

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE

May 8, 2023

3:17 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jesse Sumner, Chair
Representative Justin Ruffridge, Vice Chair
Representative Mike Prax
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Stanley Wright
Representative Ashley Carrick
Representative Zack Fields

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

Dana Walukiewicz - Anchorage

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

ALASKA WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

John Corbett - Fairbanks
Jonathon Dartt - Fairbanks
Anthony Ladd - Anchorage
Lake Williams - Fairbanks

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

BOARD OF BARBERS AND HAIRDRESSERS

Breanna Hardy - Anchorage
Glenda Ledford - Wasilla

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

BOARD OF NURSING

Danette Schloeder - Anchorage

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

Stacy Stone - Anchorage

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

Megan Ferguson - Palmer
Jesse Hronkin - Wasilla
Newell Walther - Wasilla

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

MARIJUANA CONTROL BOARD

Ely Cyrus - Anchorage

CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

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."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 143

"An Act relating to the Department of Environmental Conservation; relating to advanced recycling and advanced recycling facilities; relating to waste; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 123(L&C)

"An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers' license requirements; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 123(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 93(L&C) AM

"An Act relating to claims for injury, disability, or heart attack payable from the fishermen's fund; relating to claims against protection and indemnity insurance policies of vessel owners; relating to the definition of 'occupational disease'; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 93(L&C) AM OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 137

"An Act relating to an interstate physical therapy licensure compact; relating to the licensure of physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, occupational therapists, and occupational therapy assistants; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 137 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 138

"An Act relating to an audiology and speech-language interstate compact; relating to the practice of audiology and the practice of speech-language pathology; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 138 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 145

"An Act relating to loans in an amount of \$25,000 or less; relating to deferred deposit advances; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 145(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 146

SHORT TITLE: REGULATION OF FIREWORKS

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

03/29/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/29/23	(H)	STA, L&C
04/13/23	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/13/23	(H)	Heard & Held
04/13/23	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
04/27/23	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/27/23	(H)	Moved CSHB 146(STA) Out of Committee
04/27/23	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
05/01/23	(H)	STA RPT CS(STA) 5DP 2NR

05/01/23 (H) DP: CARPENTER, C. JOHNSON, ALLARD,
 WRIGHT, SHAW
 05/01/23 (H) NR: ARMSTRONG, STORY
 05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 143

SHORT TITLE: ADVANCED RECYCLING AND FACILITIES
 SPONSOR(S): RESOURCES

03/27/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 03/27/23 (H) RES, L&C
 04/05/23 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
 04/05/23 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --
 04/12/23 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
 04/12/23 (H) Heard & Held
 04/12/23 (H) MINUTE(RES)
 04/19/23 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
 04/19/23 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --
 04/21/23 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
 04/21/23 (H) Heard & Held
 04/21/23 (H) MINUTE(RES)
 04/26/23 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
 04/26/23 (H) Moved CSHB 143(RES) Out of Committee
 04/26/23 (H) MINUTE(RES)
 04/28/23 (H) RES RPT CS(RES) 5DP 2DNP 1AM
 04/28/23 (H) DP: MCCABE, WRIGHT, RAUSCHER, SADDLER,
 MCKAY
 04/28/23 (H) DNP: MEARS, DIBERT
 04/28/23 (H) AM: ARMSTRONG
 05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: SB 123

SHORT TITLE: LICENSE REQUIREMENTS: COMM. DRIVERS
 SPONSOR(S): TRANSPORTATION

04/05/23 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 04/05/23 (S) TRA, L&C
 04/11/23 (S) TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 04/11/23 (S) Heard & Held
 04/11/23 (S) MINUTE(TRA)
 04/13/23 (S) TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 04/13/23 (S) Moved SB 123 Out of Committee
 04/13/23 (S) MINUTE(TRA)
 04/14/23 (S) TRA RPT 3DP
 04/14/23 (S) DP: KAUFMAN, MYERS, WILSON
 04/21/23 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 04/21/23 (S) Heard & Held

04/21/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
 04/26/23 (S) L&C AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 04/26/23 (S) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
 04/28/23 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 04/28/23 (S) Moved CSSB 123(L&C) Out of Committee
 04/28/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
 05/01/23 (S) L&C RPT CS 4DP SAME TITLE
 05/01/23 (S) DP: BJORKMAN, BISHOP, DUNBAR, MERRICK
 05/03/23 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
 05/03/23 (S) VERSION: CSSB 123(L&C)
 05/03/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
 05/03/23 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
 05/05/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
 05/05/23 (H) <Bill Hearing Rescheduled to 05/08/23>
 05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: SB 93

SHORT TITLE: FISHERMEN'S FUND: VESSEL OWNER CLAIMS
 SPONSOR(s): LABOR & COMMERCE BY REQUEST

03/08/23 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 03/08/23 (S) L&C
 03/24/23 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/24/23 (S) Heard & Held
 03/24/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
 03/29/23 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/29/23 (S) Moved CSSB 93(L&C) Out of Committee
 03/29/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)
 03/31/23 (S) L&C RPT CS 4DP NEW TITLE
 03/31/23 (S) DP: BJORKMAN, DUNBAR, BISHOP, GRAY-
 JACKSON
 05/01/23 (S) NOT TAKEN UP 5/1 - ON 5/3 CAL
 05/03/23 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
 05/03/23 (S) VERSION: CSSB 93(L&C) AM
 05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 137

SHORT TITLE: PHYSICAL THERAPY LICENSURE COMPACT
 SPONSOR(s): WRIGHT

03/27/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 03/27/23 (H) L&C, FIN
 04/21/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
 04/21/23 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
 04/24/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
 04/24/23 (H) Heard & Held
 04/24/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)

05/05/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
05/05/23 (H) Heard & Held
05/05/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 138

SHORT TITLE: AUD. & SPEECH-LANG INTERSTATE COMPACT
SPONSOR(S): WRIGHT

03/27/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/27/23 (H) L&C, FIN
04/21/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
04/21/23 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
04/24/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
04/24/23 (H) Heard & Held
04/24/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
05/05/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
05/05/23 (H) Heard & Held
05/05/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 145

SHORT TITLE: LOANS UNDER \$25,000; PAYDAY LOANS
SPONSOR(S): WRIGHT

03/29/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/29/23 (H) L&C
04/14/23 (H) FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER L&C
04/14/23 (H) BILL REPRINTED
04/14/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
04/14/23 (H) Heard & Held
04/14/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
04/19/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
04/19/23 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --
04/21/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
04/21/23 (H) Heard & Held
04/21/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
05/03/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
05/03/23 (H) <Bill Hearing Rescheduled to 05/05/23>
05/05/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
05/05/23 (H) Heard & Held
05/05/23 (H) MINUTE(L&C)
05/08/23 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

DANETTE SCHLOEDER, DNP, RNC, OB, C-EFM, C-ONS, Appointee

Board of Nursing
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Nursing.

LISA PURINTON, Acting Legislative Liaison
Department of Public Safety
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced HB 146, on behalf of the sponsor, House Rules by request of the governor.

LLOYD NAKATO, State Fire Marshall
Division of Fire and Life Safety
Department of Public Safety
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 146.

ROBERT HALL, Owner
Gorilla Fireworks
Houston, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 146.

REPRESENTATIVE TOM MCKAY
Alaska State Representative
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced HB 143, on behalf of the prime sponsor, House Resources Standing Committee, of which Representative McKay served as chair.

TREVOR JEPSEN, Staff
Representative Tom McKay
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave a PowerPoint presentation, titled "HB 143: Advanced Recycling," on behalf of the House Resources Standing Committee, prime sponsor.

CRAIG COOKSON, Senior Director
Plastics Sustainability
American Chemistry Council
Washington, D.C.

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 143.

CHRISTINA CARPENTER, Director
Division of Environmental Health
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 143.

EMMA TORKELSON, Staff
Senator James Kaufman
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced CSSB 123(L&C), on behalf of the sponsor, Senate Transportation Standing Committee, of which Senator Kaufman served as chair.

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced CSSB 93(L&C)am, on behalf of the sponsor, Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee, on which Senator Bjorkman served as chair.

SENATOR MATT CLAMAN
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on the amendments adopted to CSSB 93(L&C)am.

CLAY BEZENEK, Member
Fishermen's Fund Board
Ketchikan, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave public testimony on CSSB 93(L&C)am.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:17:28 PM](#)

CHAIR JESSE SUMNER called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:17 p.m. Representatives Prax, Wright, Carrick, Fields, and Sumner were present at the call to order. Representatives Ruffridge and Saddler arrived as the meeting was in progress.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers

Board of Nursing

Board of Social Work Examiners

Board of Dental Examiners

Marijuana Control Board

[3:18:16 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the first order of business would be confirmation hearings of the governor's appointees to various boards.

[3:18:28 PM](#)

DANETTE SCHLOEDER, DNP, RNC, OB, C-EFM, C-ONS, Appointee, Board of Nursing, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, stated that she is seeking reappointment as a member of the Board of Nursing. She shared that she has 28 years of experience with perinatal nursing and has given talks and taught courses on the subject. She stated that she has five academic degrees and has been the chair of the board for three and a half of the four years she has served, most of which were during the COVID-19 pandemic. She listed a few of the subjects the board has been working on, including faster processing times for military spouses seeking a nursing license.

[3:20:31 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether Ms. Schloeder is a member of Providence Alaska Medical Center management.

MS. SCHLOEDER answered that she had been the director of the children's hospital for nine months but no longer holds this management position. In response to a follow-up question, she said that currently she is a perinatal clinical specialist, and she is not part of a union.

[3:22:48 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the board has anything it wishes for the legislature to consider.

MS. SCHLOEDER answered that the board supports HB 149.

[3:23:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether Ms. Schloeder believes advanced practice clinicians should be allowed to perform medicinal abortions.

MS. SCHLOEDER answered that if the statutes were changed to include advanced practice clinicians, the Board of Nursing would create appropriate regulations.

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether Providence Alaska Medical Center should put more effort into training nurses.

[3:25:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX objected to the question. He expressed the opinion that Providence Alaska Medical Center's business practices are not relevant to the proceedings.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER seconded the objection.

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS argued that Ms. Schloeder has used her position on the board to promote a bill which would benefit the medical center.

CHAIR SUMNER allowed the question.

MS. SCHLOEDER answered that most nurses who practice in Alaska spend time at Providence Alaska Medical Center doing clinical studies. She said that all new nurses hired at the medical center receive a month of guidance.

[3:27:56 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER opened public testimony on the confirmation hearings for consideration of the governor's appointees to various boards. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

[3:28:21 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee has reviewed the qualifications of the governor's appointees [and recommends that the following names be forwarded to a joint session for consideration]: Dana Walukiewicz - Alcoholic Beverage Control Board; John Corbett, Jonathon Dartt, Anthony Ladd, and Lake Williams - Alaska Workers' Compensation Board; Breanna Hardy and Glenda Ledford - Board of Barbers and Hairdressers; Danette Schloeder - Board of Nursing; Stacy Stone - Board of Social Work Examiners; Megan Ferguson, Jesse Hronkin, and Newell Walther - Board of Dental Examiners; and Ely Cyrus - Marijuana Control Board. [Signing the report regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects an individual member's approval or disapproval of the appointee, and the nomination is merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.]

[3:29:29 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:29 p.m. to 3:31 p.m.

HB 146-REGULATION OF FIREWORKS

[3:31:05 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be 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." [Before the committee was CSHB 146(STA).]

[3:31:20 PM](#)

LISA PURINTON, Acting Legislative Liaison, Department of Public Safety (DPS), introduced HB 146 on behalf of the sponsor, House Rules by request of the governor. She said state fireworks statutes were first created in 1969 and have not been substantially altered since then; because of this, Alaska fireworks statutes do not currently match international fire codes and standards. She stated that rather than having this in statute, HB 146 would allow DPS to regulate fireworks sales and usage, and it would require municipalities to comply with these regulations.

[3:34:47 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked how the current international practices differ from the statute.

[3:35:30 PM](#)

LLOYD NAKATO, State Fire Marshall, Division of Fire and Life Safety, Department of Public Safety, answered that the proposed legislation would allow DPS to adopt international standards, as well as standards from the National Fire Protection Association.

[3:36:38 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER questioned the difference between the codes and the current state statute.

MR. NAKATO answered that international fire codes address fireworks very little, and the state would use industry practices to create appropriate regulations. In response to a follow-up question, he said that the proposed legislation would not create stricter standards; however, it would update outdated definitions.

[3:38:59 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether there is data from other states on regulations regarding wildfires.

MR. NAKATO answered no. In response to a follow-up question, he said he would have to look further to answer whether other states have implemented a fee structure for the sale of fireworks.

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether there is data on injuries related to fireworks.

MR. NAKATO replied that he would follow up to the committee with this information.

[3:42:06 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked whether there is a summary of changes for HB 146.

MS. PURINTON answered that the added language clarified the difference between private residences storing fireworks and firework stands. In response to a follow-up question, she said

that Anchorage is an example of a municipality with fireworks ordinances.

MR. NAKATO added that other municipalities have similar regulations, although he is not certain which municipalities this includes.

[3:44:42 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked whether there is a model Alaska should adopt if the proposed legislation were passed.

MR. NAKATO answered that DPS would look at regulations being used in other states. In response to a follow-up question, he said that there is a group of standards DPS would use to create regulations.

[3:46:14 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked how quickly the fireworks industry changes.

[3:46:52 PM](#)

ROBERT HALL, Owner, Gorilla Fireworks, provided invited testimony on HB 146. He stated that he has been selling fireworks for nearly 40 years and has worked with state fire officials during this time. He expressed the understanding that the proposed legislation would give technical definitions in statute for fireworks, and he expressed the recognition that federal regulations have made fireworks safer. He said that updated definitions would clarify in regulations what type of fireworks would be allowed. It would allow for the sale of certain fireworks to be restricted in certain weather and fire conditions, which would increase public safety. He noted that changes in labeling fireworks have allowed for the sale of certain types of fireworks to the general public, despite those fireworks never being intended for public sale. He said that giving the state fire marshal the ability to regulate fireworks would save the legislature time and allow for updated and clear definitions and regulations.

[3:55:16 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the old statute needs to be updated, or if the state fire marshal needs the authority to regulate fireworks.

MR. HALL answered that the industry would prefer for the legislature to update the statutes; however, he expressed the understanding that the situation is dire enough to justify giving the state fire marshal the ability to regulate fireworks. In response to a follow-up question, he said that the state holds individuals responsible for starting fires, although local municipalities have enacted high fees for businesses selling fireworks, and these fees go to the local fire department.

[3:59:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the proposed bill would restrict his ability to sell fireworks for New Year's Eve celebrations.

MR. HALL expressed doubt that it would, as winter is "a good time" for fireworks because of the low fire danger and the darkness [creating better visibility].

[4:02:28 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked how HB 146 would improve public safety.

MR. HALL answered that fireworks which are legal federally can be sold in Alaska year-round, although some types have been restricted by certain municipalities. He expressed the opinion that a state-wide restriction on certain types of fireworks would cause people to instead buy what is available locally.

[4:06:17 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that HB 146 was held over.

[4:06:25 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:06 p.m. to 4:09 p.m.

HB 143-ADVANCED RECYCLING AND FACILITIES

[4:09:14 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HB 143, "An Act relating to the Department of Environmental Conservation; relating to advanced recycling and advanced

recycling facilities; relating to waste; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee was CSHB 143(RES).]

[4:09:21 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE TOM MCKAY, Alaska State Legislature, introduced HB 143 on behalf of the sponsor, the House Resources Standing Committee, on which Representative McKay serves as chair. He stated that HB 143 would create a regulatory framework for a new industry known as "advanced recycling." He stated that current recycling processes are only able to recycle 10 percent of collected plastic, and the proposed bill would clarify state statute to allow for advanced recycling. He noted that 23 other states have passed similar legislation.

[4:11:06 PM](#)

TREVOR JEPSEN, Staff, Representative Tom McKay, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of the sponsor, the House Resources Standing Committee, of which Representative McKay serves as chair, gave a PowerPoint presentation, titled "HB 143: Advanced Recycling" [hard copy included in the committee packet]. He began on slides 2 through 6 and stated that advanced recycling is a relatively new technology which would allow the industry to recycle plastics it currently does not have the ability to recycle. He explained that chemicals are used to recycle post-use plastics into petroleum-based products which can be used to create new chemical building blocks, plastic additives, waxes, lubricants, and feedstock for new plastics. He said that advanced recycling uses gasification, pyrolysis, and solvolysis to break down the plastics, and he showed a chart displaying the pyrolysis process.

[4:15:44 PM](#)

MR. JEPSEN continued to slides 7 through 11 and stated that advanced recycling is necessary because of the low amount of plastics which are able to be recycled, and this does not include plastic which ends up as waste or pollution. The bill would incentivize markets to reuse products, preserve resources, and allow waste to be reused. He said that there is an estimated \$70.2 million economic benefit for advanced recycling. The proposed bill would allow the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to develop regulations, define terms, and stipulate the advanced recycling facilities be regulated as manufacturing facilities, not waste disposal facilities.

[4:19:16 PM](#)

MR. JEPSEN gave the sectional analysis for HB 143 [included in the committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Section 1: Amends the section to include the new nonresident postsecondary student license.

Section 2: Adds a new subsection allowing for nonresident students who are enrolled half-time or part-time in postsecondary education to purchase a special nonresident postsecondary student license for sport fishing, hunting, or trapping at the same cost as a resident license.

Section 3: Provides uncodified law that allows the Department of Fish and Game to adopt regulations to implement to the new license.

Section 4: Provides for an effective date.

Section 5: Provides for an effective date

[4:20:07 PM](#)

CRAIG COOKSON, Senior Director, Plastics Sustainability, American Chemistry Council, provided invited testimony on HB 143. He stated that the American Chemistry Council represents over 200 companies and supports HB 143. The ability to mechanically recycle objects such as milk jugs, water bottles, and certain tub lids has existed for years, but objects such as snack wrappers are more difficult to mechanically recycle. He said that using advanced recycling, also known as chemical recycling, provides the opportunity to recycle materials which are more difficult to recycle, and companies, such as Wendy's and Under Armor, are selling products made with recycled plastic. He noted that 24 other states and the federal government regulate advanced recycling plants with the same regulations as manufacturing plants.

[4:23:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked how viable the industry would be in Alaska.

MR. JEPSEN, in response, argued that even if the industry is not yet viable in Alaska, it is necessary to have the regulations in place for when it does become viable.

MR. COOKSON added that many companies are pledging to increase their usage of recycled materials, and some states are mandating certain amounts of products be recycled. He added that members of the American Chemistry Council have invested \$7 billion in advanced recycling.

[4:26:36 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether other states include regulations for water and air emissions in similar legislation.

MR. COOKMAN answered that HB 143 is very similar to advanced recycling legislation passed in other states, leaving these types of regulations up to the respective environmental conservation departments. He added that advanced recycling facilities have been found to have very low emissions. In response to a follow-up question, he said that defining advanced recycling as a manufacturing facility is more appropriate for the process than the current practice.

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked how a company wishing to use the advanced recycling process would be permitted under current statute.

[4:32:19 PM](#)

CHRISTINA CARPENTER, Director, Division of Environmental Health, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), stated that DEC has not currently issued any permits for advanced recycling facilities, although it has the authority to do so.

[4:33:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether DEC would be able to inform companies what the regulatory framework would be like.

MS. CARPENTER answered yes.

MR. JEPSEN added that the bill would provide clarification for potential investors.

[4:34:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked how much plastic material is recycled in Alaska.

MR. JEPSEN expressed uncertainty. In response to a follow-up question, he said that he would follow up with the total recycling numbers to the committee.

[4:35:41 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked whether there are specific companies looking to invest in Alaska.

MR. JEPSEN answered that many large chemical and oil companies, such as ExxonMobil, are looking at investment in advanced recycling.

MR. COOKMAN added that he is unaware about Alaska specifically, and the purpose of the bill is to create the regulatory framework needed to attract investment.

[4:38:25 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that HB 143 was held over.

SB 123-LICENSE REQUIREMENTS: COMM. DRIVERS

[Contains discussion of HB 124.]

[4:38:34 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 123(L&C), "An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers' license requirements; and providing for an effective date."

[4:38:54 PM](#)

EMMA TORKELSON, Staff, Senator James Kaufman, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of the prime sponsor, the Senate Transportation Standing Committee, on which Senator Kaufman serves as the chair, presented CSSB 123(L&C). She stated that the proposed legislation would repeal the state requirement for individuals to have a "normal" driver's license for a year before obtaining a commercial driver's license (CDL). She explained the difference between SB 123 and HB 124 is that the former would have an immediate effective date.

[4:39:40 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked whether certain winter driving conditions should be incorporated into the requirement for obtaining a CDL.

MS. TORKELSON answered that between the federal requirements and the experience requirements for larger commercial vehicles, public safety would not be negatively impacted.

[4:41:57 PM](#)

VICE CHAIR RUFFRIDGE moved to report CSSB 123(L&C) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSSB 123(L&C) was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[4:42:23 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:42 p.m. to 4:46 p.m.

SB 93-FISHERMEN'S FUND: VESSEL OWNER CLAIMS

[4:46:37 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 93(L&C)am, "An Act relating to claims for injury, disability, or heart attack payable from the fishermen's fund; relating to claims against protection and indemnity insurance policies of vessel owners; and providing for an effective date."

[4:47:01 PM](#)

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, Alaska State Legislature, introduced CSSB 93(L&C)am, on behalf of the sponsor, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee, on which Senator Bjorkman served as chair. He stated that the Fishermen's Fund aids the out-of-pocket medical costs for fishermen suffering from an injury or illness affiliated with their work. He stated that the proposed bill would increase the amount that can be paid out to fishermen or boat owners. He said the Senate version of the bill includes "step-downs" which would reduce payments if the Fishermen's Fund were to run low on funds.

[4:48:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the fund is designed to provide payouts to fishermen, boat owners, or both.

SENATOR BJORKMAN answered both.

[4:49:28 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the changes made in the Senate were requested by the [Fishermen's Fund Appeal and Advisory Council].

SENATOR BJORKMAN answered that the amendments were proposed by Senator Matt Claman.

[4:50:32 PM](#)

SENATOR MATT CLAMAN, Alaska State Legislature, answered questions on the amendments adopted to CSSB 93(L&C)am. He stated that the amendments were the result of discussions with the chair of the [Fishermen's Fund Appeal and Advisory Council] and are meant to add further protections for the fund in the unlikely event the increased payments create issues for the fund's financial health.

[4:52:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the proposed bill was meant to account for medical inflation or the lack of coverage.

SENATOR BJORKMAN answered that insurance deductibles have increased, and the fund is healthy, so it makes sense to increase payouts to ease the burden on fishermen.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether coverage for COVID-19 played a part in creating the bill.

SENATOR CLAMAN answered that although the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, if a similar event happened in the future, then the fund would be able to help with some costs related to this.

[4:56:38 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether boat owners are obligated to cover illnesses regardless of whether the illnesses were contracted on the boat.

SENATOR CLAMAN answered yes. He said that this obligation dates to the 1800s, and nothing the legislature can do would change this because of the broad nature of the obligation.

[4:57:40 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the [Fishermen's Fund Appeal and Advisory Council] has a position on whether COVID-19 coverage would be harmful to the fund.

[4:58:47 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER opened public testimony on CSSB 93(L&C)am.

[4:59:06 PM](#)

CLAY BEZENEK, Member, Fishermen's Fund Appeal and Advisory Council, testified that the impetus of CSSB 93(L&C)am related to deductibles for boat owners. He said that the council has no consensus on COVID-19 coverage because of the infrequency of the council's meetings. He requested time to follow up after the council's discussion of this issue.

[5:01:52 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER, after ascertaining there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony on CSSB 93(L&C)am.

[5:02:11 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the council would be able to come to a consensus in the next seven months.

MR. BEZENEK answered that the council would be open to considering this after having discussions with the insurance companies. In response to a follow-up question, he said the council would have time to give due consideration to the provision.

[5:03:45 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the issues covered by the House version of the bill were urgent enough for the legislature to act now, leaving the Senate amendments for next year.

MR. BEZENEK responded that the council supports the House version of the proposed legislation; however, the council has

"angst" with CSSB 93(L&C)am. In response to a follow up question, he expressed appreciation for the prospect of passing the House version of the bill.

[5:05:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report CSSB 93(L&C)am out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX objected.

[5:05:44 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Wright, Carrick, Fields, Ruffridge, Saddler, and Sumner voted in favor of reporting CSSB 93(L&C)am out of committee. Representative Prax voted against it. Therefore, CSSB 93(L&C)am was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee by a vote of 6-1.

[5:06:37 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 5:06 p.m. to 5:10 p.m.

HB 137-PHYSICAL THERAPY LICENSURE COMPACT

[5:10:03 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 137, "An Act relating to an interstate physical therapy licensure compact; relating to the licensure of physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, occupational therapists, and occupational therapy assistants; and providing for an effective date."

[5:10:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report HB 137 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER objected for the purpose of discussion.

[5:10:39 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Wright, Prax, Ruffridge, Saddler, Carrick, and Sumner voted in favor of reporting HB 137 out of committee. Therefore, HB 137 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee by a vote of 6-0.

HB 138-AUD. & SPEECH-LANG INTERSTATE COMPACT

[5:11:16 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 138, "An Act relating to an audiology and speech-language interstate compact; relating to the practice of audiology and the practice of speech-language pathology; and providing for an effective date."

[5:11:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report HB 138 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER objected for the purpose of discussion.

[5:11:43 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Wright, Prax, Ruffridge, Saddler, Carrick, and Sumner voted in favor of reporting HB 138 out of committee. Therefore, HB 138 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee by a vote of 6-0.

HB 145-LOANS UNDER \$25,000; PAYDAY LOANS

[5:12:19 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the final order of business would be CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 145(L&C), "An Act relating to loans in an amount of \$25,000 or less; relating to the Nationwide Multistate Licensing System and Registry; relating to deferred deposit advances; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee, adopted as a working document on 5/5/23, was CSHB 145, Version 33-LS0508\U, Dunmire, 3/28/23, ("Version U").]

[5:12:33 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether he had the correct short title of the bill.

REPRESENTATIVE WRIGHT answered yes.

[5:12:51 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report CSHB 145, Version 33-LS0508\U, Dunmire, 3/28/23, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

CHAIR SUMNER objected.

[5:13:09 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Wright, Prax, Carrick, Saddler, and Ruffridge voted in favor of reporting CSHB 145, Version 33-LS0508\U, Dunmire, 3/28/23, out of committee. Representative Sumner voted against it. Therefore, CSHB 145(L&C) was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee by a vote of 5-1.

[5:13:36 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.