

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

January 27, 2026

3:17 p.m.

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Ashley Carrick, Chair
Representative Andi Story, Vice Chair
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Ky Holland
Representative Sarah Vance
Representative Kevin McCabe
Representative Steve St. Clair

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Jeremy Bynum

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 124

"An Act relating to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 81

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

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 202

"An Act designating giant cabbage as the official state vegetable; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 124

SHORT TITLE: AIDEA

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) CARRICK

03/05/25 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/05/25 (H) STA, FIN
01/22/26 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
01/22/26 (H) Heard & Held
01/22/26 (H) MINUTE(STA)
01/27/26 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120

BILL: HB 81

SHORT TITLE: ACCESS TO MARIJUANA CONVICTION RECORDS

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) D. NELSON

02/03/25 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/03/25 (H) STA, JUD
02/27/25 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/27/25 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>
03/06/25 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/06/25 (H) Heard & Held
03/06/25 (H) MINUTE(STA)
01/27/26 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

RANDY RUARO, Executive Director
Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Shared an AIDEA presentation and answered questions during the hearing on HB 124.

ALEXUS KWCHKA, representing self
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

MARY GLAVES
Alaska Backcountry Hunter and Anglers
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support HB 124.

JOHN GAEDEKE, Lodge Owner
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

SUSAN GEORGETTE, representing self
Kotzebue, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

DAVID LESLIE
Northern Alaska Environmental Center
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

RON YARNELL, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

MADDIE HALLORAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

BARRY WHITEHILL, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

MATTHEW JACKSON, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

ANDREA FENIGER, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

ASPEN FRICK, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 124.

ROBERT SHELDON, representing self
Talkeetna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on HB 124.

STANLEY ROGERS, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB124.

DIOOLA ERICKSON, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support for HB 124.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID NELSON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, reintroduced HB 81 and answered questions.

LISA PURINTON, Director
Division of Statewide Services
Department of Public Safety
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the hearing on HB 81.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:17:58 PM](#)

CHAIR ASHLEY CARRICK called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:17 p.m. Representatives St. Clair, McCabe, Vance, Holland, Himschoot, Story, and Carrick were present at the call to order.

^#hb124

HB 124-AIDEA

[3:19:42 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 124 "An Act relating to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority; and providing for an effective date."

[3:19:50 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease from 3:19 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.

[3:20:23 PM](#)

RANDY RUARO, Executive Director, Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) began a PowerPoint presentation on AIDEA and HB 124. Referring to slide 3, "The Policy Behind AIDEA," he said AIDEA's roots go back to the Alaska Constitution in Art VIII, Sec 1. The Alaska Statehood Act is another important part of AIDEA's history. He said Congress wanted the state to be successful and support itself and produce jobs.

MR. RUARO, referring to slide 4, "How did the Alaska Constitution and the Alaska Statehood Act Produce AIDEA?," said AIDEA was created quickly after statehood, in 1961. The statutes have been modified but largely held as originally

written. The legislature that created AIDEA was worried about not having enough financing and developing resources required to access financing.

MR. RUARO, referring to slide 5, "The Policy against unemployment and poverty," said they were worried about the negative effects of unemployment and poverty. He said especially in areas where the rates were extremely high such as rural Alaska and other places. These policies are still on the books in our findings; unemployment and poverty are bad things for Alaska. The harmful effects of unemployment and poverty include high suicide rates, increased mental health issues, homelessness, and poorer educational outcomes.

MR. RUARO, referring to slide 6, "Labor participation Rate/Earnings," said this graph shows the recent chart of labor participation. He stated that unemployment doesn't take into account people that have given up looking for work. He shared that one in three Alaskans are out of work. Continuing on slide 7, "Earning Levels in Alaska," he said this chart shows that total wages growth is higher where there is resource development. He gave examples from the chart of various projects.

[3:25:29 PM](#)

MR. RUARO, referring to slide 8, "How was AIDEA Designed to Work?," said AIDEA's structure was designed to have separation from the legislation and the legislative process. In addition, AIDEA was to have separation from the state and state treasury, very much like a private bank. He said AIDEA is a public corporation under the statutes and very different from the average agencies; it was intentionally created to have a separate existence from the state and managed by a board of directors appointed by the governor. He said AIDEA must manage assets under the prudent investor statute. Additionally, AIDEA was given broad powers to achieve its mission, including the ability to enter contracts with third parties. He stated that AIDEA can use its credit to lend and invest. He said AIDEA is not a state agency in the Executive Budget Act except for the annual operating budget. He stated AIDEA's budget exists only as receipts. He said there is a clear structure that was used by the legislature to give AIDEA separation.

[3:28:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked a question about a previous downgrade to AIDEA's bond or credit rating in 2018 or 2019. He asked if Mr. Ruaro could explain about change in credit rating and what that means.

MR. RUARO replied that AIDEA has studied the downgrade. It is the result of an appropriation by the legislature and dividend structure for about \$2 million for a roof in Nome. Since it was outside the statutes and rules for AIDEA, this is not a structure that supports the bond rating. It was viewed as a significant issue and resulted in at least a 20-point downgrade.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked if volatility in the agency is more important than the amount of money that AIDEA has. Investors and bond issuing entities look to see if AIDEA is subject to legislature actions as the legislature struggles with money. He stated the legislature took the money and created an issue for AIDEA; it was not about transparency.

MR. RUARO replied that is correct; AIDEA has a memo from the financial advisors on this issue, which he said he would submit.

[3:31:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY said that she had heard from a constituent about the downgrade. She had heard that the downgrade had to do with the lack of transparency. Also, AIDEA was providing very limited information on its loan program participants.

MR. RUARO replied that he is not aware of either of those concerns as the reason for the downgrade. He said he could provide the memo.

[3:32:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND stated that he wanted to follow-up and he may need to come back with this information. Directing attention to slide 9, AS 44.88.205 operating budget compliance with the Executive Budget Act, he asked if there was limitation on the operating budget and AIDEA to do an annual review of AIDEA's assets. He asked if this assessment and a report would be available by January 10. He inquired if there is a report available for the committee to review.

MR. RUARO stated that the report was filed with the Senate and House clerk and he will be sure that the committee gets that report.

MR. RUARO continued with his presentation on slide 10, "Legal Challenges to the Statutory Structure of AIDEA." He stated that challenges were brought almost immediately in 1961 over control over AIDEA's assets. In the case brought against AIDEA, the statutes were upheld and the state had the ability to create AIDEA as it exists. The challenges to the structure were resolved within a year.

MR. RUARO continued with slides 11 and 12, "The Policy against How has AIDEA been doing? What Can it do in the Future?," and "AIDEA Earns AA+ Bond Rating Highlighting Financial Strength and Alaska Commitment." He shared AIDEA received the best credit rating ever, AA+, and is at the top among its peers. The rating will benefit AIDEA and Alaska as AIDEA finances projects with a better credit rating than the State of Alaska. In the last three years, AIDEA has resolved several issues. It has produced two record years in a row of gross and net income which led to this credit rating.

[3:36:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked whether AIDEA evaluated whether HB 124 could negatively affect the bond rating and/or borrowing costs by increasing perceived political risk, credit concentration, or non-commercial decision-making.

MR. RUARO replied that AIDEA has some initial input from its financial advisors, PFM Financial Advisors, LLC, which said it would result in a significant downgrade and a serious effect on the credit rating. He will forward the information to the chair and committee members.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked if there was a list of all the businesses geographically that have participated or are participating in the Loan Participation Program (LPP). Further, he asked Mr. Ruaro to comment on those projects that would be affected by HB 124.

MR. RUARO replied that he can produce a list of LPP loan participant program borrowers under \$3 million. There are hundreds of them and several thousand of them, if it includes those that were paid off. It is one of AIDEA's most popular programs and makes up a quarter of AIDEA's entire asset value.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE stated AIDEA's asset value is over \$1.7 million and a quarter of that would be above the \$500 million in the bill. He asked if AIDEA would have to sell off these loans.

MR. RUARO replied that AIDEA's loan portfolio exceeds \$500 million and includes loans in progress. To reduce its total asset value, AIDEA would have to sell off every LPP loan or part of the portfolio. He stated AIDEA also has fixed assets to be considered.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE asked if the Interior Gas Utility (IGU) loan is under LPP. He stated that it is a \$139 million loan with terms of 35 years. He said AIDEA has a good track record of helping cities like Fairbanks with the Interior gas utility to be able to acquire cheap gas or heating. He asked if it would negate the terms of this loan.

MR. RUARO answered that the IGU loan does have very favorable terms. It allows it to function and grow and add users. He said IGU is a low performing loan, as LPP loans run at a statutory rate of 6 percent and IGU is far below that percentage. If AIDEA was forced to divest, it would keep with the highest performance of the portfolio. The IGU would likely rank near the bottom.

[3:43:30 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ST. CLAIR asked if AIDEA has an estimate of the impact a \$500 million divestiture would have on jobs.

MR. RUARO stated it is difficult to estimate the fiscal impact of divesting the portfolio. He said it would be significant; a range of 30-50 percent probably is not out of the range of possibilities. There certainly would be losses in hundreds of millions of dollars if forced to divest on a fast schedule. He stated there would be an employment impact due to the divestiture.

MR. RUARO continued with slides 13, "FY 2025 Annual Report - Record Breaking Performance." He stated that FY 2025 was the strongest financial performance in AIDEA's history. He shared the following statistics from the slide: Statutory Net Income of \$67.4 million; \$17 million in dividend to the state plus another \$6.5 million have of the payment for the ANWR leases; and \$512 million in cumulative dividends. He said that he anticipates the dividend payments to increase with various

sample investments given. He reiterated that the AA+ credit rating is the highest in history.

[3:48:11 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND stated that AIDEA's average rate of return is 3.8 percent compared to the permanent fund dividend (PFD) which has a great return of 9.4 percent; these rates of return are substantially different. He said using the \$1.7 billion asset base of AIDEA and looking at it through a percent of market value (POMV) lens, which is now a gold standard as a substantiable draw from the state's assets. He stated the POMV on \$1.7 billion would be a dividend to the state of about \$87 million. The state is down this year from \$20 million to \$17 million, despite AIDEA doing quite well. He asked Mr. Ruaro to help the committee understand what looks like an incongruity of the expectation of this asset and what the state might see as a dividend. He asked, "How is the dividend determined and how did AIDEA come up with \$17 million instead of \$87 million using the POMV like the PFD?"

MR. RUARO replied by statute it is a 25-50 percent range of net revenue. The board is not allowed to deviate outside of this range. This year's dividend amount, there was discussion by the board of not only the dividend but the additional funds of \$6.5 million ANWR funds. He stated additionally, big projects are putting a large demand on the assets. He gave examples of projects across the state. There is a strong interest in Alaska and developing energy and resource projects. Based on all the above, the board felt that \$17 million plus \$6.5 million was a fair place to land given the pressures on AIDEA on financing other projects. The board looked at a mixture of factors. He offered further explanation that on AIDEA oil and gas projects are not limited to the dividends but royalties as well. He suggested that part of the question may be how the return is measured.

[3:52:26 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND, looking at the balance sheet, observed that AIDEA has \$50 million and maybe \$400-500 million in cash assets. He stated there is no shortage of cash available and if the statute would have allowed, AIDEA could have given a 100 percent dividend. He said AIDEA would still have plenty of cash to fund projects on its six-year plan.

MR. RUARO replied there are a couple more takedowns from the gross assets that AIDEA have in our project pipeline that is likely to be funded. He said AIDEA is still doing due diligence on projects. The list totals billions for these projects. There are still projects that are committed, but the cash hasn't been dispersed because of timing issues. He said AIDEA has some very strong projects in the pipeline across the board. He said that not all projects would make it and AIDEA couldn't fund every project. He said AIDEA is trying to balance the commitment of funds.

MR. RUARO, continued with slides 14, "Loan Participation Program (LPP) Highlights and Regional Diversity." He shared the highlights on FY 25 LPP. He stated that banks come to AIDEA with projects looking for matching funds; it forms a large part of its loan portfolio. He stated that LPP are found across the state. He said AIDEA would like to increase loans in the southeast region as it is very light there. Delinquency rate is 0 percent and projects are working very well.

[3:57:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE stated comparing the PFD to AIDEA is like comparing apples and snowmachines. The PFD is designed to do one thing and AIDEA is not designed to bring dividends. He stated that AIDEA is designed for jobs according to the statute. He asked if AIDEA is anticipating needing money to fund contractors on these larger projects, like the gas pipeline.

MR. RUARO replied that the board is aware of the project and gets updates regularly. There are several ancillary projects that would tie into the line that would be realistic once the project goes forward. He said AIDEA does have interested parties that would likely come to AIDEA for the ancillary projects, so it is something that AIDEA is thinking of while declaring a dividend. He added further that when AIDEA funds an oil and gas project it is the highest and best return to the state. In this sense, the state gets a significant 25 percent dividend but also gets all the normal production, royalty, and property taxes.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE stated AIDEA has a \$1.7 billion balance sheet. He asked if AIDEA could do a 100 percent dividend without needing to liquidate its assets. He asked, "How liquid are AIDEA's assets?"

MR. RUARO replied it is true that AIDEA's assets contain half a billion dollars in loans. It also has fixed assets as well as loans. He specified that the \$1.7 billion is an asset number, not a cash value.

[4:02:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND wished he had AIDEA's financial statement. He asked what AIDEA's cash balance is on hand.

MR. RUARO replied roughly five hundred to six hundred million dollars.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND asked if AIDEA could pay a \$50 million dividend without having to liquidate assets.

MR. RUARO replied yes. He added that AIDEA has a fair amount of cash. It has committed funds that haven't been issued yet, as well as has many energy projects in the pipeline.

MR. RUARO continued with the AIDEA presentation on slide 15, "AIDEA Small Business Loans DCCED Managed Programs." He stated that AIDEA is seeing a stepped-up demand for these programs. These loans will go out very quickly and monitoring to see if it needs additional capital. On slide 16, "AIDEA Assets, Project Bonds and Loans," there is a map of Alaska with AIDEA projects. He highlighted various projects across the state.

[4:05:05 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND asked if there is continued work on the Ambler Road project, whether it expired or has been renewed.

MR. RUARO replied that it has been extended to the end of February 2026.

[4:06:02 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK opened public testimony on HB 124.

[4:06:40 PM](#)

ALEXUS KWCHKA, representing self, stated that she is 100 percent in support of HB 124. The bill will merely put guardrails on AIDEA using public and state money. There are both success and failures of AIDEA. This proposed bill will not hinder AIDEA but will mitigate the failures. The proposed bill will foster trust

and accountability. He said AIDEA is not different and cautions the legislature. He fully supports HB 124 but maybe \$500 million is not appropriate.

[4:08:42 PM](#)

MARY GLAVES, Alaska Backcountry Hunter and Anglers, said the chapter is in support of HB 124. Alaska deserves transparency, accountability, and public input. The proposed bill would improve trust and use of public land. The proposed bill would not stop development and would ensure it is well-vetted. The proposed bill would strengthen public trust and is a reasonable step forward.

[4:10:05 PM](#)

JOHN GAEDEKE, Lodge Owner, stated AIDEA proposed Ambler Road seventeen years ago. He has been attending numerous meetings with federal and state agencies and occasionally AIDEA has been there and "it has been a nonstop confusing mess." He stated that AIDEA's perspective has been on attracting foreign mining and out-of-state workers. He stated that communicating with AIDEA has been consistently poor marked by a lack of transparency. He feels responsibility and transparency are essential. He stated there is a lack of accountability from AIDEA, and it needs increased accountability and oversight. He supports HB 124 as a bare minimum.

[4:12:35 PM](#)

SUSAN GEORGETTE, representing self, said she is very active in a grassroots group, Protect the Kobuk, which is a forum for those opposed to Ambler Road. The forum represents 70 members who are current residents or tribal members of the Northwest Arctic Borough. She stated that AIDEA is dismissive of public concerns and lacks transparency. The Ambler Road is very divisive in the Northwest region. She supports HB 124.

[4:14:24 PM](#)

DAVID LESLIE, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, said he is the board secretary and is calling today to support HB 124. He said HB 124 will lead Alaska towards more responsible and ethical development of resources. The legislative confirmation requirement will lead to more transparency. He said Alaska Native representation would be good as they are the stewards of the land and can include indigenous knowledge. He supports the

increase in the time for public testimony, and it is very important especially during hunting and berry seasons. He supports extra oversight of large financial projects. He supports AIDEA being subject to the Public Records Act as other state agencies are to add transparency and accountability.

[4:17:17 PM](#)

RON YARNELL representing self, said he leads wilderness trips through the Brooks Range. He wants to thank the House State Affairs Committee for sponsoring this bill. He provided examples of questionable actions by AIDEA. He urges the Alaska State Legislature to investigate AIDEA. He said AIDEA has refused to release the full document of a report by Northern Economics.

[4:21:07 PM](#)

MADDIE HALLORAN, representing self, said she recalls twenty years ago when AIDEA financed a soccer field for \$50 million. She is in support of HB 124. She said AIDEA has spent millions of dollars in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). She stated that AIDEA was made to operate separately; AIDEA should be made accountable with Alaska money. She has tried to speak directly to representatives of AIDEA but they mostly discuss large projects in executive sessions. She hopes the committee will pass HB 124 and make it fair to protect Alaska's assets. She would repeat the previous speaker and ask for full release of report by Northern Economics.

[4:24:04 PM](#)

BARRY WHITEHILL, representing self, said he is calling in support of HB 124. He thanked the previous callers that have stressed the lack of transparency and visibility. He is a subsistence person, and the impact of Amber Road will last for eons. He hates to see future generations saddled with the clean-up of this project.

[4:26:03 PM](#)

MATTHEW JACKSON, representing self, said he was born and raised in Ketchikan and currently lives in Anchorage. He is here to support HB 124. He has tried to testify to AIDEA, and they are uninterested in public comments. He supports expanding the board and tribal representation. He thinks the proportion of out-of-state workers is at an all-time high. He said AIDEA is

not creating year-round jobs for Alaskans; there are better things that could be done with these funds. He opined that HB 124 is a step in the right direction.

[4:28:14 PM](#)

ANDREA FENIGER, representing self, said she thinks the legislature could go farther in regulating AIDEA, but it is a great start. She stated that AIDEA's structure has developed a lack of transparency, and she commented that AIDEA doesn't take public input. The legislature can offer oversight, and another set of eyes would be good. The Northern Economics Report was released only as a summary. She supports reigning in AIDEA through HB 124.

[4:30:13 PM](#)

ASPEN FRICK, representing self, said that AIDEA has spent millions of Alaska dollars on failing projects without any public input or oversight. She stated that AIDEA has lost \$11.4 billion from the PFD. She said AIDEA is more likely to lose money than to make money. She shared AIDEA's mission from its website. She fully supports the terms under House Bill 124.

[4:31:42 PM](#)

ROBERT SHELDON, representing self, stated that he is a life-long Alaskan. He works across the public and private sectors including military. He served on various boards across the last six administrations requiring legislative approval. He stated it was his pleasure to serve on the AIDEA board from 2010-2013. He stated if one wants to stifle business, reduce partnering with the military and federal government, then restrict AIDEA. Impairing AIDEA in any way will have an immediate detrimental effect on all Alaskans in all walks of life and areas in the state. Many of Alaska's small businesses are participants in LPP. He provided many examples of AIDEA's work while he was on the AIDEA board. He summarized by saying impairing AIDEA in any way will have a detrimental effect.

[4:35:58 PM](#)

STANLEY ROGERS, representing self, said he is a 26-year-old carpenter, and he wholeheartedly supports HB 124. He asked how much resources the state has lost in exchange for temporary gains in mining and oil. He concluded by restating his support for HB 124.

[4:37:06 PM](#)

DIOOLA ERICKSON, representing self, said she was born and raised in Southeast and is a life-long Alaskan. She thanked Representative Carrick for sponsoring this bill. She stated that AIDEA has been around for 50 years. She has been trying to engage with AIDEA and hasn't had success. The proposed bill will provide oversight. She stated support for HB 124.

[4:39:24 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:39 to 4:40.

[4:40:16 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK announced that she would leave public testimony open on HB 124 until after Thursday's hearing.

CHAIR CARRICK announced HB 124 was held over.

^#hb81

HB 81-ACCESS TO MARIJUANA CONVICTION RECORDS

[4:41:15 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 81, "An Act restricting the release of certain records of convictions; and providing for an effective date."

[4:41:48 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID NELSON, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, reintroduced and answered questions on HB 81. The bill is an important step in providing an opportunity for people with low level marijuana possession convictions to make a more significant economic impact on the state. He stated that hardworking Alaskans are facing barriers to employment, housing, licensing, and volunteering. He shared that 28 states have already enacted laws that apply specifically to records confidentiality regarding certain marijuana related offenses. At a time when Alaska really is struggling to find enough qualified workers to fill job openings, individuals shouldn't be excluded based on actions that are no longer illegal. He stated that HB 81 would make certain marijuana convictions confidential on basic background checks while keeping those convictions available for government agencies and qualified individuals.

Individuals that are 21 years or older at the time of the crime, possessed one ounce or less of marijuana, and not convicted of any other crimes can request the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to make those crimes on records confidential. The proposed legislation doesn't remove the crimes from the records. He said DPS would have until January 1, 2028, to amend its database. The Alaska Court System has already amended its records.

[4:43:52 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK invited committee questions.

[4:44:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND asked for confirmation that the bill would apply to pre-legalization offenses in Alaska and does not pertain to federal offenses.

REPRESENTATIVE D. NELSON confirmed that is correct. He deferred to Lisa Purinton for further details.

[4:46:12 PM](#)

LISA PURINTON, Director, Division of Statewide Services, Department of Public Safety, advised that it would be limited to the state convictions and history.

CHAIR CARRICK asked if 35 other states have already done this.

REPRESENTATIVE D. NELSON replied that is correct.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT asked about a constituent unable to travel overseas because of an earlier marijuana conviction and asked whether the proposed legislation would help the person be able to travel.

REPRESENTATIVE D. NELSON replied that he didn't know the specific facts and there may be extenuating circumstances.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT added that it was a misdemeanor. He was caught smoking marijuana when it was still illegal.

MS. PURINTON stated that it would limit the displaying conviction information for those who are 21 years or older and the possession was under one ounce. The statute is very specific on when the information would be released; this is

limited to a name-based background check. If a fingerprint-based background check or a background check for another reason were requested, then that information would still be released.

CHAIR CARRICK asked if HB 81 was broad enough and asked how many people would be affected.

REPRESENTATIVE D. NELSON replied around 8,500 Alaskans.

[4:49:43 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK opened public testimony on HB 81. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, she closed public testimony.

[4:50:03 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 4:50 p.m.

[4:50:25 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK confirmed there are no more questions from the committee.

[4:50:43 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:50 p.m. to 4:51 p.m.

[4:51:37 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK set an amendment deadline for HB 81 and thanked the sponsor for his bill.

[HB 81 was held over.]

#

[4:51:58 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:52 p.m. to 4:53 p.m.

[4:53:10 PM](#)

CHAIR CARRICK noted that HB 202 would not be heard. She related future scheduling details.

[4:54:11 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.