

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
March 28, 2023  
9:10 a.m.

[9:10:21 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Olson called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair  
Senator Donny Olson, Co-Chair  
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair  
Senator Click Bishop  
Senator Jesse Kiehl  
Senator Kelly Merrick  
Senator David Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Ella Adkinson, Staff, Senator Jesse Kiehl; Lauree Morton, Advocacy Initiatives Director, Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Ali Pedershoare, Acting Director, Division of Shared Services, Department of Administration; Tony Newman, Director, Senior and Disabilities Services, Department of Health; Kim Champney, Director, Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities; Representative Bryce Edgmon, Sponsor; Laib Allensworth, Staff, Representative Bryce Edgmon.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Kirt Stage-Harvey, Alaska Peace Officers Association, Juneau; Pamela Samash, Alaska Commission on Aging, Nenana; Robert Nave, Program Manager, Division of Healthcare Services, Department of Health, Anchorage; Michele Girault, Executive Director, Hope Community Resources, Anchorage; Jamie Kokoszka, Program Coordinator, Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Palmer; Pamela Samash,

Alaska Commission on Aging, Nenana; Michael Jeffery, Self, Utqiagvik; Marge Stoneking, Advocacy Director, AARP, Anchorage; Tim Sandstrom, COO, Alaska Energy Authority, Anchorage; Curtis Thayer, Executive Director, Alaska Energy Authority, Anchorage; Michael Rovito, Deputy Director, Alaska Power Association, Anchorage.

SUMMARY

SB 12 ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

SB 12 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

SB 57 ADULT HOME CARE; MED ASSISTANCE

SB 57 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 62 RENEWABLE ENERGY GRANT FUND

HB 62 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#sb12

SENATE BILL NO. 12

"An Act relating to confidentiality of information; relating to the duties of the Department of Administration; creating an address confidentiality program; and providing for an effective date."

[9:11:54 AM](#)

SENATOR JESSE KIEHL, SPONSOR, introduced the legislation. He stated the bill created an address protection program. He remarked that Alaska was the only state that did not have an address protection program.

[9:15:40 AM](#)

ELLA ADKINSON, STAFF, SENATOR JESSE KIEHL, discussed the Sectional Analysis (copy on file):

Sec. 1: Puts the program in the Department of Administration.

Sec. 2: Creates the program.

(b) requires a Post Office Box as a substitute mailing address for enrollees and instructs the department to forward mail to participants. It charges the department with protecting confidentiality and requires regulations to govern enrollment and withdrawal.

(c) describes eligible participants as people sheltered by a protective order or qualifies by other department standards, along with their parents, guardians, children, and household members. It also admits peace officers and correctional officers.

(d) requires state and municipal agencies to accept the P.O. Box.

(e) describes the eligibility period.

(f) forbids the department from charging a fee.

(g) allows access to confidential addresses subject to a search warrant.

(h) establishes penalties for unlawfully revealing a protected individual's address.

(i) defines certain terms.

Sec. 3: Establishes a transition period for the department to adopt regulations to implement the program.

Sec. 4: Lets the department begin its regulation process immediately. Sec. 5: Sets an effective date of Jan. 1, 2024 for the rest of the bill.

Senator Wilson wondered about the five year requirement before renewing the program.

Senator Kiehl replied that it was a standard provision that provided an extensive period of protection, at the end of which an enrollee can decide whether to remain in the program.

Senator Wilson asked whether the enrollee would then remain in the program indefinitely.

Senator Kiehl replied in the affirmative.

Senator Wilson wondered why there was not a fee assigned for the peace officers on active duty.

Senator Kiehl replied that it followed standard practice, and was not aware of any state that charged a fee for the service.

Co-Chair Olson queried the process to remove oneself from the list.

Senator Kiehl replied that the department would provide the process by regulation.

Co-Chair Olson wondered how successful the program had been in getting to the end goal in other states.

Senator Kiehl replied that generally, participants in other states were satisfied with their involvement in the program.

Senator Merrick wondered who might unlawfully reveal a protected individual's address.

Senator Kiehl stated that the bill was written to cover most areas where it might happen.

[9:21:23 AM](#)

LAUREE MORTON, ADVOCACY INITIATIVES DIRECTOR, ALASKA NETWORK ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT, spoke in support of the bill. She shared some history of the program.

Co-Chair Olson wondered how the bill would protect the children.

Ms. Morton replied that the victim's children would also be enrolled in the program.

Senator Kiehl agreed that the household members would be included in the program.

[9:25:46 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson wondered what would happen if the parent died, and the child wanted to reconnect.

Senator Kiehl replied that it would probably fall under a child custody issue.

[9:26:53 AM](#)

KIRT STAGE-HARVEY, ALASKA PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION, JUNEAU (via teleconference), spoke in support of the legislation.

[9:29:28 AM](#)

ALI PEDERSHOARE, ACTING DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF SHARED SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, introduced herself. She explained the fiscal note.

Co-Chair Olson queried the number of anticipated participants.

Ms. Pedershoare replied that the model in the bill following Arizona's modeling.

Co-Chair Olson wondered how many participants were in Arizona's program.

Ms. Pedershoare replied that Arizona currently had 2072 participants.

[9:31:39 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:32:09 AM](#)

RECONVENED

[9:32:19 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson OPENED public testimony.

[9:33:01 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:33:30 AM](#)

RECONVENED

[9:33:49 AM](#)

PAMELA SAMASH, ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING, NENANA (via teleconference), testified in support of the legislation. She shared a story about stalking within her family.

[9:36:35 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson CLOSED public testimony.

Senator Wilson wondered how the municipal property searches would work within the legislation.

Senator Kiehl replied that the public records request would return with the state address.

Senator Wilson stressed that an internet search would show the property owner.

Senator Kiehl responded that many municipalities would remove a person's name from a property owner search. He agreed that it would be a good idea to work with municipalities. He remarked that the person might need to create a trust to own their property.

Senator Wilson looked at Section 2. He wondered what department was referenced, and whether it referred to a long-term or short-term protective order.

Senator Kiehl replied that either protective order could be applied, and the department was the Department of Administration (DOA).

[9:40:42 AM](#)

Senator Wilson wondered whether there could be an examination of long-term versus short-term protective orders. He also asked whether there could be involvement with the Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Senator Kiehl replied that he had worked with DPS, and settled on DOA because of the Central Mail Services.

Ms. Adkison furthered that expanding the regulation aside from protective orders, such as referrals, but only whether the department could take on more victims.

Senator Wilson stressed that DOA did not seem the appropriate department to set the standards for the legislation.

SB 12 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

9:43:10 AM

AT EASE

9:45:25 AM

RECONVENED

#sb57

SENATE BILL NO. 57

"An Act relating to medical assistance for recipients of Medicaid waivers; establishing an adult care home license and procedures; providing for the transition of individuals from foster care to adult home care settings; and providing for an effective date."

9:45:58 AM

TONY NEWMAN, DIRECTOR, SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, discussed the presentation, "State of Alaska Department of Health" (copy on file). He looked at slide 2, "Senior and Disabilities Services - Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers":

- Allow people with disabilities and seniors to remain in their homes or local community settings when they would otherwise need institutional care
- Home and Community Based Waivers receive a 50% Federal and 50% General Fund Match
- Alaska provides five home and community-based waivers:
  - Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities waiver (serving about 2,000 people)
  - Alaskans Living Independently waiver (2,200 people)
  - Children with Complex Medical Conditions waiver (225 people)
  - Adults with Physical & Developmental Disabilities waiver (144 people)
  - Individualized Supports waiver (500 people)

Mr. Newman looked at slide 3, "Services available under Alaska's Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waivers":

- Residential Habilitation (Group Home, Family Home Habilitation)
- In-Home Supports
- Supported Living
- Day Habilitation

- Adult Day Services
- Respite
- Supported Employment
- Transportation
- Environmental Modifications
- Meals
- Specialized Medical Equipment
- Nursing Oversight
- Intensive Active Treatment
- Specialized Private Duty Nursing

Mr. Newman pointed to slide 4, "Options for 24/7 residential care for people on Medicaid home and community-based waivers":

Assisted Living Home

Available for four waivers

Alaskans Living Independently (ALI)

Alaskans with Physical and Developmental Disabilities (APDD)

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

Children with Complex Medical Conditions (CCMC)

Number of residents only limited by size of facility

Multiple administrative requirements

Varying staffing patterns possible

Adult Care Home (proposed)

Available for four waivers:

Alaskans Living Independently (ALI)

Adults with Physical and Developmental Disabilities (APDD)

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

Children with Complex Medical Conditions (CCMC)

1 to 2 residents

Less administrative requirements

Live-in caregiver

[9:52:25 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson wondered how many other states had a similar model, and how successful were those states.

Mr. Newman replied that many states had the model, but most called the program different names. He stated that it was determined that it was a positive situation.

Senator Kiehl surmised that the bill did not limit to people aging out of the foster care system.

Mr. Newman agreed.

Senator Kiehl wondered whether it was a new form of care, or filling a limited gap.

Mr. Newman replied that the goal was for two people to live together, but it allowed for up to three people.

Senator Kiehl asked for a definition of "unusual circumstances."

Mr. Newman replied that the situation would be for three disabled people to want to stay together.

[9:55:11 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson wondered whether there was an age limit.

Mr. Newman replied that any qualified individual over 18 was eligible for the service.

Senator Kiehl wondered who would draft the plan of care.

Mr. Newman replied that the plan of care was set up by the recipient with help from a care coordinator and approved by the department.

Senator Kiehl asked where the type of care home would have an exemption.

Mr. Newman responded that Section 4 would add it to the setting list.

Senator Kiehl noted that the department had recently expanded its definition of "assisted living home" for a number of facilities, so he hoped that it would not take away care.

Co-Chair Olson queried the difficulty in receiving a license.

Mr. Newman replied that Mr. Nave would be able to reply to that question.

[9:57:48 AM](#)

ROBERT NAVE, PROGRAM MANAGER, DIVISION OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), explained that the process to obtain a license was not very cumbersome for providers.

Co-Chair Olson queried the difficulty for rural residents to obtain a license.

Mr. Nave stated that the objective for the bill was to relieve that difficulty.

Mr. Newman agreed.

[10:00:08 AM](#)

Mr. Newman provided an overview of the fiscal notes.

Senator Bishop wondered why the positions could not be located in Anchorage.

Mr. Newman replied that they could be in Juneau or Fairbanks.

[10:03:19 AM](#)

Co-Chair Olson OPENED public testimony.

[10:03:48 AM](#)

MICHELE GIRAULT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HOPE COMMUNITY RESOURCES, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the bill.

[10:05:52 AM](#)

JAMIE KOKOSZKA, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION, PALMER (via teleconference), testified in support of the legislation.

[10:08:46 AM](#)

Mr. Nave stated that he did not need to testify.

[10:09:02 AM](#)

PAMELA SAMASH, ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING, NENANA (via teleconference), spoke in support of the bill.

[10:10:56 AM](#)

MICHAEL JEFFERY, SELF, UTQIAGVIK (via teleconference), testified in support of the bill.

[10:13:35 AM](#)

MARGE STONEKING, ADVOCACY DIRECTOR, AARP, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the legislation.

[10:16:16 AM](#)

KIM CHAMPNEY, DIRECTOR, ALASKA ASSOCIATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, spoke in support of the bill.

Mr. Newman thanked the committee for hearing the bill.

Senator Merrick wondered whether people had to pay to become licensed as an assisted living home.

Mr. Newman replied that there was a small license fee, and the bill proposed to eliminate that license fee.

[10:20:18 AM](#)

Senator Kiehl queried the definition of "business site" in Section 5.

Mr. Newman agreed to provide that information.

Mr. Nave replied that there was requirement that stated that no other business could be run from the home other than the assisted living business, without the approval of the department.

SB 57 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#hb62

HOUSE BILL NO. 62

"An Act relating to the renewable energy grant fund and recommendation program; and providing for an effective date."

[10:22:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BRYCE EDGMON, SPONSOR, explained the legislation.

[10:24:44 AM](#)

LAIB ALLENSWORTH, STAFF, REPRESENTATIVE BRYCE EDGMON, discussed the Sectional Analysis (copy on file):

Sec 1. - Amends Section 5, Ch. 31, SLA 2008, as previously amended, to extend the repeal date of the fund to June 30, 2033.

Sec 2. - Makes the sunset extension retroactive to June 30, 2023 if the bill takes effect after the Fund sunsets on that date.

Sec 3. - Establishes an immediate effective date under AS 01.10.070(c).

[10:25:29 AM](#)

TIM SANDSTROM, COO, ALASKA ENERGY AUTHORITY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), discussed the fiscal note.

Co-Chair Olson wondered whether there were no anticipated funding needed in future years.

Mr. Sandstrom replied that the expectation was outlined as an average.

Co-Chair Stedman wondered whether there was a review of the old grants to see the impact and benefit to the meter.

Representative Edgmon replied that in the affirmative.

Co-Chair Stedman hoped that the benchmarks of diesel usage would be used in the project.

Representative Edgmon agreed.

[10:30:36 AM](#)

Senator Merrick noted that the spreadsheet, and wondered whether the unspent money would be returned to the Renewable Energy Fund.

Mr. Allensworth deferred to Mr. Sandstrom.

Mr. Sandstrom stated that it went back to the fund.

[10:31:54 AM](#)

CURTIS THAYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA ENERGY AUTHORITY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), explained how that unspent money would be returned to the fund.

Mr. Sandstrom stated that he had no further testimony.

[10:33:31 AM](#)

MICHAEL ROVITO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ALASKA POWER ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the bill.

Co-Chair Olson OPENED and CLOSED public testimony.

[10:35:30 AM](#)

Senator Bishop wanted assurance that all available federal dollars had been explored to leverage the state dollars.

HB 62 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#

ADJOURNMENT

[10:36:49 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.