

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

May 5, 2025

1:41 p.m.

1:41:37 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Schrage called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:41 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Neal Foster, Co-Chair
Representative Andy Josephson, Co-Chair
Representative Calvin Schrage, Co-Chair
Representative Jamie Allard
Representative Jeremy Bynum
Representative Alyse Galvin
Representative Sara Hannan
Representative Nellie Unangiq Jimmie
Representative DeLena Johnson
Representative Will Stapp
Representative Frank Tomaszewski

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Bob Scanlon, Chief Executive Officer, Blood Bank of Alaska, Anchorage; Sean Case, Chief, Anchorage Police Department, Anchorage; Charles Coulson, Blood Bank of Alaska, Anchorage; Lily Stevens Becker, President, Ted Stevens Foundation, Anchorage.

SUMMARY

CSSB 57 (FIN)

APPROP: CAPITAL/FUNDS/REAPPROP

CSSB 57 (FIN) was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Schrage reviewed the meeting agenda. The committee would hear public testimony on the capital budget. He provided the call in numbers and email address and reviewed public testimony protocol.

#sb57

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 57 (FIN)

"An Act making appropriations, including capital appropriations and other appropriations; making reappropriations; making appropriations to capitalize funds; and providing for an effective date."

1:43:18 PM

Co-Chair Schrage OPENED public testimony.

1:43:48 PM

AT EASE

1:43:59 PM

RECONVENED

BOB SCANLON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BLOOD BANK OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), recognized the committee for years of support for the Blood Bank. He thanked the committee for including \$500,000 in the supplemental budget for the Blood Bank of Alaska (BBA). He requested the committee's support for full funding to complete the BBA donor testing project. He relayed that funding would be leveraged by BBA to end a serious vulnerability to the Alaska blood supply by making BBA wholly self-sufficient in the area of donor testing services via the establishment of a donor testing lab. The full appropriation of \$500,000 served as the capstone and completion of the project. He relayed that donor testing was currently being done out of state in Minneapolis, Minnesota and was currently a substantial bottleneck and ongoing vulnerability to blood supply operations and availability in the event of a medical trauma and/or declared state or national emergency. He elaborated that BBA had worked toward the establishment of donor testing in Alaska for a number of years. Testing in Alaska would ensure self-sufficiency alleviating the threat of disruptions due to things like air space closure due to natural disasters, airline disruptions, and/or state or national emergency. He stated that becoming self-sufficient would ensure predictability, versatility,

consistency, and shorter response times in the event of disaster for rural and urban areas. He thanked the committee for continued support for the project.

[1:46:45 PM](#)

SEAN CASE, CHIEF, ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), shared that he is a BBA board member. He recognized the years of support from the legislature for BBA. He advocated for the allocation of \$500,000 in the supplemental budget to complete the BBA donor testing lab. He highlighted that law enforcement and BBA shared a common mission to save lives. He stated that BBA was a critical part of the state's healthcare infrastructure. He cited dependability, consistency, and predictability as the cornerstones in any successful operation and BBA was no exception. The proposed budget would ensure the values were upheld. The funding would enable BBA to maintain a safe, tested blood supply for use at any time. The funding would also support versatility. He detailed that not having to rely on out of state testing meant BBA would be able to meet the diverse needs of the state's population in rural and urban communities. The lab would help ensure safety and health of residents. He noted that the use of out of state labs could be costly and time consuming. He noted that the state's weather conditions, and vast geography could make transportation and logistics challenging. The funds would ensure every Alaskan had access to a life-saving resource. He thanked the committee for its consideration.

[1:49:19 PM](#)

CHARLES COULSON, BLOOD BANK OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the BBA. He had served on the board for over a decade, and the project had been on the agenda for at least that long. He stated that fortunately BBA had received the support of the legislature for helping with construction of the new building, which included lab space for testing. He relayed that the \$500,000 increment would enable the project to reach completion. The facility in the building would be to the benefit of all Alaskans. He thanked the committee for its time.

Co-Chair Josephson thanked Mr. Coulson for his contribution.

Representative Hannan stated that the legislature had been supportive of the project and had included the \$500,000 increment in the budget the previous year. The item had been vetoed. She asked if the BBA board had talked with the administration about the importance of the funding to ensure it did not get vetoed in the current year. Mr. Coulson replied affirmatively. He believed the administration understood the importance of the funding. He could not comment on the political and financial decisions being made currently. The BBA was very disappointed the funding had been struck from the budget the previous year and was hopeful it would be included and maintained in the current budget.

Co-Chair Josephson noted there were currently no other testifiers online. He would take an "at ease" until 3:00 p.m. He noted that individuals could provide testimony via email until 5:00 p.m.

1:52:23 PM

AT EASE

3:02:04 PM

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Schrage noted the committee was hearing public testimony on the capital budget.

LILY STEVENS BECKER, PRESIDENT, TED STEVENS FOUNDATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), asked for support of \$1.25 million for the Alaska Leaders Archives project, which was a joint effort between the Ted Stevens Foundation and the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). She explained that the Archives amassed the official papers and memorabilia of over 130 prominent Alaskans from all aspects of society. The foundation had transferred the archives of Senator Ted Stevens to UAA and would become the cornerstone of the Alaska Leaders' Archives. She elaborated that the university needed to do renovation and modernization within the library to create a modern facility for the archives. She related that Senator Steven's 5,000 boxes required substantial space. The foundation had acquired \$60 million in federal funds, which required a \$5 million state match. Without the match the project would not move forward. The state had not provided any funding yet. She indicated that the renovation eliminated \$18 million in deferred maintenance on the library. She understood it was a

difficult year for the state financially. She highlighted that the archive was dedicated to educating the next generation of Alaska's leaders. She thanked the committee for its support.

Co-Chair Foster thanked Ms. Stevens Becker for calling in. He recognized and appreciated all of the work done by the late Senator Ted Stevens. Co-Chair Foster thought that \$1.25 million was appropriated to the project by the legislature. He asked for comment. Ms. Stevens Becker clarified that prior to the current budget there had been no state funding appropriated to the project. The request from the University's Board of Regents was for \$2.5 million and would complete the federal match. She pointed out that currently the appropriation was for \$1.25 million in the budget. Co-Chair Foster asked if the \$1.25 million but not the full \$2.5 million was appropriated, what would happen if the full amount was not allocated to provide the match. He asked if the future opportunity for federal funding would be eliminated. Ms. Stevens Becker answered that the funding was a reimbursement grant, and the project had to show a proportionate non-federal match. The project had raised \$2 million from private donations. The \$1.25 million increment would help the project get further along proportionately with the incomplete match amount. She believed the project could spend proportionate to the funds received but would stop if the remainder of the match was not received.

Co-Chair Schrage understood that the Ted Stevens Foundation should be able to get further funding down the line.

Co-Chair Schrage CLOSED public testimony.

CSSB 57(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Schrage reviewed the schedule for the following day.

ADJOURNMENT

3:09:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m.