

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 18, 2024

1:47 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Matt Claman, Chair  
Senator Jesse Kiehl, Vice Chair  
Senator James Kaufman

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Cathy Giessel  
Senator Löki Tobin

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 17

"An Act relating to political contributions; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 17(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

State Board of Parole  
Richard Larson - Wasilla

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 134

"An Act relating to insurance; relating to insurance data security; relating to mammograms; amending Rule 26, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure, and Rules 402 and 501, Alaska Rules of Evidence; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING RESCHEDULED TO 3/20/24

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 17  
SHORT TITLE: CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS  
SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) KAWASAKI

01/18/23           (S)           PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/23

01/18/23	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/23	(S)	STA, JUD
04/27/23	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
04/27/23	(S)	Heard & Held
04/27/23	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
05/06/23	(S)	STA AT 9:00 AM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
05/06/23	(S)	Moved SB 17 Out of Committee
05/06/23	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
05/08/23	(S)	STA RPT 2DP 1NR
05/08/23	(S)	DP: KAWASAKI, WIELECHOWSKI
05/08/23	(S)	NR: BJORKMAN
01/19/24	(S)	JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
01/19/24	(S)	Heard & Held
01/19/24	(S)	MINUTE(JUD)
03/11/24	(S)	JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/11/24	(S)	Heard & Held
03/11/24	(S)	MINUTE(JUD)
03/18/24	(S)	JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

**WITNESS REGISTER**

RICHARD "OLE" LARSON, Appointee  
 State Board of Parole  
 Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as a governor's appointee to the State Board of Parole.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

1:47:12 PM

**CHAIR MATT CLAMAN** called the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:47 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Kiehl, Kaufman, and Chair Claman.

**SB 17-CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**

1:47:40 PM

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 17 "An Act relating to political contributions; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR CLAMAN said that this is the third hearing of SB 17 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. A committee substitute (CS) was adopted as the working document at the previous hearing. The intention is to seek the will of the committee to move CSSB 17 from the Senate Judiciary Committee today.

[1:48:01 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no closing comments or committee questions.

[1:48:13 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[1:48:15 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report CSSB 17, work order 33-LS0183\B, from committee with individual recommendations [and attached zero fiscal note].

[1:48:28 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN [found no objection and] CSSB 17(JUD) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)**  
**STATE BOARD OF PAROLE**

[1:48:36 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced consideration of governor appointee Richard Larson to the State Board of Parole. He invited Mr. Larson to state his name for the record and proceed with his testimony.

[1:49:07 PM](#)

RICHARD "OLE" LARSON, Appointee, State Board of Parole, Wasilla, Alaska, testified as a governor's appointee to the State Board of Parole.

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CHAIR CLAMAN asked whether he had prior experience serving on the State Board of Parole.

MR. LARSON replied that he served on the Board from 2010 to 2020, completing two terms. He said that he was not reappointed in 2020 for the full term but was reappointed midway in 2022. He said that he is now up for reappointment in 2024 for a 5-year term.

[1:50:04 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked him to share his experience serving on the Board since 2022.

MR. LARSON observed a difference between his recent and prior service ten years ago. He said the Board has not seen the same [level of] discretionary offenders or resumes it used to during

his first ten years of earlier tenure. He pointed to two factors in trying to analyze the cause:

**- Restorative justice and Senate Bill 91 [Chapter 36, SLA 16].**

When SB 91 went into effect, it was to create rehabilitation programs in the community by closing correctional facilities. As a result, Palmer Correctional Center, a major rehabilitation center for minimum—and medium-security incarcerated individuals, was closed. That facility had offered a wide range of programs, all of which were lost to the corrections system. Shortly thereafter, COVID-19 struck.

[1:51:29 PM](#)

**- COVID-related impacts.**

Correctional facilities were locked down for at least two years, and visitors were not allowed during the COVID period. Programs were largely inactive or shut down, including many in the community. However, this year, programs are returning pretty strong. Palmer Correctional Center reopened, its programs are back in operation, and efforts are underway to restore them to pre-closure levels, both inside the facility and in the community.

MR. LARSON said that when he first returned to the Board two years ago, the discretionary applications were generally poor, not for any reason due to the offenders themselves, but due to the impacts of the two events that occurred. Now, the Board is seeing an increase in programs and an increase in pretty solid discretionary candidates coming before it.

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CHAIR CLAMAN opened public testimony; finding none, he closed public testimony.

[1:53:37 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[1:53:41 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated that [in accordance with AS 39.05.080,] the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointment be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

State Board of Parole

Richard Larson - Wasilla

SENATOR KIEHL reminded members that signing the report(s) regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

[1:54:04 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN stated Mr. Larson's name will be forwarded to a joint session of the legislature.

[1:54:19 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Claman adjourned the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting at 1:54 p.m.