

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

May 8, 2025

10:15 a.m.

10:15:12 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Foster called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 10:15 a.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

Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Sponsor; Emily Ricci, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Health; Kim Champney, Executive Director, Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities; Representative Dan Saddler; Representative Justin Ruffridge.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Kevin Richard, Director, Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office, Anchorage; Phillip Tafs, Self, Anchorage; Kermit Wilson, Executive Director, Advocacy Board, Juneau; Jared Kosin, President and CEO, Alaska Hospital and Healthcare Association, Anchorage; Michelle Baker, Executive Vice President, Southcentral Foundation, Anchorage; Kay Riley, Self, Juneau; Kerry Thomas, Acting Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Post-Secondary Education, Juneau.

SUMMARY

CSSB (FIN) 80  
EXTEND BOARDS

CSSB (FIN) 80 was REPORTED out of committee with seven "do pass" recommendations, two "no recommendation" recommendations, and one "amend" recommendation, and with three previously published fiscal impact notes: FN1 (CED), FN2 (CED), and FN3 (DOH).

HB 73 COMPLEX CARE RESIDENTIAL HOMES

HB 73 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 28 TEACHER/STATE EMPLOYEE STUDENT LOAN PRGRM

HB 28 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Foster reviewed the meeting agenda.

#sb80

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 80 (FIN)

"An Act extending the termination date of the Big Game Commercial Services Board; extending the termination date of the Board of Massage Therapists; extending the termination date of the Alaska Commission on Aging; extending the termination date of the Marijuana Control Board; and providing for an effective date."

[10:16:42 AM](#)

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, SPONSOR, introduced the bill.

Co-Chair Foster asked if anyone could discuss the letter included in the packet.

KEVIN RICHARD, DIRECTOR, ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA CONTROL OFFICE, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke to the letter.

Representative Allard asked about the personal services and the 10 full-time positions and one special investigator.

Mr. Richard responded that work was not passed on to the Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Representative Allard asked if the three special investigators used to fall under the DPS umbrella.

[10:20:41 AM](#)

Mr. Richard responded that at one point in time, enforcement was handled under the DPS umbrella but it was before his time.

Representative Allard asked whether and why they did not carry weapons anymore

Mr. Richard responded that they were generally focused on enforcement and regulation and not arresting people.

Representative Allard wanted to find out for sure if they could arrest and carry firearms.

Senator Bjorkman did not have a specific answer, because the circumstances varied based on the scenario.

Representative Allard relayed that her intent was that law enforcement should use the full force of the law to do what they needed to do.

[10:25:45 AM](#)

Co-Chair Josephson MOVED to REPORT CSSB(FIN)80 from committee, Work Draft 34-LS0416\N, with individual recommendations and attached fiscal notes.

CSSB(FIN) 80 was REPORTED out of committee with seven "do pass" recommendations, two "no recommendation" recommendations, and one "amend" recommendation, and with three previously published fiscal impact notes: FN1(CED), FN2(CED), and FN3(DOH).

#hb73

HOUSE BILL NO. 73

"An Act relating to complex care residential homes; and providing for an effective date."

[10:27:13 AM](#)

EMILY RICCI, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, reviewed HB 73.

[10:29:19 AM](#)

Co-Chair Foster OPENED public testimony.

[10:29:48 AM](#)

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

Representative Galvin asked about the bed limit of 15 per home.

Ms. Champney responded that the hope was to leave the limit as open ended as possible.

[10:35:42 AM](#)

Representative Hannan stressed that she wanted to provide support for people with a wide range of needs.

[10:38:38 AM](#)

PHILLIP TAFS, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the bill.

[10:41:18 AM](#)

KERMIT WILSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADVOCACY BOARD, JUNEAU (via teleconference), testified in support of the bill.

[10:43:56 AM](#)

JARED KOSIN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ALASKA HOSPITAL AND HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), stated that the association supported the bill.

Representative Galvin asked how many Alaskans were waiting for a spot.

Mr. Kosin responded that they did not have the data broken down to reasonably assess the number.

Representative Galvin asked if he could estimate.

Mr. Kosin responded that he would follow up with the information.

[10:47:53 AM](#)

Representative Allard asked if he could do it today to put it on public record.

Mr. Kosin responded that the assessment of bed need was approximately 1,491.

Representative Allard appreciated him putting it on the record

[10:48:57 AM](#)

MICHELLE BAKER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of HB 73.

[10:52:30 AM](#)

Representative Hannan wondered whether the limit was 16 or 60.

Ms. Baker responded that it was 16 or less

Representative Galvin noted that they were concerned about the size being too much and felt that the goal was for it to feel like a home based environment.

Ms. Baker responded that the intent was to create as much flexibility as allowed within the law.

Co-Chair Foster noted that Representative Dan Saddler was present

Representative Jimmie asked about village centers.

Ms. Baker responded that the framework allowed for a new license type at the village center.

[10:56:45 AM](#)

Co-Chair Foster CLOSED public testimony.

[10:57:08 AM](#)

Representative Bynum queried the definition of putting not more than fifteen, and striking it from the language.

Ms. Ricci responded the department was in support of providing flexibility to organizations.

Representative Bynum asked if there was anything that would prohibit them.

Ms. Ricci replied that it would not inhibit the department of doing the work.

[11:02:53 AM](#)

Co-Chair Josephson asked for clarification on the position of the department.

Ms. Ricci responded that the department did not support integrating kids and adults.

[11:05:18 AM](#)

AT EASE

[11:08:27 AM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Josephson stressed that the removal of the cap on residents would run opposite to recommendations.

Ms. Ricci responded that they had thoughtfully engaged with stakeholders and provider groups to ensure that the stakeholders would provide the best service.

Representative Tomaszewski asked about the timeframe.

Ms. Ricci responded that they believed that Sections 6 and 7 could be removed and a July 1 date could be implemented into the legislation.

Representative Tomaszewski wondered whether it would be better to move the bill out of committee and have an amendment on the floor.

[11:12:55 AM](#)

Representative Allard queried the definition of "stakeholders."

Ms. Ricci responded that stakeholders meant anyone who was working to meet the needs of individuals, and the complexities of different provider groups.

[11:16:49 AM](#)

Representative Allard understood that someone was in a homeless shelter who needed help, care could be delayed if there were not enough beds

Ms. Ricci responded in the affirmative.

Representative Allard understood that children could not be with adults.

Representative Galvin asked about the limit of fifteen.

[11:21:16 AM](#)

Ms. Ricci would hesitate to use the word investors, but were providers who see a need to offer a service.

Representative Galvin wondered why the number 15 was originally chosen.

Ms. Ricci responded that it was because of the limit of 16 beds or less.

Representative Hannan was in support of the bill being amended because the subtleties of the bill.

[11:26:06 AM](#)

Representative Johnson agreed that the committee should make the changes rather than doing it on the floor.

Co-Chair Foster stressed that the amendments would need to be rolled into a committee substitute.

Ms. Ricci thanked the committee.

HB 73 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

[11:29:37 AM](#)

#hb28

HOUSE BILL NO. 28

"An Act establishing a student loan repayment pilot program; and providing for an effective date."

[11:29:45 AM](#)

Co-Chair Foster OPENED public testimony.

[11:30:11 AM](#)

KAY RILEY, SELF, JUNEAU (via teleconference), testified in support of the bill.

[11:31:32 AM](#)

KERRY THOMAS, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA COMMISSION ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, JUNEAU (via teleconference), was online to answer questions about the bill.

Co-Chair Foster stated that Tuesday, May 13, 5pm was the amendment deadline.

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ADJOURNMENT

[11:32:46 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.