

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

April 18, 2024

1:32 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Forrest Dunbar, Chair
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson
Senator Jesse Bjorkman
Senator Cathy Giessel

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Donald Olson, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 279 (CRA) AM
"An Act relating to the Local Boundary Commission; and providing
for an effective date."

- MOVED SCS CSHB 279 (CRA) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 279

SHORT TITLE: LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) CRONK

01/18/24	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/24	(H)	CRA
01/30/24	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
01/30/24	(H)	Heard & Held
01/30/24	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
02/13/24	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/13/24	(H)	Heard & Held
02/13/24	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
02/20/24	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/20/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/22/24	(H)	CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/22/24	(H)	Moved CSHB 279 (CRA) Out of Committee
02/22/24	(H)	MINUTE (CRA)
02/23/24	(H)	CRA RPT CS (CRA) 3DP 3NR
02/23/24	(H)	DP: BAKER, HIMSCHOOT, RUFFRIDGE
02/23/24	(H)	NR: MEARS, MCCABE, MCCORMICK

03/08/24 (H) TECHNICAL SESSION 3/8 - ON 3/11
CALENDAR
03/11/24 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
03/11/24 (H) VERSION: CSHB 279(CRA) AM
03/12/24 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/12/24 (S) CRA
03/19/24 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/19/24 (S) Heard & Held
03/19/24 (S) MINUTE(CRA)
04/16/24 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
04/16/24 (S) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
04/18/24 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

WITNESS REGISTER

ARIELLE WIGGIN, Staff
Senator Forrest Dunbar
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the summary of changes on HB 279.

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK, District 36
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered closing remarks on HB 279.

DAVE STANCLIFF, Staff
Representative Mike Cronk
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered closing remarks on HB 279.

ACTION NARRATIVE

1:32:47 PM

CHAIR FORREST DUNBAR called the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gray-Jackson, Bjorkman, Giessel, and Chair Dunbar.

HB 279-LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

1:33:18 PM

CHAIR DUNBAR announced the consideration of CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 279(CRA) am "An Act relating to the Local Boundary Commission; and providing for an effective date."

This is the second hearing of HB 279 in the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee. The intent is to adopt a Senate committee substitute (CS) and look to the will of the committee.

[1:33:50 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR solicited a motion.

[1:33:53 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL moved to adopt the Senate committee substitute (SCS) for CSHB 279, work order 33-LS1177\S, as the working document.

[1:34:04 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR objected for purposes of discussion. He invited Ms. Wiggin to explain the summary of changes.

[1:34:18 PM](#)

ARIELLE WIGGIN, Staff, Senator Forrest Dunbar, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented the summary of changes on HB 279. She said the following changes were made to Section 1:

- Page 1, [line 7]

The number of seats on the Local Boundary Commission (LBC) changes from 5 to 6 members.

- Page 1, line 8

The term changes from a five-year to a six-year term.

- Page 1, lines 9 - 10

Specifies that one member shall be appointed from the unorganized borough.

MS. WIGGIN said that, after hearing from the LBC, these changes were made to promote the most participation and the most representation. She said that the goal of HB 279 is to improve the representation in unorganized boroughs, and hearing from the LBC that generally recruitment for this type of position is challenging and arduous. It was requested that one seat be kept open to promote participation of those who are interested, able and qualified while opening a way for individuals, specifically from the unorganized borough, to participate.

[1:35:34 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR noted that the Senate CS preserves the change allowing the Commission to select its own chair rather than the governor.

[1:35:55 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL said she appreciated that lines 12 and 13 requires the members from each judicial district "maintain a principal place of abode and be registered to vote in a precinct in that district."

CHAIR DUNBAR expressed his belief that was included in the version that came over from the House.

[1:36:23 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR removed his objection. He found no further objection and SCS CSHB 279 was adopted as the working document.

[1:36:40 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR invited Representative Cronk and his staff to make closing remarks.

[1:36:54 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK, District 36, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, offered closing remarks on HB 279. He said he appreciates that the committee heard HB 279 and opined it is a fair compromise.

[1:37:16 PM](#)

DAVE STANCLIFF, Staff, Representative Mike Cronk, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, offered closing remarks on HB 279, stating it appears the compromise will work. HB 79 had unanimous support when it left the House and will muster what it takes to pass upon its return.

[1:37:56 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR solicited the will of the committee.

[1:37:59 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL moved to report SCS CSHB 279, work order 33-LS1177\S, from committee with individual recommendations and attached zero fiscal note(s).

[1:38:24 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR found no objection and SCS CSHB 279(CRA) was reported from the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee.

[1:38:53 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Dunbar adjourned the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting at 1:38 p.m.