacy. He relayed it was a multiyear process involving numerous (past and current) chairs of the Board of Pharmacy. The intent was to update statutes to help modernize the profession and add important updates reflecting changes to the profession in the past decade. The bill had been brought forward by the Board of Pharmacy and the Alaska Pharmacists Association. He stated that the changes were necessary and important.

10:50:38 AM

Co-Chair Foster asked the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development to review its fiscal note.

SYLVAN ROBB, DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, noted that the board chair was available for questions as well. She reviewed the fiscal note that included \$705,600 in FY 24. The amount

increased to \$751,200 in FY 25 and remained consistent for the remainder of the outyears reflected in the fiscal note. She explained there was a decrease in startup costs of \$50,000 and in the regulations project of \$4,400 from FY 24 to FY 25, but there was an increase in legal fees for the outyears. She highlighted that \$269,400 of the request was general fund with the remainder to be paid with receipt supported services by the licensees. The fiscal note primarily supported five additional staff to handle the additional workload created by the bill.

Co-Chair Foster noted that the Board of Pharmacy chair was online for questions.

Representative Hannan asked how much general fund the board currently required for operation.

Ms. Robb answered that the board currently received no general funds. The division was funded with receipt supported services.

Representative Hannan noted that the bill set a change in motion for the Board of Pharmacy. She wondered if the department intended to make the change for all other boards that were currently self-funded. Alternatively, she asked if all of the boards would "reshuffle and change rates" so that general funds were not used.

Ms. Robb replied that the governor's FY 24 budget included general funds to pay for investigations within the division. The fiscal note reflected the anticipation of the increment being approved. She detailed that if the final budget included the increment, the investigations for all boards would be funded with general funds. Otherwise, the full amount would be funded with receipt supported services.

[10:54:08 AM](#)

Representative Hannan asked for verification that the fiscal note reflected the cost of investigators that may be captured through separate legislation, which would zero out the general fund element [of the fiscal note] in outyears.

Ms. Robb answered that it depended on whether the general fund increment remained in the budget. Otherwise, the full amount would be paid with receipt supported services.

Representative Hannan asked for verification that the budget increment was general funds to pay for investigators for all of the boards with investigative responsibilities for professional licensures.

Ms. Robb agreed. She added that in addition to the programs with boards, there were investigators for the 22 programs without boards, and for corporations and business licensing as needed.

Representative Galvin had a question unrelated to the fiscal note.

Co-Chair Foster asked to have the sponsor come to the table.

Representative Galvin referenced a presentation the committee had received that specified one of the goals was to allow the board to adopt language for retired pharmacist status. She had been unable to find the particular reference in the bill's sectional analysis. She asked where it was located in the bill.

Representative Ruffridge replied that it was a very simple section that added the term "retired pharmacist" to the already allowable license types. He offered to follow up with the specific section offline.

Representative Galvin stated her understanding that the intent was to enable retired pharmacists to work again. She noted new language around requiring [pharmacists to have] background checks. She asked if the requirement would apply to retired pharmacists who opted to work again.

[10:57:00 AM](#)

Representative Ruffridge answered, "No." He clarified that retired status was a common status in other medical professions and was almost a sign of respect. He explained that currently there were only two types of license status: active and lapsed/expired. The change would allow for a license type that would enable a [retired] pharmacist's license to not lapse, but the individual would not be actively working. He noted it would be listed on the individual's online platform showing that they had retired their license.

Representative Ruffridge thanked the committee for considering the bill. He answered an earlier question by Representative Galvin and relayed that the retired pharmacist status was included in Section 2 of the bill. He appreciated the committee's support.

Co-Chair Johnson MOVED to REPORT CSHB 112(L&C) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note.

There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

CSHB 112(L&C) was REPORTED out of committee with nine "do pass" recommendations and one "no recommendation" recommendation and with one new fiscal impact note from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

[10:59:19 AM](#)

AT EASE

[11:00:36 AM](#)

RECONVENED

#sb81

SENATE BILL NO. 81 am

"An Act relating to the office of victims' rights; and providing for an effective date."

[11:01:02 AM](#)

Co-Chair Foster requested a brief recap of the bill.

JEFF STEPP, STAFF, SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON, relayed that the bill sought to accomplish two important goals. First, the bill would permanently place the Office of Victims' Rights (OVR) attorneys on the state attorney salary schedule. Second, the bill was identified as a vehicle to assist the joint Victims Advocate Selection Committee with its task of hiring a permanent victims' advocate. He noted there were others available for questions.

Representative Josephson asked if the victims' rights attorneys had been paid by some source back to around October 31, 2022.

Mr. Stepp replied in the affirmative.

Co-Chair Foster asked for a review of the fiscal note.

JESSICA GEARY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY, relayed the fiscal note would add \$107,000 to the base to get the four OVR attorneys onto the attorney salary schedule created by HB 226 [passed in 2022].

[11:03:21 AM](#)

Co-Chair Foster noted that no amendments had been received for the bill.

Co-Chair Johnson MOVED to REPORT SB 81 am out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note.

There being NO OBJECTION, it was so ordered.

SB 81 am was REPORTED out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation and with one previously published fiscal impact note: FN1 (LEG).

Co-Chair Foster reviewed the schedule for the afternoon meeting. He listed bills the committee could potentially hear in the afternoon meeting. He asked his staff to review any bills he had missed.

BRODIE ANDERSON, STAFF, REPRESENTATIVE NEAL FOSTER, answered that the other bill the committee could potentially hear amendments to SB 77.

Co-Chair Foster asked for the number of amendments for SB 77.

Mr. Anderson responded that there were three or four amendments.

Co-Chair Foster concluded the meeting.

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ADJOURNMENT

[11:06:06 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.