

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

April 23, 2024

1:32 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Donald Olson, Vice Chair
Senator Cathy Giessel

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13

Recognizing and commending the National Conference of State Legislatures on its 50th anniversary in 2025.

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 337

"An Act establishing 4-H Day."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HCR 13

SHORT TITLE: RECOGNIZING NCSL ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) SADDLER

02/20/24	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/20/24	(H)	STA
03/26/24	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/26/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
04/04/24	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/04/24	(H)	Moved HCR 13 Out of Committee
04/04/24	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
04/05/24	(H)	STA RPT 5DP 1DNP
04/05/24	(H)	DP: WRIGHT, CARRICK, STORY, CARPENTER, SHAW
04/05/24	(H)	DNP: ALLARD

04/09/24 (H) STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/09/24 (H) -- Rescheduled to 04/11/24 --
04/12/24 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
04/12/24 (H) VERSION: HCR 13
04/15/24 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/15/24 (S) CRA
04/23/24 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: HB 337

SHORT TITLE: ESTABLISHING 4-H DAY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MEARS

02/20/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/20/24 (H) CRA
03/28/24 (H) CRA RPT 5DP 1NR
03/28/24 (H) DP: HIMSCHOOT, MCKAY, BAKER, MEARS,
MCCORMICK
03/28/24 (H) NR: MCCABE
03/28/24 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/28/24 (H) Moved HB 337 Out of Committee
03/28/24 (H) MINUTE(CRA)
04/17/24 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
04/17/24 (H) VERSION: HB 337
04/19/24 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/19/24 (S) CRA
04/23/24 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER, District 24
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HCR 13.

MELODIE WILTERDINK, Staff
Representative Dan Saddler
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered testimony in support of HCR 13 during the discussion of the resolution.

REPRESENTATIVE DONNA MEARS, District 21
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 337.

MICHAELLA ANDERSON, 4-H Alumni

Club Leader

Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave invited testimony in support of HB 337.

SELAH DENSMORE, representing self

Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 337.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:32:30 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, and Chair Dunbar.

HCR 13-RECOGNIZING NCSL ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

[1:33:44 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR announced the consideration of HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13 Recognizing and commending the National Conference of State Legislatures on its 50th anniversary in 2025.

This is the introductory hearing of HCR 13. The Senate companion resolution, SCR 8, was heard previously. The intention is to hear a brief introduction of the resolution.

[1:34:06 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR invited the sponsor to introduce HCR 13.

[1:34:16 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER, District 24, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, Sponsor of HCR 13. He gave an overview of the resolution and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). He stated HCR 13 acknowledges and celebrates the 50th anniversary of NCSL. The NCSL is a primary voice for state legislatures and serves many functions, including:

- National voice for state legislatures
- Legislator and staff development training
- Advocating with the federal government on behalf of state issues
- Fostering cooperation among state legislatures
- Conducting public policy research and answering research requests

- Repository for update information on public policy that affects states and state legislatures.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER stated he has participated proudly and willingly in NCSL's programs that develop policy statements. He said by doing this he advanced Alaska's interest in land management, resources development and other issues in sympathy with western states. He stated he is proud to have advanced some of Alaska's interests at the national level. In the last four years between 16 and 27 legislators have participated in NCSL events either in person or online. In the last 3 years NCSL has fielded 175 research requests from Alaska legislators and staff. NCSL has played an important role in advocating for state legislatures. HCR 13 commends NCSL.

[1:36:30 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked the sponsor for bringing HCR 13 forward. She said NCSL is an amazing organization, and she is glad to participate in its Budget and Revenue Committee.

[1:36:49 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR invited Ms. Wilterdink to testify on the resolution.

[1:37:10 PM](#)

MELODIE WILTERDINK, Staff, Representative Dan Saddler, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, offered testimony in support of HCR 13. She stated that she has availed herself of NCSL programs and has received helpful answers to many research requests.

[1:37:53 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR held HCR 13 in committee.

[1:38:15 PM](#)

At ease

HB 337-ESTABLISHING 4-H DAY

[1:39:51 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of HOUSE BILL NO. 337 "An Act establishing 4-H Day."

This is the first hearing of HB 337 in the Senate. The intention is to hear an introduction of the bill, invited testimony, and public testimony.

[1:40:11 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR invited the sponsor to introduce the bill.

[1:40:19 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DONNA MEARS, District 21, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of HB 337, stated that she is honored to present this bill to establish the first Wednesday in October as 4-H Day in Alaska. She said 4-H has been a part of her life from a young age and helped prepare her for service in the legislature. Many who work in the Capitol have connections to 4-H. In addition to its youth and governance programs and projects, produce, and livestock shown at the Alaska State Fair, students can join local 4-H clubs. 4-H plays a pivotal role in cultivating a deep appreciation for Alaska's unique agricultural heritage and natural resources. By engaging in various 4-H programs, participants develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills essential for success in any endeavor they pursue. In recognizing 4-H Day, volunteers, educators, and supporters are honored for making the club possible. Recognizing the impact of 4-H sends a strong message of support and encouragement to the young individuals of Alaska and underscores the state's commitment to youth and community investment. She urged the committee to join her in championing the passage of HCR 13.

[1:43:31 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR announced invited testimony on HB 337.

[1:43:46 PM](#)

MICHAELLA ANDERSON, 4-H Alumni, Club Leader, Fairbanks, Alaska, gave invited testimony in support of HB 337. She described her involvement in 4-H from kindergarten through leadership positions. She further explained how it helps youth thrive and the reasonable cost of membership. National 4-H Week is the first week of October and showcases the benefits of the club. She highlighted that 4-H Day, would occur within the week of national recognition if HB 337 passes.

[1:46:08 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR asked about the size and scale of 4-H membership in Fairbanks.

[1:46:20 PM](#)

MS. ANDERSON replied that 4-H has upwards of 1,000 youth in the Fairbanks and Tanana area.

[1:46:58 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR opened public testimony on HB 337.

[1:47:58 PM](#)

SELAH DENSMORE, representing self, Palmer, Alaska, testified in support of HB 337. She stated that as a member of 4-H for four years, it has helped her grow as a teenager. She shared that 4-H stands for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. It is a program that helps children grow into maturity. Youth learn responsibility by caring for animals and public speaking through presentations. She mentioned that a group of youth recently visited the Capitol to learn about government.

[1:49:36 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR closed public testimony on HB 337.

[1:49:47 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS expressed gratitude for the 4-H program.

[1:50:19 PM](#)

CHAIR DUNBAR held HB 337 in committee.

[1:50:37 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Dunbar adjourned the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting at 1:50 p.m.