

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

March 27, 2024

1:34 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Matt Claman, Chair  
Senator Jesse Kiehl, Vice Chair  
Senator James Kaufman  
Senator Löki Tobin  
Senator Cathy Giessel

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 60

"An Act repealing the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission; relating to decisions and orders of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission; relating to superior court jurisdiction over appeals from Alaska Workers' Compensation Board decisions; repealing Rules 201.1, 401.1, and 501.1, Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure, and amending Rules 202(a), 204(a) - (c), 210(e), 601(b), 602(c) and (h), and 603(a), Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 60(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 28(FIN)

"An Act restricting the release of certain records of convictions; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SCS CSHB 28(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 60

SHORT TITLE: REPEAL WORKERS' COMP APPEALS COMMISSION

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) WIELECHOWSKI

02/06/23	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/06/23	(S)	L&C, JUD
02/27/23	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

02/27/23 (S) Heard & Held  
 02/27/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)  
 05/10/23 (S) L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)  
 05/10/23 (S) Moved SB 60 Out of Committee  
 05/10/23 (S) MINUTE(L&C)  
 05/11/23 (S) L&C RPT 2DP 1NR  
 05/11/23 (S) NR: BJORKMAN  
 05/11/23 (S) DP: DUNBAR, GRAY-JACKSON  
 01/22/24 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
 01/22/24 (S) Heard & Held  
 01/22/24 (S) MINUTE(JUD)  
 03/20/24 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
 03/20/24 (S) Heard & Held  
 03/20/24 (S) MINUTE(JUD)  
 03/27/24 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 28

SHORT TITLE: ACCESS TO MARIJUANA CONVICTION RECORDS  
 SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) WRIGHT

01/19/23 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/23  
 01/19/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 01/19/23 (H) JUD, FIN  
 03/01/23 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
 03/01/23 (H) Heard & Held  
 03/01/23 (H) MINUTE(JUD)  
 03/08/23 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
 03/08/23 (H) Heard & Held  
 03/08/23 (H) MINUTE(JUD)  
 04/14/23 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
 04/14/23 (H) Moved CSHB 28(JUD) Out of Committee  
 04/14/23 (H) MINUTE(JUD)  
 04/24/23 (H) JUD RPT CS(JUD) 2DP 2NR 2AM  
 04/24/23 (H) DP: C.JOHNSON, GRAY  
 04/24/23 (H) NR: CARPENTER, VANCE  
 04/24/23 (H) AM: GROH, EASTMAN  
 04/26/23 (H) FIN AT 1:30 PM ADAMS 519  
 04/26/23 (H) Heard & Held  
 04/26/23 (H) MINUTE(FIN)  
 05/01/23 (H) FIN AT 1:30 PM ADAMS 519  
 05/01/23 (H) Heard & Held  
 05/01/23 (H) MINUTE(FIN)  
 05/05/23 (H) FIN AT 9:30 AM ADAMS 519  
 05/05/23 (H) Moved CSHB 28(FIN) Out of Committee  
 05/05/23 (H) MINUTE(FIN)  
 05/08/23 (H) FIN RPT CS(FIN) 8DP 1NR

05/08/23 (H) DP: CRONK, ORTIZ, STAPP, GALVIN,  
HANNAN, EDGMON, D.JOHNSON, FOSTER  
05/08/23 (H) NR: JOSEPHSON  
05/12/23 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)  
05/12/23 (H) VERSION: CSHB 28 (FIN)  
05/13/23 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
05/13/23 (S) JUD, FIN  
01/19/24 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
01/19/24 (S) Heard & Held  
01/19/24 (S) MINUTE (JUD)  
03/27/24 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

**WITNESS REGISTER**

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff  
Senator Matt Claman  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented the explanation of changes for SB 60.

DANA FERESTIEN, Regional President  
Alaska National Insurance Company  
CopperPoint Insurance Company  
Seattle, Washington

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 60.

JOELLE HALL, President  
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial  
Organizations (AFL-CIO) Alaska  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified by invitation on SB 60.

DAVID DUNSMORE, Staff  
Senator Bill Wielechowski  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the discussion of SB 60.

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff  
Senator Matt Claman  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented the explanation of changes for HB 28.

REPRESENTATIVE STANLEY WRIGHT, District 22  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered closing comments on HB 28.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:34:44 PM](#)

**CHAIR MATT CLAMAN** called the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Kiehl, Tobin, Kaufman, and Chair Claman. Senator Giessel arrived immediately thereafter.

**SB 60-REPEAL WORKERS' COMP APPEALS COMMISSION**

[1:35:14 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 60 "An Act repealing the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission; relating to decisions and orders of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission; relating to superior court jurisdiction over appeals from Alaska Workers' Compensation Board decisions; repealing Rules 201.1, 401.1, and 501.1, Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure, and amending Rules 202(a), 204(a) - (c), 210(e), 601(b), 602(c) and (h), and 603(a), Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR CLAMAN said this is the third hearing of SB 60 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. A Judiciary committee substitute (CS), version \B, was adopted as the working document in the January 22 hearing. The intention is to consider new committee substitute version \S. He invited Ms. Kakaruk to present the explanation of changes.

[1:36:09 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL joined the meeting.

[1:36:49 PM](#)

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff, Senator Matt Claman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented the explanation of changes for SB 60 from version \B to version \S.

[Original Punctuation Provided]

Explanation of Changes

Senate Judiciary Committee: Version B to Version S

The CS for Senate Bill 60 (Judiciary) version S replaces version B of the bill by placing the jurisdiction of the former Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission under the office of administrative hearings (OAH). OAH would have jurisdiction to hear appeals from final decision and orders of the board. In version S, the office would designate one primary administrative law judge and one alternate law judge to hear and decide all appeals to the office.

In SB 60 version B, the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission would be repealed and jurisdiction over appeals of Workers' Compensation decisions would return to the Superior Court.

[1:37:50 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced invited testimony on SB 60. He invited Mr. Ferestien to put himself on the record and provide his thoughts and comments about CS versions \B and \S.

[1:38:26 PM](#)

DANA FERESTIEN, Regional President, Alaska National Insurance Company, CopperPoint Insurance Company, Seattle, Washington, testified by invitation on SB 60. He provided a brief history on the Alaska National Insurance Company (ANIC). It was founded in 1980 for the purpose of providing a stable market for workers compensation insurance for the employers of Alaska. Alaska National insures more than a third of the Alaska workers compensation voluntary market. It served for many years as a servicing carrier for Alaska's assigned risk plan, and currently services a majority of the pool.

MR. FERESTIEN stated that ANIC supports the proposed committee substitute (CS), which would send appeals to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) rather than the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission. He said the change effectively addresses concerns about the cost of operating the Commission and the recent decline in its caseload following the COVID shutdown. While he acknowledged that the Commission's annual operating cost is significant, he pointed out that it is funded by premium taxes, making the system self-sustaining. He recognized that committee members may still wish to pursue cost savings but cautioned reductions in operating expenses should not come at the expense of the system or the employers and employees it serves.

[1:40:11 PM](#)

MR. FERESTIEN said it was important to provide context about the workers' compensation system, which he described as the product of the "Grand Bargain." He explained that under this bargain, workers injured in the scope of their employment, receive medical care and scheduled compensation without regard to fault. This process is designed to promote healing and a quick return to work. He said the system emphasizes efficiency, predictability, and minimizing litigation. He asserted that the original version of SB 60 is contrary to and undercuts the Grand Bargain by routing appeals to the Superior Court while the CS supports and preserves it. He elaborated by making the following three points:

### **Binding Precedent**

Decisions from OAH would provide binding precedent and guidance for employers, employees, and the attorneys that represent them in workers' compensation cases. He contrasted this with the Superior Court, whose decisions are binding only on the parties to a specific case and do not establish precedent for future cases. He said this would lead to a less predictable and less efficient system, where the same issue could be decided differently in separate cases.

[1:42:31 PM](#)

### **Designated Administrative Law Judge**

The committee substitute (CS) provides for a single administrative law judge to act as the primary decision-maker for appeals, mirroring the structure of the Appeals Commission. He emphasized that administrative law judges are subject-matter experts, in contrast to Alaska's 40-plus Superior Court judges, who are generalists. He explained that under the Superior Court approach, workers' compensation cases would rotate across different judges throughout the state, many of whom might only hear one such case in their entire career. He cautioned that this lack of specialization would reduce consistency and expertise in decision-making.

### **Delays**

The focus is on the timeframe to get injured workers back to work and on with their lives. Alaska Superior Courts have a significant case backlog, taking, at best, 18 months to get to trial. That timeline does not include the earlier stages of the claims process, such as hearings before the Workers' Compensation Board. He emphasized that this extended wait time is contrary to the core purpose of workers' compensation, which is to heal, compensate, and return injured workers to their jobs

as promptly as possible. In contrast, OAH would have a single, dedicated judge managing what currently appears to be a relatively light caseload. While the exact timeline for decisions is unknown, he suggested that decisions from OAH could be expected significantly faster than from the Superior Court.

[1:44:50 PM](#)

MR. FERESTIEN said for these reasons, Alaska National Insurance Company supports the committee substitute. He said it represents a sound and well-considered compromise that balances fiscal responsibility with a fair, efficient, and accurate decision-making body. The measure preserves the principles of the Grand Bargain, safeguards workers, offers a fair forum for employers, and reaches a practical resolution. He thanked the committee for the opportunity to provide comments.

[1:45:29 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN sought clarification about whether any workers' compensation entity has the authority to create binding precedent.

MR. FERESTIEN replied, it is his understanding, that the Alaska Worker's Compensation Appeals Commission (AWCAC) decisions are binding and followed in subsequent cases. He said that this is in contrast to the Alaska Superior Court. He expressed his belief that expert testimony at prior hearings indicated Appeals Commission decisions set precedent and are followed in subsequent cases.

[1:46:17 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN expressed her understanding that the legislature cannot constitutionally require the courts to give precedential value to Appeals Commission decisions and asked for clarity about this.

[1:46:32 PM](#)

MR. FERESTIEN prefaced his response by noting he is not an attorney, but stated his understanding that Commission decisions are binding on the Workers' Compensation Board. He explained that, when the system functions as intended, employers and their insurance companies receive notice of a claim, determine compensability, and begin paying benefits. He estimated this scenario occurs in 90 to 99 percent of cases. The primary objective is to begin supporting the worker as soon as possible. A small percentage of claims, between one and ten percent, are appealed to the Board, which typically provides effective administrative resolution.

MR. FERESTIEN continued that only a handful of cases proceed beyond the Board to the Appeals Commission or another appellate body. He stressed, under the current structure, the Board is required to follow Commission decisions, which create binding precedent that ensures consistency and predictability when claimants appear before the Board. In contrast, decisions issued by the Superior Court are not binding on future cases.

MR. FERESTIEN further explained that appeals beyond the Superior Court level go to the Alaska Supreme Court; the Supreme Court may uphold existing precedent under stare decisis or may overturn prior cases and do something different.

[1:48:34 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN expressed his understanding that, in terms of precedent, the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission is bound by its own prior decisions. He stated that the Commission looks to its previous rulings to guide future decisions, as it serves as the appellate body for the Workers' Compensation Board. However, if a party is dissatisfied with a Commission decision and appeals to the Alaska Supreme Court, the Commission's decisions carry no binding precedential value for the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court reviews such cases independently, and if it agrees with the Commission's reasoning, its ruling then becomes binding precedent.

CHAIR CLAMAN offered a slight variation to better explain precedent as it pertains to workers' compensation in Alaska and the Superior Court. He noted that Superior Court judges are not bound by each other's decisions. For example, a ruling by Judge Smith may be persuasive to Judge Jones, but Judge Jones is not obligated to follow it. Similarly, the Workers' Compensation Board is not required to necessarily follow Superior Court decisions in the same way it must follow Appeals Commission decisions. He asked whether this distinction aligned with others' understanding or if there was a different interpretation.

MR. FERESTIEN expressed that the chair said it more artfully than he had.

[1:50:20 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN said the chair's explanation provided clarity.

MR. FERESTIEN commented that, while facts in each case may differ, the issues often overlap. He explained that whether the

matter involves medical benefits, return to work, or another issue, the interpretation of statutes and regulations are frequently similar. He emphasized that it is the interpretation within the decision that is most useful to the Board in subsequent cases.

[1:51:11 PM](#)

SENATOR KAUFMAN stated that the original bill would reduce costs by incorporating the function of the Appeals Commission into existing court operations, which are already ongoing. He explained that this approach was expected to lower expenses. He expressed uncertainty about how CS version \S would achieve the same objective, asking whether OAH costs would remain the same.

MR. FERESTIEN replied that it would require a study to give a precise answer in dollars and cents and acknowledged that any figure offered without such analysis would be speculative. He noted material differences between the current structure and the proposal. Mainly, the existing Appeals Commission carries three full-time salaries, whereas CS version \S proposes to house the work within an entity that is already funded.

MR. FERESTIEN observed that if the Court System could absorb the caseload without adding staff, the Office of Administrative Hearings might be able to do close to the same. He said that meaningful savings appeared likely; quantifying those savings could reveal costs roughly equivalent to those projected for the original bill.

[1:52:59 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN referenced testimony, which noted that roughly half a million dollars in Appeals Commission costs are funded through the state general fund generated from workers' compensation insurance premiums paid by policyholders.

MR. FERESTIEN confirmed, expressing his understanding that the funding comes from dedicated dollars generated by the premium tax on workers' compensation policies. He concluded that the system is self-sustaining based on that structure.

[1:53:31 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN outlined the following assumptions:

- the workers' compensation system is self-sustaining,
- the bill's provisions are adopted so that the Superior Court hears workers' compensation appeals, and

- the Superior Court fiscal note indicates it can absorb the cost within its existing system.

CHAIR CLAMAN asked whether, assuming these assumptions hold, policyholders would realize savings by eliminating their share of the half-million-dollar cost associated with operating the Appeals Commission.

MR. FERESTIEN replied that rates are established through an actuarial analysis of loss cost. He explained that the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI), in coordination with the Division of Insurance director, conducts a rigorous annual process to set those rates. He stated that it seems unlikely the state would experience savings as a result of the change. He made a side note, stating that the state has seen a significant decline in rates over the past years. He surmised that transferring appeals to the Superior Court would likely create upward pressure on loss cost and, all else being equal, could result in higher rates over time.

[1:55:08 PM](#)

SENATOR KAUFMAN asked about the impetus for shifting workers' compensation appeals in Alaska from the Superior Court to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission, and whether he could elaborate on the history and factors that contributed to that change.

MR. FERESTIEN replied that he did not have knowledge of that rationale. He was not involved in the industry until 2005. He emphasized that an administrative process focused on resolution and returning injured workers to the workforce aligns more closely with the core principles and public policy objectives of a workers' compensation system. The goal is to avoid the courthouse, minimize legal involvement, and prevent increased costs resulting from litigation.

[1:57:53 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN invited Ms. Hall to identify herself for the record and to proceed with her testimony.

[1:58:16 PM](#)

JOELLE HALL, President, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska, testified by invitation on SB 60. She noted that the federation has backed versions of this bill for several years, beginning with similar legislation introduced eight or

nine years ago, and has consistently favored eliminating the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission.

MS. HALL voiced concern that the committee substitute would place every worker's compensation appeal in the hands of a single administrative law judge. Although such a structure might appear efficient, she argued it would concentrate too much power in one appointee whose biases and background are unknown. Under that model, the only recourse would be an appeal to the Alaska Supreme Court. While Superior Court judges may lack deep familiarity with workers' compensation, she maintained that distributing appeals among many judges is preferable to allowing one individual to control every case, a situation she warned could invite lobbying pressure given the monetary stakes involved.

MS. HALL characterized the current system, appeals from the Workers' Compensation Board to the Appeals Commission, as duplicative, describing it as "two executive-level bodies" reviewing the same claim before it reaches the courts. Instead, the AFL-CIO supports the original version of SB 60, which would allow the executive branch a single opportunity to adjudicate a claim and, if necessary, send the matter directly to the courts. She acknowledged that she is not a technical expert in workers' compensation. She said vesting authority in one person, over all appeals, is inconsistent with the principles of the Grand Bargain, which underlies the workers' compensation system.

[2:01:41 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN invited Mr. Dunsmore to identify himself for the record.

[2:01:52 PM](#)

DAVID DUNSMORE, Staff, Senator Bill Wielechowski, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced himself and put himself on the record.

[2:02:11 PM](#)

SENATOR KAUFMAN commented on increasing the number of entities that hear claim disputes within a single branch of government. He said there is a certain logic in dividing that responsibility between two branches. If a party is not satisfied with the outcome at the executive level, the next step would be an appeal in the judicial branch. He acknowledged that some individuals may find court burdensome. He asked the bill sponsor for his perspective on keeping the appeal process within the executive branch versus shifting it to the judiciary.

[2:02:59 PM](#)

MR. DUNSMORE replied that the sponsor supports the bill as originally introduced. The original bill proposes to restore jurisdiction to the Superior Court, which heard these cases before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission was established. He expressed appreciation to the committee for exploring options but said CS version \S simply replaces one executive branch agency with another without addressing the underlying structural issues.

MR. DUNSMORE stated that version \S likely would not result in significant cost savings. He said that the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is already overstretched and dealing with staffing shortages. While some cost savings might result from eliminating lay commission member travel and per diem, the major cost savings would come from eliminating two full-time positions.

[2:04:12 PM](#)

MR. DUNSMORE expressed his belief that shifting appeals between administrative agencies would perpetuate the inefficiencies introduced by the Appeals Commission. He explained that prior to the creation of the Commission, only about 25 percent of Superior Court workers' compensation decisions were appealed to the Alaska Supreme Court. By contrast, approximately 50 percent of Appeals Commission decisions are appealed to the Supreme Court. He emphasized that Supreme Court appeals add months, if not years, to the resolution process. He expressed concern that decisions issued by OAH could be appealed at a similarly higher rate, thereby perpetuating the same inefficiencies.

MR. DUNSMORE indicated that the bill sponsor believes the original version presents the most efficient path forward. It offers meaningful cost savings and helps address the current funding shortfall, as the workers' compensation system no longer receives sufficient designated general fund revenue to cover the full cost of the program.

[2:06:17 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN reminded members that the working document before the committee is CSSB 60, version \B, the sponsor's version. He invited discussion on whether to adopt new CS version \S or continue with the current version.

[2:06:42 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL addressed the Department of Administration's budget, stating if OAH were to take on these appeals, it would charge the workers' compensation system approximately \$280 per hour. Therefore, transferring appeals to OAH would not yield the same cost savings as transferring them to the Superior Court.

SENATOR KIEHL said another budget issue is OAH chargebacks. He noted that the governor's budget is asking for more than \$700,000 in unrestricted general funds. He stated that, in terms of cost savings, transferring appeals to the Superior Court would result in greater savings than assigning them to OAH.

SENATOR KIEHL referenced a current backlog challenge in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the volume of fair hearings now being appealed. He described the situation as a "pig in the python" that will eventually work through the system.

[2:08:11 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated he has always been most comfortable with the structure of appeals proceeding from the Superior Court to the Supreme Court, rather than from an administrative process, as proposed in version \S. He pointed out that under its current structure, OAH decisions are appealed to the Superior Court, noting that version \S would carve out an exception to that framework, treating workers' compensation appeals differently.

SENATOR KIEHL expressed that he is probably most comfortable with the working document before the committee, CS version \B; it maintains the original bill and fixes the effective dates.

[2:08:58 PM](#)

SENATOR KAUFMAN stated that, based on what he has learned, he is more inclined to support the original bill.

[2:09:18 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN expressed appreciation for the discussion and the opportunity to learn more about the current appeals structure, as well as possible alternatives that may offer some cost savings. She expressed her support for version \B, acknowledging that the savings may not reach the level anticipated under the original bill and looks forward to continued discussion about ensuring individuals receive a fair appeals process.

[2:09:50 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found that no committee member sought to adopt CS version \S.

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[2:10:03 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report CSSB 60, work order 33-LS0330\B, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[2:10:19 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and CSSB 60(JUD) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

**HB 28-ACCESS TO MARIJUANA CONVICTION RECORDS**

[2:10:47 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 28(FIN) "An Act restricting the release of certain records of convictions; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR CLAMAN said this is the second hearing of HB 28 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. There is a proposed committee substitute. He invited Ms. Kakaruk to present the explanation of changes.

[2:11:33 PM](#)

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff, Senator Matt Claman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented the explanation of changes for HB 28 from version \U to version \R.

[Original punctuation provided.]

Explanation of Changes

Senate Judiciary Committee: Version U to Version R

Senate CS for CS for House Bill 28 (Judiciary) version R amends version U of the bill by removing Section 4. Section 4 in HB 28 version U amended AS 22.35 by adding a new section that established records relating to the individuals and occurrences in this bill shall not be publicly published by the Alaska Court System.

Section 4 was removed in Version R because the Alaska Court System has already taken the step to remove marijuana conviction records for marijuana possession of under an ounce for people over 21 on the

Court System's website. The Supreme Court order removed those records, effective of May 2023.

Version R re-numbered Section 5 as Section 4, and updated the effective date, which was January 1, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

[2:12:45 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited a motion.

[2:12:50 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to adopt the Senate committee substitute (SCS) for CSHB 28, work order 33-LS0271\R, as the working document.

[2:13:05 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN offered the bill sponsor an opportunity to speak to the SCS.

[2:13:19 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STANLEY WRIGHT, District 22, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, expressed appreciation to the committee for its good work on HB 28. He expressed his belief that this bill will help a lot of Alaskans.

[2:13:39 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and SCS CSHB 28 was adopted as the working document.

[2:14:36 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[2:14:40 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report SCS CSHB 28, work order 33-LS0271\R, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[2:14:54 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and SCS CSHB 28(JUD) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

[2:15:23 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Claman adjourned the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting at 2:15 p.m.