

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2024

3:18 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**

HOUSE BILL NO. 203

"An Act relating to wage payments."

- MOVED HB 203 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 290

"An Act relating to the issuance of certificates of fitness for plumbers and electricians; relating to fees for certificates of fitness for plumbers and electricians; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 290 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 285

"An Act relating to insurance; relating to mammograms; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 285 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 218

"An Act relating to coverage for disability from diseases for certain firefighters; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 55

"An Act relating to allocations of funding for the Alaska Workforce Investment Board; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 147(L&C)

"An Act relating to reemployment rights and benefits; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING RESCHEDULED TO 3/22/24

HOUSE BILL NO. 150

"An Act relating to residential building codes; relating to construction contractors and residential contractor endorsements; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 203

SHORT TITLE: PAYMENT OF WAGES; PAYROLL CARD ACCOUNT

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) SUMNER

05/16/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/16/23	(H)	L&C
01/26/24	(H)	BILL REPRINTED
02/09/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
02/09/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/16/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
02/16/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/23/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
02/23/24	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
02/28/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
02/28/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/01/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/01/24	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/04/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/04/24	(H)	Heard & Held
03/04/24	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/11/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/11/24	(H)	Heard & Held
03/11/24	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/18/24	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/18/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --

03/20/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 290

SHORT TITLE: CERT. OF FITNESS: PLUMBERS/ELECTRICIANS

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/24/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
01/24/24 (H) L&C, FIN  
02/19/24 (H) L&C AT 4:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/19/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
02/21/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/21/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
02/26/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/26/24 (H) Heard & Held  
02/26/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)  
03/04/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
03/04/24 (H) Heard & Held  
03/04/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)  
03/20/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 285

SHORT TITLE: MAMMOGRAMS: INSURANCE COVERAGE

SPONSOR(s): FIELDS

01/22/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
01/22/24 (H) HSS, FIN  
01/29/24 (H) L&C REFERRAL ADDED AFTER HSS  
01/29/24 (H) BILL REPRINTED  
02/14/24 (H) HSS REFERRAL MOVED TO AFTER L&C  
02/21/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/21/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
02/28/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/28/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
03/04/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
03/04/24 (H) Heard & Held  
03/04/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)  
03/13/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
03/13/24 (H) Heard & Held  
03/13/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)  
03/20/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 218

SHORT TITLE: FIREFIGHTER WORKERS COMP REQUIREMENTS

SPONSOR(s): SADDLER

01/16/24 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/24  
01/16/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

01/16/24 (H) L&C  
02/28/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
02/28/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
03/01/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
03/01/24 (H) Heard & Held  
03/01/24 (H) MINUTE (L&C)  
03/20/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

JOHN DELLACROCE, Former Assistant Chief  
Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department  
Chugiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave testimony on HB 218.

ADONIS BUZARD, Staff  
Representative Dan Saddler  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** On behalf of Representative Saddler, prime sponsor, answered committee member's questions on HB 218.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:18:37 PM](#)

**CHAIR JESSE SUMNER** called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:18 p.m. Representatives Prax, Ruffridge, Saddler, Wright, Carrick, Fields, and Sumner were present at the call to order.

#### **HB 203-PAYMENT OF WAGES; PAYROLL CARD ACCOUNT**

[3:19:29 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 203, "An Act relating to wage payments."

[3:19:39 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report HB 203 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 203 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

#### **HB 290-CERT. OF FITNESS: PLUMBERS/ELECTRICIANS**

[3:20:02 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HB 290 HOUSE BILL NO. 290, "An Act relating to the issuance of certificates of fitness for plumbers and electricians; relating to fees for certificates of fitness for plumbers and electricians; and providing for an effective date."

[3:20:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report HB 290 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 290 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

**HB 285-MAMMOGRAMS: INSURANCE COVERAGE**

[3:20:33 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HB 285 HOUSE BILL NO. 285, "An Act relating to insurance; relating to mammograms; and providing for an effective date."

[3:20:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report HB 285 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 285 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

**HB 218-FIREFIGHTER WORKERS COMP REQUIREMENTS**

[3:21:05 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the final order of business would be HB 218 HOUSE BILL NO. 218, "An Act relating to coverage for disability from diseases for certain firefighters; and providing for an effective date."

[3:21:15 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER opened public testimony on HB 218.

[3:21:3 PM](#)

JOHN DELLACROCE, Former Assistant Chief, Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department, gave testimony on HB 218. He said that HB 218 would

affect all fire departments in Alaska. He said reducing the current requirement for benefits from seven years to three years would improve retention. He concluded his testimony by adding that reducing the number of medical exams to one upon entry and one every five years would be more palatable for small departments with financial constraints.

[3:23:01 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked Mr. Dellacroce if he has checked his specific city's policy on workers' compensation to see if the city would sell the fire department an insurance policy, if [Mr. Dellarcore] were self-insured.

MR. DELLACROCE answered that his fire department has not checked with its provider regarding insurance premiums.

[3:23:54 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked for clarification relating to the language change on page 2, line 16, asking the difference between becoming a firefighter and becoming a certified fire fighter.

[3:24:50 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER, after ascertaining there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 218.

[3:24:56 PM](#)

ADONIS BUZARD, Staff, Representative Dan Saddler, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Saddler, prime sponsor of , said he did not have an answer to Representative Field's question at this time and would follow up later.

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS said he likes the language that reduces required exams but asked for more explanation regarding the frequency of exams proposed in the bill.

[3:26:35 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER said the intent of HB 218 is to provide more flexibility so that coverage and workers' compensation aren't lost because of a time requirement.

[3:26:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX said he would like to hear from insurance carriers about the financial risk for their companies. He said that if a carrier cannot determine the risk, it could refuse to provide coverage. He asked if it is known how HB 218 would affect coverage.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER answered that the risk doesn't change, and he said he could confirm with insurance companies about the question of coverage.

[3:28:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE gave his understanding of Representative Prax' question that he is speaking not of the risk to the fire fighter but the risk to the insurance company and whether it would have to pay out benefits more frequently if HB 218 were to become law.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX confirmed that's correct.

[3:29:31 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER said he would follow up with Representative Fields about the current credentialing organizations and processes.

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked Representative Saddler if someone would be delayed in working as a firefighter if they haven't yet become certified.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER responded that while there might be a gap between certification and employment, the examinations are spaced out accordingly to the certification programs.

[HB 218 was held over.]

[3:31:13 PM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee was recessed at 3:31 p.m. to a call of the chair. [The meeting never reconvened.]