

**MALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 14, 2025

3:18 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Zack Fields, Co-Chair
Representative Carolyn Hall, Co-Chair
Representative Ashley Carrick
Representative Robyn Niayuq Burke
Representative Julie Coulombe
Representative David Nelson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Dan Saddler

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Calvin Schrage

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 99

"An Act relating to the business of money transmission; relating to licenses for money transmission, licensure requirements, and registration through a nationwide multistate licensing system; relating to the use of virtual currency for money transmission; relating to authorized delegates of a licensee; relating to acquisition of control of a license; relating to record retention and reporting requirements; authorizing the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development to cooperate with other states in the regulation of money transmission; relating to permissible investments; relating to violations and enforcement of money transmission laws; relating to exemptions to money transmission licensure requirements; relating to payroll processing services; relating to currency exchange licenses; amending Rules 79 and 82, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 99(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 121

"An Act relating to the practice of accounting; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 121 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 25

"An Act relating to disposable food service ware; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 25(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 99

SHORT TITLE: MONEY TRANSMISSION; VIRTUAL CURRENCY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) FIELDS

02/12/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/12/25	(H)	L&C, FIN
02/21/25	(H)	L&C AT 9:00 AM BARNES 124
02/21/25	(H)	Heard & Held
02/21/25	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
02/26/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
02/26/25	(H)	Heard & Held
02/26/25	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/05/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/05/25	(H)	Heard & Held
03/05/25	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/10/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/10/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/14/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 121

SHORT TITLE: ACCOUNTING; PRACTICE PRIVILEGE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) SCHRAGE

02/28/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/28/25	(H)	L&C
03/10/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/10/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/12/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/12/25	(H)	Heard & Held
03/12/25	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/14/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 25

SHORT TITLE: DISPOSABLE FOOD SERVICE WARE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) JOSEPHSON

01/22/25	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
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01/22/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25	(H)	STA, L&C
02/18/25	(H)	STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/18/25	(H)	Heard & Held
02/18/25	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
02/20/25	(H)	STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/20/25	(H)	Heard & Held
02/20/25	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
02/25/25	(H)	STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/25/25	(H)	Moved HB 25 Out of Committee
02/25/25	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
02/26/25	(H)	STA RPT 4DP 2AM
02/26/25	(H)	DP: HOLLAND, HIMSCHOOT, STORY, CARRICK
02/26/25	(H)	AM: MOORE, MCCABE
03/05/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/05/25	(H)	Heard & Held
03/05/25	(H)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/10/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124
03/10/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/14/25	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

KAREN TARVER, Member
 Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants
 Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Available for questions during the hearing on HB 121.

CRISTA BURSON, President & CEO
 Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants
 Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 121.

THOMAS NEILL, Chair
 Uniform Accountancy Act Committee
 Joint American Institute of CPAs/National Association of State Boards of Accountancy
 Seattle, Washington
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 121.

LINDSAY STOVALL
 The American Chemistry Council
 Sacramento, California
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 25.

BRITTANI ROBBINS, representing self

Wrangell, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 25.

KATIE CAPOZZI, President & CEO

Alaska Chamber of Commerce

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 25.

DYANI CHAPMAN, State Director

Alaska Environment

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 25.

HARRIET DRUMMOND, Former Alaska State Representative

Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 25.

KEN ALPER, Staff

Representative Andy Josephson

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 25.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:18:18 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR CAROLYN HALL called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:18 p.m. Representatives Burke, Carrick, Coulombe, Fields, and Hall were present at the call to order. Representatives Nelson arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 99-MONEY TRANSMISSION; VIRTUAL CURRENCY

[3:19:43 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 99, "An Act relating to the business of money transmission; relating to licenses for money transmission, licensure requirements, and registration through a nationwide multistate licensing system; relating to the use of virtual currency for money transmission; relating to authorized delegates of a licensee; relating to acquisition of control of a license; relating to record retention and reporting requirements; authorizing the Department of Commerce, Community,

and Economic Development to cooperate with other states in the regulation of money transmission; relating to permissible investments; relating to violations and enforcement of money transmission laws; relating to exemptions to money transmission licensure requirements; relating to payroll processing services; relating to currency exchange licenses; amending Rules 79 and 82, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee, adopted as a working document on 3/5/25, was the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 99, Version 34-LS0543\N, Gunther, 3/3/25 ("Version N").]

CO-CHAIR FIELDS gave wrap-up comments on HB 99, noting that he was carrying the bill on behalf of the administration.

CO-CHAIR HALL invited questions from committee members.

CO-CHAIR HALL invited amendments from committee members.

[3:20:45 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 1 to HB 99, Version N, labeled 34-LS0543\N.1, Gunther, 3/9/25, which read as follows:

Page 4, line 13, following the second occurrence of "denial":

Insert "in detail"

Page 4, line 14:

Delete "30"

Insert "60"

Page 20, line 8:

Following the first occurrence of "denial":

Insert "in detail"

Delete "30"

Insert "60"

[3:20:49 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS objected.

[3:21:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE explained that Amendment 1 would change the notice of denial language in the event that a company is denied a license, requiring that the language be specific and detailed "to avoid any confusion and mandate a proper response." She further explained that the denial can be appealed for 60 days instead of 30 days.

[3:21:55 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS stated that the [Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development] (DCCED) would prefer to keep the length for appeal at 30 days. He maintained his objection.

[3:22:11 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Nelson and Coulombe voted in favor of Amendment 1 to HB 99, Version N. Representatives Burke, Carrick, Fields, and Hall voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 1 failed to be adopted by a vote of 2-4.

[3:23:03 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE indicated that she would not be offering Amendment 2.

[3:23:14 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 3 to HB 99, Version N, labeled 34-LS0543\N.3, Gunther, 3/9/25, which read as follows:

Page 9, line 21:

Delete "that virtual currency is not money,"

There being no objection, Amendment 3 to HB 99 was adopted.

[3:23:47 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 4 to HB 99, Version N, as amended, labeled 34-LS0543\N.4, Gunther, 3/9/25, which read as follows:

Page 10, line 28:

Delete "five"

Insert "three"

[3:23:53 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS objected.

[3:23:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE explained that Amendment 4 would reduce the recordkeeping requirement of [DCCED] from five years to three years because the five-year requirement is a burden on the businesses.

[3:24:10 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS stated that he appreciated the intent of Amendment 4 but could not support it due to inconsistency with federal regulations. He cited the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), which requires that records for money service businesses be kept for five years. He maintained his objection.

[3:24:48 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Nelson and Coulombe voted in favor of the motion to adopt Amendment 4 to HB 99, Version N. Representatives Carrick, Burke, Fields, and Hall voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 4 failed to be adopted by a vote of 2-4.

[3:25:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 5 to HB 99, Version N, as amended, labeled 34-LS0543\N.5, Gunther, 3/9/25, which read as follows:

Page 16, line 6:

Delete "all records the department reasonably requires"

Insert "records necessary for the department"

Page 23, line 13:

Delete "All records"

Insert "**Records** [ALL RECORDS]"

Page 23, line 14, following "department":

Insert "**only as permitted**"

There being no objection, Amendment 5 was adopted.

[3:25:53 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 3:25 p.m.

[3:26:15 PM](#)

REPRESENTAIVE COULOMBE indicated that she would not be offering Amendment 6.

[3:26:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 7 to HB 99, Version N, as amended, labeled 34-LS0543\N.7, Gunther, 3/9/25, which read as follows:

Page 24, lines 8 - 14:

Delete all material and insert:

"(b) The department may disclose information that is not otherwise subject to disclosure under (a) of this section to representatives of state or federal agencies **if the** [WHO PROMISE IN A RECORD THAT THEY WILL MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE INFORMATION OR IF THE DEPARTMENT FINDS THAT THE RELEASE IS REASONABLY NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC AND IN THE INTERESTS OF JUSTICE, AND THE MONEY SERVICES] licensee has been given previous notice by the department of **the department's** [ITS] intent to **disclose** [RELEASE] the information."

[3:26:36 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS objected.

[3:26:41 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE explained that Amendment 7 would reinstate language from the original bill version.

[3:27:13 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS stated his appreciation for Amendment 7. He stated that the ability to share information among regulators, including law enforcement, was critical to prevent money laundering and other criminal uses of money transmission. Additionally, he stated that it is important that licensee records are maintained and not destroyed. He emphasized the importance of law enforcement and regulatory oversight.

CO-CHAIR FIELDS maintained his objection.

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE pointed out that there are sections in statute that address money laundering. She stated it was her intention to avoid penalizing law-abiding citizens by not giving notice. She urged committee members to vote yes on the amendment.

[3:28:10 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Nelson and Coulombe voted in favor of the motion to adopt Amendment 7 to HB 99, Version N. Representatives Burke, Carrick, Fields, and Hall voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 7 failed to be adopted by a vote of 2-4.

[3:28:53 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS began a motion.

[3:29:10 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 3:29 p.m.

[3:29:19 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS moved to report HB 99, Version N, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the

accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 99(L&C) was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[3:29:58 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:29 p.m. to 3:36 p.m.

HB 121-ACCOUNTING; PRACTICE PRIVILEGE

[3:36:29 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 121, "An Act relating to the practice of accounting; and providing for an effective date."

[3:36:59 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL opened public testimony on HB 121.

[3:37:24 PM](#)

KAREN TARVER, Member, Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants, stated that she was available to answer questions during the hearing on HB 121, not to provide public testimony.

[3:37:52 PM](#)

CRISTA BURSON, President & CEO, Alaska Society of Certified Public Accountants (AKCPA), explained that the society consisted of over 600 members, including students, educators, and certified public accountants (CPAs) in both public and private practice. She stated that the AKCPA was in support of the proposed legislation, hopeful that HB 121 would help in filling the CPA pipeline shortage. Further, she stated that accounting students and faculty at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) expressed excitement that the proposed changes would allow students to enter the profession without additional expense and time. She thanked the committee members.

[3:39:13 PM](#)

THOMAS NEILL, Chair, Uniform Accountancy Act Committee, Joint American Institute of CPAs/National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (AICPA/NASBA) explained that the Uniform Accountancy Act Committee was responsible for developing and maintaining uniform model language for 55 jurisdictions to use

in developing accountancy acts and standards. He stated that HB 121 more closely aligns with current and forthcoming national standards. Additionally, he stated that HB 121 would simplify the licensure and education structure to allow more CPA candidates to become CPAs and serve Alaska residents and businesses. He stated that he was available to answer questions.

[3:40:26 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL, after ascertaining that there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 121.

[3:40:33 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 3:40 p.m.

[3:41:05 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL asked the will of the committee.

[3:41:31 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS moved to report HB 121 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 121 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[3:41:53 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:41 p.m. to 3:46 p.m.

HB 25-DISPOSABLE FOOD SERVICE WARE

[3:46:45 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 25, "An Act relating to disposable food service ware; and providing for an effective date."

[3:46:57 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL opened public testimony on HB 25.

[3:47:15 PM](#)

LINDSAY STOVALL, American Chemistry Council (ACC), testified in opposition to HB 25. She began her testimony by stating that ACC includes the leading suppliers and manufacturers of packaging food service products, including polystyrene food and beverage containers. She stated that while ACC strongly supports efforts to reduce plastic waste, it believes that HB 25 takes the wrong approach. She stated that HB 25 would restrict the use of polystyrene food service ware and mandate the use of only compostable or biodegradable alternatives, which, she asserted, would limit a restaurant's ability to use a variety of products, such as plastic and plastic-lined paper containers, bowls, cups, plates, and lids. She asserted that Anchorage lacks any commercial composting facilities and that any compostable food service ware collected by the Municipality [of Anchorage] (MOA) would wind up in the landfill. Additionally, she asserted that HB 25 does not address the need to transition to a circular economy and would ultimately favor certain materials over others, instead of offering a "more comprehensive waste management solution." She asserted that the alternative products required under the proposed legislation would result in higher operating costs for restaurants and businesses operating on thin margins could face increased financial constraints.

MS. STOVALL asserted that a practical first step towards a circular economy entails "understand[ing] current recycling and composting rates for all food service ware materials, sorting and processing infrastructure, and markets for collected materials." She argued that banning polystyrene food containers would not mean that alternatives would be recycled or composted. She stated that ACC had been involved in packaging recycling legislation "that seek[s] to reduce waste and increase the recycling of all types of packaging materials" in several states, including California, Colorado, Oregon, Hawai'i, and Washington. She referred to legislation currently being considered in Hawai'i.

MS. STOVALL concluded by stating ACC supports "policy ... that seeks to increase the recycling and recovery of all packaging materials, rather than imposing targeted product restrictions that may result in unintended consequences." She urged committee members to vote no on HB 25. She thanked the committee members.

[3:50:47 PM](#)

BRITTANI ROBBINS, representing self, testified in support of HB 25. She gave a list of her professional credentials. She

stated that she did research on the cost of alternatives to polystyrene, using webstaurant.com. She reported that an eco-friendly entre container would cost between 20 and 25 cents, whereas the Styrofoam would cost 13 to 15 cents; she noted that this cost differential was the largest she discovered in her research. She further reported that an eco-friendly salad would cost 18 to 26 cents, whereas the Styrofoam would cost 14 to 26 cents. She asserted that replacing banned stock with clean items was no different from replacing recalled products and should not be viewed as a burden.

MS. ROBBINS said her business is a "nickel and dime business" and stated that both of her grocery stores continued to operate despite a decreased population in Wrangell because she prioritized her customers, not her bottom line. She asserted that a business should prioritize what is best for customers, and a legislator should prioritize what is best for constituents. She argued that there would be no loss in business, stating that customers prefer green alternatives. She additionally asserted that there would be no increase in competition, stating that there is already a large, competitive market for "green supplies." She stated that biodegradable items decompose and do not leech toxic poisons into water, soil, our bodies, etc. She provided some personal anecdotes of the dangers of Styrofoam. She concluded by urging committee members to pass HB 25, as is, and thanked the committee members.

[3:56:15 PM](#)

KATIE CAPOZZI, President & CEO, Alaska Chamber, testified in opposition to HB 25. She gave prepared remarks [included in the committee file], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

The Alaska Chamber (the Chamber) writes in opposition to House Bill 25, an Act relating to disposable food service ware; and providing for an effective date.

The Alaska Chamber is the state's largest statewide business advocacy organization. Our mission is to promote a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state, representing 58,000 Alaskan workers and \$4.6 billion in wages.

HB25 would prohibit restaurants from using polystyrene foodservice containers and mandate the use of biodegradable or compostable alternatives. While the business community fully supports responsible waste reduction and improvements in recycling and recovery, HB25 takes the wrong approach by restricting businesses' ability to select the foodservice packaging that best meets their needs, while failing to consider the broader environmental and economic consequences.

All packaging materials, including compostable alternatives, leave an environmental footprint, requiring energy and resources for production, transportation, and disposal. Furthermore, the reality in Alaska is that the infrastructure needed to properly process compostable foodservice containers does not exist. Anchorage's Solid Waste Services' Curbside Compost Program and Community Compost drop-off sites do not accept compostable foodservice materials due to processing limitations. Without access to an industrial composting facility, these alternatives will likely end up in landfills, negating any intended environmental benefits.

HB 25 would impose significant financial burdens on Alaska's businesses. By requiring restaurants to use more expensive alternatives that may not perform as well—especially for hot or cold foods—this bill threatens to increase operating costs for businesses already struggling with narrow margins. The unintended consequence could be higher costs for consumers and additional strain on small businesses.

Moreover, the exemption language found within HB25 is vague and arbitrary. A regulator at the Department of Environmental Conservation does not have the expertise or ability to determine what regulations cause "undue hardship" to a restaurant. What might appear as a small financial burden in the context of this specific proposed law might be the final straw in a long line of other expensive mandates placed on the business. It is inappropriate for the government to decide what is and is not undue hardship on a business.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose HB 25 and consider more balanced, evidence-based solutions that

support both Alaska's businesses and environmental goals.

[3:59:35 PM](#)

DYANI CHAPMAN, State Director, Alaska Environment, testified in support of HB 25. She explained that her organization focuses on issues relating to clean air and water, and open spaces. She stated that polystyrene and plastic pollution is a mounting problem and cited studies that have predicted that there would be more plastic in weight than fish by 2050 using the earth's current trajectory. She reported that her organization tested 39 water sources in Southcentral Alaska in 2023 and found microplastics in 100 percent of the samples, including tap water in Anchorage. She stated that wildlife often mistakes pieces of plastic for food. Additionally, she stated that wildlife cannot fully digest plastic, and consumption thereof may lead to starvation. She also reported that salmon that are exposed to microplastics move more slowly and are more vulnerable to predation. She stated that exposure to microplastics in humans and mammals has been linked to fertility problems, developmental issues, cancer, and dementia. She stated that polystyrene breaks down into microscopic pieces that are difficult to clean up, is particularly toxic to humans and wildlife, and takes centuries to fully degrade. She acknowledged that a "brightline circular system" would be ideal but asserted that some materials are more harmful than others and that the proposed legislation is "a good step in the right direction."

MS. CHAPMAN referred to a previous committee, in which Representative Vance noted that Homer, Alaska, is Styrofoam-free. She remarked that polystyrene is still very prominent in Anchorage, Alaska, and many other communities in the state. She asserted that the passage of HB 25 would keep people and wildlife healthier in Alaska by getting rid of some of the worst plastics. She concluded by stating that "nothing we use for a couple minutes should pollute our environment for hundreds of years." She thanked the committee members.

[4:02:11 PM](#)

HARRIET DRUMMOND, Former Alaska State Representative, testified in support of HB 25. She asserted that HB 25 would be an "amazing start." She gave several personal anecdotes about the importance of reducing plastic use, ways to reuse plastic, such as reusable takeout containers, and incentives for recycling plastic.

[4:04:33 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL, after ascertaining that there was no one else who wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 25.

CO-CHAIR HALL stated that the committee would not be offering Amendment 1 or Amendment 3 to HB 25.

CO-CHAIR HALL invited amendments from committee members.

[4:05:12 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS moved to adopt Amendment 2 to HB 25, labeled 34-LS0256\A.5, Dunmire, 3/12/25, which read as follows:

Page 1, line 4, following "**ware**":

Insert "**and containers provided by customers**"

Page 1, lines 4 - 5:

Delete "(e) and (f)"

Insert "(e) - (g)"

Page 1, line 11:

Delete "(f)"

Insert "(g)"

Page 1, following line 13:

Insert a new subsection to read:

"(e) The department may adopt regulations that allow a restaurant to provide prepared food in a clean container provided by a customer of the restaurant. The regulations must establish procedures to prevent cross-contamination."

Reletter the following subsections accordingly.

[4:05:24 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL objected for the purpose of discussion.

[4:05:33 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS explained that the amendment would allow, not require, citizens to take reusable containers to a restaurant for the purpose of takeout. He credited Representative Mears for the amendment, noting that she was the only current legislator to have worked in waste management/recycling.

[4:05:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE asked for clarification that the amendment would not require a restaurant to accept reusable containers.

[4:06:12 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS clarified that it is "100 percent voluntary" for the restaurant to decide if it would accept reusable containers.

[4:06:21 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK noted that people are already bringing their own coffee cups to coffee stands. She queried whether there was language in statute preventing people from bringing their own containers/cups.

[4:06:52 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS clarified that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) does not currently penalize people for bringing their own containers or cups and noted that the amendment was for clarity.

[4:07:09 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL removed her objection to the motion to adopt Amendment 2 to HB 25. There being no further objection, it was so ordered.

[4:07:25 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 4 to HB 25, as amended, labeled 34-LS0256\A.2, Dunmire, 3/11/25, which read as follows:

Page 2, following line 28:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

TRANSITION: POLYSTYRENE PRODUCTS. (a)
Notwithstanding AS 17.20.035, enacted by sec. 1 of this Act, a restaurant may provide prepared food in polystyrene foam disposable food service ware after the effective date of this Act if the restaurant obtained the polystyrene foam disposable food service ware before the effective date of this Act.

(b) Notwithstanding AS 17.20.035, enacted by sec. 1 of this Act, the state may use polystyrene foam disposable food service ware after the effective date of this Act if the state purchased the polystyrene foam disposable food service ware before the effective date of this Act."

Renumber the following bill section accordingly.

[4:07:30 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL objected for the purpose of discussion.

[4:07:36 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE explained that Amendment 4 would address the effective date. She shared her concern about businesses having to dump inventory upon passage of HB 25. She further explained that Amendment 4 would change the effective date language, not the effective date. She stated, "A company cannot obtain polystyrene products after the effective date. The original language stated that you can't use polystyrene after the effective date. This allows companies to move through prior

purchased inventory and not lead to unneeded waste by disposing of already purchased and manufactured polystyrene products." She reiterated that the effective date would be the same, explaining that she would like companies to get through their existing inventory while still prohibiting them from purchasing any new polystyrene products after the effective date of the proposed legislation.

[4:08:44 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS stated the effective date was of concern. He offered his support for the amendment and stated that the bill sponsor supported the amendment as well. He thanked Representative Coulombe for the idea.

[4:09:05 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL removed her objection to the motion to adopt Amendment 4 to HB 25, as amended. There being no further objection, Amendment 4 was adopted.

[4:09:22 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE indicated that she would not be offering Amendment 5.

[4:09:36 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE moved to adopt Amendment 6 to HB 25, as amended, labeled 34-LS0256\A.6, Dunmire, 3/13/25, which read as follows:

Page 1, line 4:

Delete "(e)"

Insert "(d)"

Page 1, line 5:

Delete "(f)"

Insert "(e)"

Page 1, lines 9 - 11:

Delete all material.

Reletter the following subsections accordingly.

Page 2, line 9:

Delete "biodegradable or compostable"

Page 2, lines 14 - 16:

Delete all material.

Renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

4:09:47 PM

CO-CHAIR FIELDS objected for the purpose of discussion.

4:10:00 PM

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE explained that Amendment 6 would strike the language that "restaurants must only use biodegradable, compostable food service ware as an alternative to polystyrene." She further explained that it would give restaurants more flexibility to replace their Styrofoam products.

4:10:08 PM

CO-CHAIR FIELDS opined that the amendment would make the bill language consistent with the bill intent, stating that "a ban on polystyrene is not a ban on plastic." He offered his belief that there are other plastics that are not as injurious as polystyrene. He offered his support for the amendment, noting that "it appropriately narrows the bill, so we are dealing with a human health and environmental issue, but were also preserving a lot of flexibility for businesses." He additionally stated that Amendment 6 would address a lot of the concerns heard during public testimony. He withdrew his objection to Amendment 6 to HB 25, as amended. There being no further objection, Amendment 6 was adopted.

4:11:06 PM

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE [moved to adopt] Conceptual Amendment [7] to HB 25, as amended, as follows:

Page 2, line 12:

Preceding "hardship"
Insert "financial and logistical"

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE clarified that the conceptual amendment would be in response to business concerns about hardship, stating that she did not want to impose an undue burden under HB 25.

[4:11:55 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS opined that the conceptual amendment would be a good idea, if products were to be excessively expensive or the products were unavailable. He stated he could not see why [legislators] would not provide that clarification to [DEC].

[4:12:08 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK objected.

[4:12:14 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:12 p.m. to 4:13 p.m.

[4:13:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE restated the motion to adopt Conceptual Amendment [7].

[4:14:38 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK maintained her objection and asked to hear from the bill sponsor's staff regarding Conceptual Amendment [7].

[4:14:53 PM](#)

KEN ALPER, Staff, Representative Andy Josephson, Alaska State Legislature, explained that there is not a lot of guidance in current Alaska Statute on how a regulator might define "hardship". He offered his belief that Representative Josephson would not be opposed to the language but cautioned he could not make that statement with certainty.

[4:15:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK said she appreciated the clarification from the bill sponsor's office.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK removed her objection to Conceptual Amendment [7] to HB 25, as amended, and articulated that she was comfortable supporting the conceptual amendment knowing that the language "hardship" already existed in Alaska Statute.

[4:16:05 PM](#)

MR. ALPER cited an e-mail received from Reese Williams, DEC's legislative liaison, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Good morning,

If passed, the approach would be as practical and accessible as possible, while respecting business' privacy. Applicants could submit a statement of hardship explaining specific challenges they face. Supporting documentation could include cost comparisons or supplier availability issues.

MR. ALPER noted that the conceptual amendment from Representative Coulombe appeared to be in line with the e-mail from DEC.

[4:16:55 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL restated that Representative Carrick removed her objection to Conceptual Amendment [7] to HB 25, as amended. There being no further objection, Conceptual Amendment [7] was adopted.

[4:17:22 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FIELDS moved to report HB 25, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

[4:17:33 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE objected.

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE offered her appreciation for the passage of her amendments. She reiterated that she does not like

Styrofoam and explained her approach to the proposed legislation was business oriented. She reported that in conversation with business owners, restaurants already have a difficult time adjusting to the new requirements for minimum wage and paid sick leave. She offered her concern regarding putting an undue burden on businesses and offered appreciation for collaboration on HB 25.

REPRESENTATIVE COULOMBE removed her objection.

CO-CHAIR FIELDS offered his appreciation for Representative Coulombe's comments and collaboration on refining HB 25.

[4:18:32 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HALL announced there being no further objection, CSHB 25(L&C) was reported out of House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[4:19:02 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.