

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 20, 2023

3:07 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Laddie Shaw, Chair  
Representative Stanley Wright, Vice Chair  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative Jamie Allard  
Representative Jennie Armstrong  
Representative Andi Story

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Ben Carpenter

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Lieutenant Governor Successor

- Jason Brune - Anchorage

Alaska Police Standards Council

- Rebecca Hamon - King Salmon  
- Daniel Carothers - Juneau  
- Stephen Dutra - North Pole

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 38

"An Act establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications."

- MOVED SB 38 OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 38

SHORT TITLE: INTERFERENCE WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) WILSON

01/18/23 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/13/23

01/18/23 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 01/18/23 (S) JUD  
 01/23/23 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
 01/23/23 (S) Heard & Held  
 01/23/23 (S) MINUTE(JUD)  
 01/30/23 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
 01/30/23 (S) Moved SB 38 Out of Committee  
 01/30/23 (S) MINUTE(JUD)  
 02/01/23 (S) JUD RPT 3DP 2NR  
 02/01/23 (S) DP: CLAMAN, GIESSEL, KAUFMAN  
 02/01/23 (S) NR: TOBIN, KIEHL  
 02/01/23 (S) FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER JUD  
 02/08/23 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
 02/08/23 (S) Heard & Held  
 02/08/23 (S) MINUTE(FIN)  
 03/07/23 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
 03/07/23 (S) Moved SB 38 Out of Committee  
 03/07/23 (S) MINUTE(FIN)  
 03/13/23 (S) FIN RPT 3DP 1NR  
 03/13/23 (S) DP: OLSON, WILSON, MERRICK  
 03/13/23 (S) NR: KIEHL  
 03/17/23 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)  
 03/17/23 (S) VERSION: SB 38  
 03/20/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 03/20/23 (H) STA  
 04/06/23 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
 04/06/23 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
 04/13/23 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
 04/13/23 (H) Heard & Held  
 04/13/23 (H) MINUTE(STA)  
 04/20/23 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JASON BRUNE, Commissioner, Appointee  
 Department of Environmental Conservation  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to be the lieutenant governor's successor.

DANIEL CAROTHERS, Appointee  
 Alaska Police Standards Council  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council.

STEPHEN DUTRA, Appointee

Alaska Police Standards Council  
North Pole, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council.

REBECCA HAMON, Appointee  
Alaska Police Standards Council  
Dillingham, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:07:27 PM](#)

**CHAIR LADDIE SHAW** called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. Representatives C. Johnson, Allard, Armstrong, Story, Wright, and Shaw were present at the call to order.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S):**  
**Lieutenant Governor Successor**  
**Alaska Police Standards Council**

[3:08:21 PM](#)

CHAIR SHAW announced that the first order of business would be the confirmation hearing for the lieutenant governor's successor.

[3:08:51 PM](#)

JASON BRUNE, Commissioner, Appointee, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), informed the committee that he has served on the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC) board of directors, the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation (APFC) board of trustees, and a number of other positions. He said that he is prepared to take the position [of lieutenant governor] and continue to serve Alaskans. He expressed honor at being able to do so.

[3:10:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY asked how his experience would help oversee elections if he had to step into the lieutenant governor's role.

COMMISSIONER BRUNE stated that as head of DEC for the state, it is important to follow the statutes and regulations that were put in place to ensure predictability. He said that the same would be true of the elections process. Additionally, he expressed the belief that bias should not be brought into the oversight of elections. He reiterated that he would follow Alaska Statutes and regulations closely and consult with the Department of Law (DOL) when appropriate.

[3:13:02 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY recalled that former Lieutenant Governor Kevin Meyer had authorized several hand counts to ensure public confidence in the elections at a critical time in the state. She asked how the public could be reassured and elections could be safeguarded for security, safety, and accuracy.

COMMISSIONER BRUNE shared his belief that nothing was more important in a representative democracy than public confidence in the fairness of the elections process. When necessary, he said, he would authorize hand counts to ensure a fair and accurate [election process].

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CHAIR SHAW opened public testimony on Commissioner Brune. After ascertaining that there was no one who wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

[3:16:10 PM](#)

DANIEL CAROTHERS, Appointee, Alaska Police Standards Council, shared an overview of his personal background and work history, highlighting his contract work for the Department of Corrections (DOC). He expressed honor that the committee was considering his appointment.

[3:18:11 PM](#)

STEPHEN DUTRA, Appointee, Alaska Police Standards Council, shared an overview of his personal background and work history, highlighting his 27 years of experience in law enforcement, 11 of which he served as the chief of police. Additionally, he informed the committee that he was the president of the Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police (AACOP) and a board member of the Alaska Police Officers Association. He noted that this was his third appointment to the Alaska Police Standards Council,

emphasizing the importance of serving in a capacity in which he could affect positive change.

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REPRESENTATIVE STORY pointed out that a duty of the council would be to develop, monitor, and revise law enforcement training and training requirements. She asked what could be done to improve officer training to ensure the best response.

MR. CAROTHERS opined that more training would be better than less, adding that standards should not be lowered to increase eligibility for the purposes of recruitment and retention issues. Further, he suggested the review of new training standards.

3:23:14 PM

MR. DUTRA discussed the critical importance of the council's ability to implement statewide training requirements, which would be before the council for consideration at the next meeting. He explained that if the statewide requirements were not met, the council could suspend a person's certificate. He indicated that currently society is requiring more training, especially in specific areas, such as crisis intervention training (CIT), de-escalation, cultural diversity, and more. He expressed motivation at finishing this work and making the council stronger.

3:24:36 PM

REBECCA HAMON, Appointee, Alaska Police Standards Council, shared an overview of her personal background and work experience. She highlighted her work for the Safe and Fear-Free Environment. She also pointed out she has been a legal advocate, working closely with law enforcement. She informed the committee that she has served on the Alaska Police Standards Council continuously since 2011. She noted that she was an advocate for making training equally available to rural police departments and making high-quality services more available across the state. Further, she emphasized the importance of trauma-informed training that was sensitive to mental and behavioral health issues. She suggested that this is needed in Alaska's system. She suggested implementing this type of training through a team approach by incorporating behavioral health and peer support response teams.

[3:28:08 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY asked whether there are training requirements for working with school districts and risk-assessments for school safety.

MR. CAROTHERS, concerning criteria for the council, expressed uncertainty regarding anything about school enforcement in the Alaska Administrative Code.

MR. DUTRA pointed out that he has put together a taskforce to unite local agencies on the issue [of active shooter response]. He opined that, regardless of whether it was an issue concerning the council, a statewide effort should be made to ensure school safety.

MS. HAMON shared her understanding that although there is no specific training [on school safety], many communities are taking up the topic in different ways and struggling to address it. In rural areas, she said, teaching classes on healthy relationships and violence prevention have utilized a team approach. She stated that positive relationships are being built by bringing officers into schools.

[3:32:37 PM](#)

CHAIR SHAW described the council as having an ever-changing environment, as it is continuously being upgraded, such as updating training for the 54 police departments across the state. He stated that this encompasses the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Alaska State Troopers. He suggested that in-service training would be essential to keep up with the use-of-force and behavioral and mental health issues. He highlighted the cultural relevance of use-of-force issues in today's headlines and shared a personal anecdote. He opened public testimony on the appointees to the Alaska Police Standards Council. After ascertaining that there was no one who wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

[3:35:16 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WRIGHT moved to advance the confirmations of Jason Brune, appointed as the lieutenant governor's successor, and Daniel Carothers, Stephen Dutra, and Rebecca Hamon, appointees to the Alaska Police Standards Council, to the joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmations were advanced.

CHAIR SHAW reminded members that signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions would in no way reflect individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees, and the nominations would merely be forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

[3:36:17 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:36 p.m. to 3:38 p.m.

**SB 38-INTERFERENCE WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES**

[3:38:52 PM](#)

CHAIR SHAW announced that the final order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 38, "An Act establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications."

[3:39:48 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WRIGHT moved to report SB 38 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SB 38 was reported from the House State Affairs Standing Committee. He authorized Legislative Legal Services to make any necessary technical and conforming changes.

[3:40:43 PM](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.