

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 17, 2024

1:34 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Click Bishop, Vice Chair  
Senator Kelly Merrick

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Commissioner - Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
Cathy Munoz - Juneau

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers and Land Surveyors

Jeffrey Garness - Anchorage  
Colin Maynard - Anchorage  
Paul Baril - Anchorage  
John Barry - Gustavus  
Bradford Rinckey - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Alaska Labor Relations Agency  
Justin Mack - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Public Accountancy  
Mark Diehl - Palmer  
Lance Johnson - Nome

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Alaska Worker's Compensation Board

Mark Sayampanathan - Anchorage  
Debbie White - Auke Bay  
John Corbett - Fairbanks  
Pamela Cline - Wasilla  
Steven Heidemann - Anchorage  
Brian Zematis - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Diane Thompson - Anchorage  
Janice Hill - Haines

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers

Tenaya Miramontes - Juneau  
Wendy Palin - Palmer  
Michelle McMullin - Anchorage  
Kevin McKinley - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Ronald Gherman - Soldotna  
John Lloyd - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Examiners in Optometry

Ethan Arndt - Anchorage  
Bradley Cross - Soldotna

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Marijuana Control Board

Bailey Stuart - Wasilla

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Certified Direct-Entry Midwives

Bethel Belisle - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Certifies Real Estate Appraisers

Mae Sprague - Wasilla  
Jenny Buswell - Palmer

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Marital and Family Therapy  
Shawnmarie Carpenter - Anchorage  
Kayla Green - Eagle River

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Massage Therapists  
Emily Foster - Palmer

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Nursing  
Michael Collins - Wasilla  
April Erickson - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Occupational Safety and Health Review Board  
Ryan Sharratt - Kodiak

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Pharmacy  
Sylvain Nouvion - Eagle River  
Ashley Schaber - Anchorage  
Carla Hebert - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners  
Lorin Bradbury - Bethel  
Erin Johnson - Anchorage  
Bradley McConnell - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Board of Social Work Examiners  
Anne Wells - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Veterinary Examiners

Denise Albert - Denali Park

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Fishermen's Fund Advisory and Appeals Council

Megan O'Neil - Petersburg

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board

Rebecca Dean - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Worker's Compensation Appeals Commission

Nancy Shaw - Anchorage

Amy Steele - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 152

"An Act relating to community energy facilities."

- MOVED CSSB 152(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 152

SHORT TITLE: COMMUNITY ENERGY FACILITIES

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) WIELECHOWSKI

|          |     |                                   |
|----------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 05/15/23 | (S) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS   |
| 05/15/23 | (S) | L&C                               |
| 01/29/24 | (S) | L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg) |
| 01/29/24 | (S) | Heard & Held                      |
| 01/29/24 | (S) | MINUTE(L&C)                       |
| 04/10/24 | (S) | L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg) |
| 04/10/24 | (S) | Heard & Held                      |
| 04/10/24 | (S) | MINUTE(L&C)                       |
| 04/17/24 | (S) | L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg) |

**WITNESS REGISTER**

CATHY MUNOZ, Commissioner Designee  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as commissioner designee for the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOWLWD).

DON ETHERIDGE, Lobbyist  
Alaska Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial  
Organizations (AFL-CIO)  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

ARLENE LUMBAB, representing self  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

REBECCA CARRILLO, representing self  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

JIMMY YAP, representing self  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

TERRY ABARRO, representing self  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

VICKY ROLDAN, representing self  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

TOM BOUTIN, representing self  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the confirmation of DOWLWD Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

PAUL BARIL, Governor's Appointee  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors (AELS Board)  
Kotzebue, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors.

JOHN BARRY, Governor's Appointee  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors (AELS Board)  
Gustavus, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors.

COLIN MAYNARD, Governor's Appointee  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors (AELS Board)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors.

BRAD RINCKEY, Governor's Appointee  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors (AELS Board)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors.

JEFF GARNES, Governor's Appointee  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors (AELS Board)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the  
State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land  
Surveyors.

KONRAD JACKSON, Staff  
Senator Jesse Bjorkman  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Read the names of the governor's appointees  
to boards and commissions.

ROBERT DOYLE, Chair  
Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions on SB 152.

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI, District K  
Alaska State Legislature,

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of SB 152.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:34:39 PM](#)

**CHAIR JESSE BJORKMAN** called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, and Chair Bjorkman.

CHAIR BJORKMAN announced that the agenda would consist of SB 152 and a review of the governor's appointees which have been referred to the committee.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :**

**COMMISSIONER - DEPARTMENT OF LABOR and WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

[1:35:41 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN announced the confirmation hearing of Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Designee Cathy Munoz.

[1:36:02 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN solicited a motion.

[1:36:07 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON moved Cathy Munoz, Commissioner Designee for the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, be forwarded to a joint session of the legislature for consideration.

[1:36:26 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN objected for purposes of discussion.

[1:36:40 PM](#)

CATHY MUNOZ, Commissioner Designee, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Juneau, Alaska, explained that she has served in the role of commissioner for 15 months, first as acting commissioner then as designated commissioner. Prior to that she served four years as deputy commissioner, overseeing two divisions of the department and handled all of the legislative work.

[1:37:14 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER MUNOZ gave a brief synopsis of her personal history and career.

[1:40:45 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER MUNOZ said it has been an honor to serve in the past year and that she has challenged the department's leadership to come up with innovative ways to reach Alaskans to fill current labor market vacancies, expand training opportunities, and improve business client processes. She said that over the last 15 years Alaska's working age population has contracted, a major factor in that is the large bubble of retirees shifting out of the workplace.

COMMISSIONER MUNOZ explained that the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD) has actively implemented strategies to expand the working age population by:

- increasing training support by 85% in 2023 and 2024 over previous years through an active media campaign targeted at young workers (18 - 30 years old)
- expanding income eligibility for federal training money
- implementing a Career Guide Project to expand career awareness in cooperation with Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and local schools
- being recently named a Department of Defense Skillbridge site, for people transitioning from a military career to DOLWD and which allows the first 6 months of wages for people transitioning from the military to work in the Department of Labor to be covered by the DOD during their transition,; advocating for similar opportunities in other career fields for these highly skilled individuals
- reviving the Office of Citizen Assistance to help legal immigrants and refugees find successful employment in Alaska

COMMISSIONER MUNOZ concluded by thanking the committee and expressing her honor to serve the State [of Alaska].

[1:44:13 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to Commissioner Munoz for sharing her story and for sharing about the success of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).

[1:44:24 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON expressed gratitude for Commissioner Munoz' summary of her accomplishments, and for her service both prior and current. She said she looks forward to confirming her appointment.

[1:44:59 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN opened public testimony on the appointment of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Designee Munoz.

[1:45:28 PM](#)

DON ETHERIDGE, Lobbyist, Alaska Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of DOLWD Commissioner Munoz. He stated that Commissioner Munoz does a great job helping with the training programs at the department. He asserted that she is fair and even though they don't agree on everything, they are able to work together. He noted that he served with her on the local assembly. He stated that the AFL-CIO is in full support of Commissioner Munoz' appointment as DOLWD Commissioner.

[1:46:21 PM](#)

ARLENE LUMBAB, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of DOLWD Commissioner Munoz. She said she was on the board of directors for the Filipino community and she shared her early impressions of and experiences with Commissioner Munoz. She highlighted the appointee's humility, warm-hearted nature and approachability. She noted the appointee's interest in and commitment to the Filipino community and said she would provide sound leadership toward a quality workforce for Alaska.

[1:48:22 PM](#)

REBECCA CARRILLO, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Commissioner Munoz.

[Original punctuation provided.]

My name is Rebecca Carrillo. I am here to support the confirmation of Cathy Munoz as Commissioner of the Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development.

I've been living in Juneau for 43 years and years and worked for almost 33 years in public health administration for the State of AK.

As a retiree, I am grateful to Cathy Munoz for carrying legislation addressing 3 billion dollars in unfunded liabilities to stabilize and safeguard the retirement of thousands of Alaska\* state employees like me. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Philippine Honorary Consul for Alaska, an office I

am proud to have served on behalf of the 26,000 Filipino-Americans in the state.

The programs Cathy Munoz and key staff has implemented, such as "Alaska Looks to Lead the Way in Youth Employment Outcomes" resulting in Alaska's selection as one of the nine teams from communities across the nation to participate in a "Youth Systems Building Academy" administered by the US Department of Labor is a huge honor.

As a parent of a military veteran, nothing makes one aware of issues, good or bad, that affect the military when you have a child who has gone through the front lines of war. The agreement with the US Dept. of Defense to become a SkillBridge partner is a lifeline for service members returning to civilian life.

Finally, in many conversations with Cathy, it is clear that her philosophy; life values of inclusion, diversity, tolerance, providing opportunities, and lifting those around her are all echoed in the vision and mission of her work as the head of the Department. The "New Workforce 2030-The Alaska Plan," a multi-agency collaboration to develop strategies to meet the challenges of Alaska's workforce shortages is a hopeful approach to this statewide problem. She will undoubtedly be laser-focused on these issues. I urge you to confirm Cathy as THE Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

[1:51:52 PM](#)

JIMMY YAP, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, read a statement in support of the reappointment of Commissioner Munoz.

[Original punctuation provided.]

Cathy Munoz, A Beacon of Unity and Friendship

Good afternoon.

To the chairman of the Senate committee, Senator Bjorkman and to the members of the Senate, Commerce and Labor committee.

I'm Jimmy Yap, I'm currently one of the Board of Directors of the Filipino Community, here in Juneau Alaska. I'm a former State of Alaska employee too.

I am honored to share my heartfelt testimony about Commissioner Cathy Munoz, a remarkable individual who has left an indelible mark on the Filipino community in Alaska. Actually, not only among Filipinos but for all Alaskans.

Cathy Munoz has been more than just a friend of Filipinos in Juneau; she has been a bridge of friendship and understanding between the people of Alaska and the Filipino community.

Her unwavering commitment and dedication were evident in her pivotal role in designating the Manila Square area in downtown to honor the contributions of Filipinos in Juneau and in making a province in the Philippines, Aklan, a sister city of Juneau, Alaska, to name a few. Through her tireless efforts, she helped forge a bond that transcended borders and celebrated the rich cultural heritage of both regions.

Beyond her official duties, Cathy actively participated in various events and activities of the Filipino Community, Inc., showcasing her genuine interest and support for our community. Whether it was attending cultural celebrations, lending a helping hand in community projects, or simply being a compassionate listener, Cathy's presence was always felt and appreciated.

Cathy Munoz's warmth, kindness, and genuine passion for fostering unity and friendship have touched the hearts of many. Her legacy will continue to inspire us to embrace diversity, build bridges of understanding, and strive for a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Thank you, Cathy, for being a beacon of unity and friendship. Your contributions will forever be cherished and remembered by the Filipino community in Alaska in particular, and all other Alaskans in general.

[1:54:54 PM](#)

TERRY ABARRO, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, testified in support of the reappointment of Commissioner Munoz. She said she lived in Anchorage and worked in the Seafood industry for the past 25 years. She related the successes she experienced as a Human Resources manager in the industry to find, recruit and train employees and the role that Commissioner Munoz had in those successes.

[2:01:31 PM](#)

VICKY ROLDAN, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of the reappointment of Commissioner Munoz. She said she was a retired registered nurse and a long-time member of the Filipino Community, Inc. She related her experiences working and in community with Commissioner Munoz and noted the appointee's close associations and support for the Filipino community and its members. She spoke about traveling with her as the in-country coordinator for the trade and tourism mission to the Philippines in 2012. She said this visit led to the eventual sister-city relationship between Juneau and the city of Kalibo in the province of Aklan.

MS. ROLDAN praised Commissioner Munoz' hard work and urged that she be confirmed as the Commissioner of Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).

[2:08:18 PM](#)

TOM BOUTIN, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Commissioner Munoz. He noted that DOLWD is not often in the news but has essential responsibilities. He said the commissioner of any department needs to be able to do the work and avoid trouble; someone who can look at a situation or a plan the governor or government has made and be able to call it out if it doesn't make sense. He said Commissioner Munoz is one of those people. He noted her role in the \$3 billion put into the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and Teacher's Retirement System (TRS) defined benefit trust funds and said her success led to an essential provision. He thanked the committee for their work.

[2:10:30 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN closed public testimony on the governor's appointment of Cathy Munoz to Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

[2:10:59 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER MUNOZ expressed gratitude to the testifiers who showed up to support her.

[2:11:08 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to Commissioner Munoz and to those who offered support for her appointment. He expressed appreciation for the work she is doing for Alaska's current and future workforce.

[2:11:29 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN removed his objection.

[2:11:36 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN stated that [in accordance with AS 39.05.080,] the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Commissioner - Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
Cathy Munoz - Juneau

CHAIR BJORKMAN reminded members that signing the report(s) regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' intention to vote for or against an appointee during the joint floor session.

[2:11:53 PM](#)

At ease

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :**  
**STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, and LAND**  
**SURVEYORS**

[2:18:02 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN solicited a motion.

[2:18:10 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON moved those appointed to boards or commissions as listed on the memo before the committee, be forwarded to a joint session of the legislature for consideration.

[2:18:27 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN object for purposes of discussion.

[2:18:32 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN explained that a member of the committee has expressed the desire to hear from five of the appointees to the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors.

[2:18:44 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN invited Paul Baril to put himself on the record and provide a brief statement about his qualifications and his desire to serve on the board.

[2:18:56 PM](#)

PAUL BARIL, Governor's Appointee, State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS Board), Kotzebue, Alaska, stated that he is the president, principal architect and owner of Envision Architecture in Anchorage, Alaska. He said he is looking forward to serving on the board and providing his expertise to the architectural community on the AELS board.

[2:19:26 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON prefaced her question with the following statement:

[Original punctuation provided.]

The U.S. Department of Defense recognizes and requires interior designers educated and credentialed specifically in the field to provide services on all DOD projects having a building component for personnel use of any kind. It's important to know if the appointees to the AELS board understand interior design as a legitimate profession affecting health, safety and welfare as recognized by the U.S. Government and required by the Department of Defense for hundreds of millions of dollars in pending projects here in Alaska.

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON asked the following prepared question:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Do you understand the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators?

[2:20:15 PM](#)

MR. BARIL responded that he absolutely does understand the difference between interior designers and interior decorators.

[2:20:29 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON asked for more specificity.

[2:20:35 PM](#)

MR. BARIL asked if there was something specific she wanted to know about the differences.

[2:20:51 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON clarified that she did not know the differences but was interested to hear his answer.

[2:21:04 PM](#)

MR. BARIL explained that a certified commercial interior designer is someone who has the education and qualifications from an interior design school and possesses National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) certification. He said an interior decorator is able to decorate interior spaces and does not need an education in interior design. He said an interior decorator could learn on the job.

[2:22:02 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN invited John Barry to put himself on the record and provide a brief statement about his qualifications and his desire to serve on the board.

[2:22:12 PM](#)

JOHN BARRY, Governor's Appointee, State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS Board), Gustavus, Alaska, said he was honored to be appointed to the mining engineer seat on the AELS Board. He said he worked for 30 years in the mining industry, mostly underground gold mining. He said he had some open-pit mining experience as well. He began his mining career in 1990 at the Green's Creek mine and most recently at a mine in West Africa. He said he is currently working on some small civil engineering projects in Gustavus, Alaska.

[2:23:10 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON expressed her gratitude to the appointee for his willingness to serve and asked the following prepared question:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Do you understand the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators?

[2:23:28 PM](#)

MR. BARRY answered that he was not familiar with the differences at all.

[2:23:46 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointee for being present at the meeting and for his willingness to serve.

[2:23:54 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN invited Colin Maynard to put himself on the record and provide a brief statement about his qualifications and his desire to serve on the board.

[2:24:13 PM](#)

COLIN MAYNARD, Governor's Appointee, State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS Board), Anchorage, Alaska, said he was a licensed civil and structural engineer in the State of Alaska. He said he retired after a 42-year career. He said he had been following AELS board issues for over 30 years as a member of the legislative liaison committee of the Alaska Professional Design Council (APDC), as well as two different terms on the APDC board and two different terms as President of the APDC board. He said he served on the AELS board from 2012 to 2020 and was asked to serve again.

[2:25:11 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointee for being present at the meeting and for his willingness to serve.

[2:25:13 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON expressed her gratitude to the appointee for his willingness to serve and asked the following prepared question:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Do you understand the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators?

[2:25:25 PM](#)

MR. MAYNARD explained that interior designers, like architects, can rearrange the space on the floor of the interior of a building to make it work for the owner or tenant. Moving doors, making sure that the fire access or escape and fire separations are there [for example]. He said an interior decorator can change the color of the paint, change the carpeting or furniture or artwork to decorate the room, but he said they do not change the built environment.

[2:26:23 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointee for being present at the meeting and for his willingness to serve.

2:26:30 PM

CHAIR BJORKMAN invited Brad Rinckey to put himself on the record and provide a brief statement about his qualifications and his desire to serve on the board.

2:26:40 PM

BRAD RINCKEY, Governor's Appointee, State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS Board), Anchorage, Alaska, said he was a land surveyor and that he applied for a position on the AELS board. He said he worked for a large native corporation, including lots of work in the bush: water and sewer projects and village improvement projects. He moved to Anchorage where he worked on large commercial developments and large subdivisions and was the Platting Manager for three years at Lounsbury & Associates. He said he started a survey group at HDL Consulting Engineers and worked on large DOT road design and right of way survey and boundary determination issues for 12 years. He said he currently works as the senior survey manager for Bell and Associates, to finish his career in oil and gas. He said he looks forward to serving on the AELS Board.

2:27:46 PM

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON expressed her gratitude to the appointee for his willingness to serve and asked the following prepared question:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Do you understand the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators?

2:27:53 PM

MR. RINCKEY said he did not know the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators. He said he did not run across that in his work as a land surveyor, but he assured the committee that when he is given material or opinions on the matter, he would thoroughly research it in order to be able to make a right decision.

2:28:20 PM

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointee for being present at the meeting and for his willingness to serve.

[2:28:27 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN invited Jeff Garness to put himself on the record and provide a brief statement about his qualifications and his desire to serve on the board.

[2:28:40 PM](#)

JEFF GARNESS, Governor's Appointee, State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS Board), Anchorage, Alaska, said he had been in private practice as a civil engineer since 1990 with several of his children. He said his business is 100 percent Native American-owned. He said he is actively involved serving on a number of boards. He said he is committed to providing a permanent profession of engineering and making it better for his children. He said he is 65 years old and is looking out for the next generation. He looks forward to the opportunity to serve a second term on the AELS board.

[2:29:38 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON expressed her gratitude to the appointee for his willingness to serve and asked the following prepared question:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Do you understand the difference between commercial interior designers and interior decorators?

[2:29:49 PM](#)

MR. GARNESS said, as a civil engineer and an environmental engineer, it was not his specialty, but interior design has a code component to it. He said there is a functionality component regarding materials and safety of the components and is a regulated profession through a practice act in several states and a title act in a number of other states. He said it is a recognized profession that works regularly and actively with the architecture community.

[2:30:31 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointee for being present at the meeting and for his willingness to serve.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :**  
**ALASKA LABOR RELATIONS AGENCY**  
**BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY**  
**ALASKA WORKER'S COMPENSATION BOARD**  
**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD**  
**BOARD OF BARBERS and HAIRDRESSERS**

BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS  
BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY  
MARIJUANA CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD OF CERTIFIED DIRECT-ENTRY MIDWIVES  
BOARD OF CERTIFIED REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS  
BOARD OF MARITAL and FAMILY THERAPY  
BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS  
BOARD OF NURSING  
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY and HEALTH REVIEW BOARD  
BOARD OF PHARMACY  
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGISTS and PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATE EXAMINERS  
BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS  
BOARD OF VETINARY EXAMINERS  
FISHERMEN'S FUND ADVISORY and APPEALS COUNCIL  
STATE PHYSICAL THERAPY and OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY BOARD  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS COMMISSION

[2:30:42 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN announced the consideration of governor's appointees to boards and commissions.

[2:31:09 PM](#)

KONRAD JACKSON, Staff, Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska read the names of the governor's appointees to boards and commissions:

**Alaska Labor Relations Agency**

Justin Mack - Anchorage

**Board of Public Accountancy**

Mark Diehl - Palmer

Lance Johnson - Nome

**Alaska Workers' Compensation Board**

Mark Sayampanathan - Anchorage

Debbie White - Auke Bay

John Corbett - Fairbanks

Pamela Cline - Wasilla

Bronson Frye - Anchorage

Steven Heidemann - Anchorage

Brian Zematis - Anchorage

**Alcoholic Beverage Control Board**

Diane Thompson - Anchorage

Janice Hill - Haines

**State Board of Registration for Architects,**

Engineers, and Land Surveyors  
Jeffrey Garness - Anchorage  
Colin Maynard - Anchorage  
Paul Baril - Anchorage  
John Barry - Gustavus  
Bradford Rinckey - Anchorage

**Board of Barbers and Hairdressers**

Tenaya Miramontes - Juneau  
Wendy Palin - Palmer  
Michelle McMullin - Anchorage

[2:33:19 PM](#)

MR. JACKSON corrected his reading, stating that Ms. McMullin was removed from consideration. He continued reading the list of appointees to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

Kevin McKinley - Anchorage

**Board of Chiropractic Examiners**

Ronald Gherman - Soldotna  
John Lloyd - Anchorage

**Board of Examiners in Optometry**

Ethan Arndt - Anchorage  
Bradley Cross - Soldotna  
Marijuana Control Board  
Bailey Stuart - Wasilla

**Board of Certified Direct-Entry Midwives**

Bethel Belisle - Anchorage

**Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers**

Mae Sprague - Wasilla  
Jenny Buswell - Palmer

**Board of Marital and Family Therapy**

Shawnmarie Carpenter - Anchorage  
Kayla Green - Eagle River

**Board of Massage Therapists**

Emily Foster - Palmer

**Board of Nursing**

Michael Collins - Wasilla  
April Erickson - Anchorage

**Occupational Safety and Health Review Board**

Ryan Sharratt - Kodiak

**Board of Pharmacy**

Sylvain Nouvion - Eagle River

Ashley Schaber - Anchorage

Carla Hebert - Anchorage

**Board of Psychologists and Psychological and Associate Examiners**

Lorin Bradbury - Bethel

Erin Johnson - Anchorage

Bradley McConnell - Anchorage

**Board of Social Work Examiners**

Anne Wells - Fairbanks

**Board of Veterinary Examiners**

Denise Albert - Denali Park

**Fishermen's Fund Advisory and Appeals Council**

Megan O'Neil - Petersburg

**State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board**

Rebecca Dean - Fairbanks

**Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission**

Nancy Shaw - Anchorage

Amy Steele - Anchorage

[2:36:06 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN opened public testimony on confirmation of the governor's appointees to boards and commissions.

[2:36:27 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN closed public testimony on confirmation of the governor's appointees to boards and commissions.

[2:36:36 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN expressed gratitude to the appointees for their service to the State of Alaska.

[2:36:48 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN removed his objection, found no further objection and stated that [in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration.

**Alaska Labor Relations Agency**

Justin Mack - Anchorage

**Board of Public Accountancy**

Mark Diehl - Palmer

Lance Johnson - Nome

**Alaska Workers' Compensation Board**

Mark Sayampanathan - Anchorage

Debbie White - Auke Bay

John Corbett - Fairbanks

Pamela Cline - Wasilla

Bronson Frye - Anchorage

Steven Heidemann - Anchorage

Brian Zematis - Anchorage

**Alcoholic Beverage Control Board**

Diane Thompson - Anchorage

Janice Hill - Haines

**State Board of Registration for Architects**

Engineers, and Land Surveyors

Jeffrey Garness - Anchorage

Colin Maynard - Anchorage

Paul Baril - Anchorage

John Barry - Gustavus

Bradford Rinckey - Anchorage

**Board of Barbers and Hairdressers**

Tenaya Miramontes - Juneau

Wendy Palin - Palmer

Kevin McKinley - Anchorage

**Board of Chiropractic Examiners**

Ronald Gherman - Soldotna

John Lloyd - Anchorage

**Board of Examiners in Optometry**

Ethan Arndt - Anchorage

Bradley Cross - Soldotna

Marijuana Control Board

Bailey Stuart - Wasilla

**Board of Certified Direct-Entry Midwives**

Bethel Belisle - Anchorage

**Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers**

Mae Sprague - Wasilla  
Jenny Buswell - Palmer

**Board of Marital and Family Therapy**

Shawnmarie Carpenter - Anchorage  
Kayla Green - Eagle River

**Board of Massage Therapists**

Emily Foster - Palmer

**Board of Nursing**

Michael Collins - Wasilla  
April Erickson - Anchorage

**Occupational Safety and Health Review Board**

Ryan Sharratt - Kodiak

**Board of Pharmacy**

Sylvain Nouvion - Eagle River  
Ashley Schaber - Anchorage  
Carla Hebert - Anchorage

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Lorin Bradbury - Bethel  
Erin Johnson - Anchorage  
Bradley McConnell - Anchorage

**Board of Social Work Examiners**

Anne Wells - Fairbanks

**Board of Veterinary Examiners**

Denise Albert - Denali Park

**Fishermen's Fund Advisory and Appeals Council**

Megan O'Neil - Petersburg

**State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board**

Rebecca Dean - Fairbanks

**Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission**

Nancy Shaw - Anchorage  
Amy Steele - Anchorage

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.

[2:37:02 PM](#)

At ease

**SB 152-COMMUNITY ENERGY FACILITIES**

[Before the committee is CSSB 152 (33-LS0607\U)]

[2:38:13 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 152 "An Act relating to community energy facilities."

[2:38:47 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted Robert Doyle, the chairman of the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) was available online to answer questions.

[2:39:09 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN asked how SB 152 would work from the perspective of the RCA.

[2:39:46 PM](#)

ROBERT DOYLE, Chair, Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA), Anchorage, Alaska, said the role of the RCA as envisioned by SB 152 is that the RCA would establish protocol to facilitate communication between the utilities and the subscriber organizations as outlined by the statute. He said the RCA is supportive of net metering and community solar farms, etc., acknowledging the growing interest of Alaskans [in renewable energy opportunities] and that they can save money. He said, if SB 152 does not move forward, RCA is considering opening a regulatory [approach] to see if it would be possible to increase net metering. He said the highest percentage of net metering in the railbelt currently is about seven percent in ATA, about five percent in Chugach and JVA, and he said MEA is probably around three percent. He said RCA was looking at getting to 20 percent [net metering]. He said getting to 20 percent would remove any caps and allow utilities to make sure that if there are costs associated with [net metering] that are having to be cross-subsidized, that would be addressed in SB 153. He said RCA would develop regulations to carry out SB 152. He said he did not expect any problematic surprises to emerge.

[2:41:30 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted the mention of cross-subsidization and language in SB 152 that mentions utilities modifying their interconnection standards, fees and processes to facilitate cost-effective interconnection. He asked how SB 152 protects other consumers from having to pay for the connection of renewable projects to their utility system.

[2:42:04 PM](#)

MR. DOYLE said the process would be developed by having hearings and getting facts from the various utilities. [The process] will be based upon the facts that are presented on the record. He said there is a point of regulating the electrons and, because, in net metering, it's different than just receiving the power. He explained [a ratepayer] could actually be generating the power and the power would go back to the utility and [the net metering ratepayers] would pay either an avoided cost or a negotiated cost. He said at some point, the normal transformer systems, the normal systems to regulate that power may have to be upgraded because there would have to be a mechanism by which the utilities would quantify [the electron exchange] and show the RCA exactly what it is so the people who are not net metering will not have to pay for something they do not benefit from. He said the RCA would analyze that through regulation and through the hearing process. He asked whether he had answered the question.

[2:43:12 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN said yes.

[2:43:14 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN referred to SB 152, page 3, line 11 which calls for the RCA to facilitate financing of projects and asked how that would work.

[2:43:24 PM](#)

MR. DOYLE said that would be an interesting conversation that will occur in the hearing process. He said RCA does not currently facilitate the creation and financing of those projects but would be able to examine regulations and established processes and consider proposed energy projects such as the recently approved Chugach project and monitor them as pilot projects. That would allow them to work with actual numbers to have a rate chase in the future based on real numbers and real cost. He said RCA could facilitate that and would be able to work with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and other groups developing community [renewable energy generation] projects who would want to be confident that RCA would not be

exerting unwarranted status in the middle of financing efforts. [IPPs and other entities] want to have [processes] that are known, prudent and [consider] the interests of all the members of the co-op and the utility and not just the members that directly benefit from net metering.

[2:44:47 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted SB 152, page 2, lines 17 - 18 and read, "The commission shall ensure that a community energy program does not have an adverse effect on the retail rates of an electric utility...". He expressed his appreciation for this provision in the bill.

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted the mention of the Chugach pilot project and asked whether RCA had originally denied that project and subsequently reversed the denial.

[2:45:20 PM](#)

MR. DOYLE said the first project was envisioned differently and ended up going through a full hearing. Based on that hearing, it was determined that cross-subsidization had not been well-addressed, and the project was denied. When the project was re-introduced as a smaller pilot project, [the developers] had addressed many of those [cross-subsidization] concerns and a hearing was not required. The project was approved after an adjudication. He described it as a small project with minimal impact, for which the developers worked out the details and communicated more information to the consumers and the RCA as [the project] was envisioned and grew. So, he said it was two different processes and two different programs [that RCA evaluated].

[2:46:18 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN restated that the RCA is confident that the cross-subsidization issues were dealt with and the pilot project moving forward is fair to all ratepayers.

[2:46:27 PM](#)

MR. DOYLE affirmed his summary and said that is why RCA approved [the Chugach project].

[2:46:48 PM](#)

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI, District K, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 152 said the bill was filed over a year ago and that it had been through an exhaustive process, meeting with stakeholders and talking with utilities, and he said the bill had gone through many changes and had reached a

state of consensus. He appreciated the committee's patience and cooperation and said he thought the bill was one that people across Alaska will appreciate. He said it would be good for the electrical grid, it will help save natural gas and it will help consumers save money.

[2:47:47 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[2:47:48 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON moved to report CSSB 152, work order 33-LS0607\U, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[2:48:11 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN found no objection and CSSB 152 (L&C) was reported from the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[2:48:50 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Bjorkman adjourned the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 2:48 p.m.