

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 4, 2025

1:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Ashley Carrick, Co-Chair
Representative Ted Eischeid, Co-Chair
Representative Genevieve Mina
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Kevin McCabe
Representative Elexie Moore

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Cathy Tilton

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Board of Marine Pilots

Donald Habeger - Juneau

James Cunningham - Homer

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

DONALD HABEGER, Appointee
Board of Marine Pilots
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the Board of Marine Pilots.

JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Appointee
Board of Marine Pilots
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as an appointee to the Board of Marine Pilots.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:31:07 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR EISCHEID called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Representatives Stutes, McCabe, Moore, Carrick, and Eischeid were present at the call to order. Representative Mina arrived as the meeting was in progress.

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS BOARD OF MARINE PILOTS

[1:32:00 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR EISCHEID announced that the only order of business would be the confirmation hearings for the Board of Marine Pilots.

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DONALD HABEGER, Appointee, Board of Marine Pilots, testified as an appointee to the Board of Marine Pilots. He introduced himself to the committee, explaining that he originally chose to join the board on an impulse. He emphasized that his resume is heavily focused around the marine industry, including a ship agent position, a position running the Port of Juneau, and a position working for the government relations team for Royal Caribbean. Since these positions, he has been involved with other varied interests, including community development. He addressed his qualifications for the board, stating that he qualifies as one of the two public members. Per requirement for a public member position on the board, he added that he has never been a marine pilot and is not invested in any occupation that the board regulates.

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MR. HABEGER, in response to a question from Representative Stutes, clarified that he is a member of the Juneau Reentry Coalition.

[1:38:56 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease.

[1:39:53 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR EISCHEID acknowledged a technical issue.

[1:40:43 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 1:40 p.m. to 1:49 p.m.

[1:49:03 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR EISCHEID introduced the next appointee.

[1:49:30 PM](#)

JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Appointee, Board of Marine Pilots, shared his experience and qualifications being a maritime pilot. He stated that he has served on the board for the past three years. He added that he graduated from the Maine Maritime Academy where he attended the marine pilot's training program. He stated that he became a full pilot in 2021.

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MR. CUNNINGHAM, in response to a question from Representative Stutes, explained that the Maine Maritime Academy is a private school while Kings Point [United States Merchant Marine Academy] is a federally backed school. He stated that the certifications are "identical;" however, Kings Point graduates are required to serve in the Navy Reserve for five years.

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES expressed her appreciation for his past service on the board.

MR. CUNNINGHAM discussed the importance of the maritime industry in the state.

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REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE expressed his appreciation for marine pilots in the state, especially in conjunction with Port McKinsey.

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES expressed her appreciation for marine pilots in the state, especially in conjunction with the Alaska Marine Highway System.

[1:54:40 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR CARRICK expressed her support for marine pilots in the state.

[1:54:53 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR EISCHEID opened public testimony. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, he closed public testimony.

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CO-CHAIR EISCHEID made closing comments. He reminded members to stay in the room to sign the report. [The House Transportation Standing Committee has reviewed the qualifications for the governor's appointees and recommends that the following name be forwarded to a joint session for consideration: Donald Habeger and James Cunningham as appointees to the Board of Marine Pilots. The committee was reminded that this does not reflect intent by any of the members to vote for or against these individuals during any further sessions for the purposes of confirmation.]

[1:56:12 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.