

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE

March 21, 2025

1:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Matt Claman, Chair
Senator Jesse Kiehl, Vice Chair
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Löki Tobin
Senator Robert Myers

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Alaska Police Standards Council
Timothy Collins - Kodiak

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct
Bill Satterberg - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

Supporting the admittance of Washington, D.C., into the Union as a state of the United States of America.

- MOVED CSSJR 6(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SJR 6

SHORT TITLE: WASHINGTON D.C. STATEHOOD

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) TOBIN

01/24/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/24/25	(S)	STA, JUD
02/25/25	(S)	STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

02/25/25 (S) Heard & Held
02/25/25 (S) MINUTE (STA)
03/04/25 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/04/25 (S) Moved SJR 6 Out of Committee
03/04/25 (S) MINUTE (STA)
03/05/25 (S) STA RPT 3DP 2DNP
03/05/25 (S) DP: KAWASAKI, WIELECHOWSKI, GRAY-
JACKSON
03/05/25 (S) DNP: BJORKMAN, YUNDT
03/10/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/10/25 (S) Heard & Held
03/10/25 (S) MINUTE (JUD)
03/21/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

Timothy Collins, Appointee
Alaska Police Standards Council
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council

Bill Satterberg, Appointee
Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

ED MARTIN, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified with concerns related to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

SCOTT EGGER, representing self
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to the appointment of Mr. Satterberg to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

SUKI MILLER, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified with concerns about the appointment of Mr. Satterberg to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff
Senator Matt Claman
Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the summary of changes for SJR 6 from version N to version I.

MAGGIE GRENIER, Staff
Senator Löki Tobin
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Indicated she was available for questions on SJR 6.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:31:01 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN called the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Stevens, Myers, Tobin, Kiehl, and Chair Claman.

^CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) ALASKA POLICE STANDARDS COUNCIL

CONFIRMATION HEARING

ALASKA POLICE STANDARDS COUNCIL

[1:31:40 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of a governor's appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council.

CHAIR CLAMAN invited Mr. Collins to put himself on the record and begin his comments.

[1:32:10 PM](#)

TIMOTHY COLLINS, Appointee, Alaska Police Standards Council, Kodiak, Alaska, testified as a governor's appointee to the Alaska Police Standards Council and gave a brief overview of his experience and background. He said he is a sergeant with the Alaska State Troopers and has served proudly in law enforcement for nearly 13 years. He started his career with the New Castle County Police Department in Delaware in 2012. He gained invaluable experience working on patrol, as a detective with the property crime squad, and the Special Victims' Unit. He investigated sensitive and challenging cases, which focused on crimes against children and sexual offenses. He stated that throughout his career, he had the privilege of serving in specialized part-time assignments, including the crisis negotiation team, and as an instructor on topics such as ethics in policing, sex crimes, and crimes against children. He decided to make a lateral move to the Alaska State Troopers in 2021, allowing him to serve in a police community where integrity is

of paramount importance. He said that he served as a patrol trooper in Soldotna and Emmonak, experiencing firsthand the unique challenges and rewards of policing in Alaska's diverse environment. He was promoted to sergeant in 2023 and is the post and patrol supervisor in Kodiak, where he leads and mentors a dedicated team of troopers. He said he will work diligently to uphold the highest standards of law enforcement in Alaska, ensuring that officers are equipped with the training, resources, and support they need to serve communities. He stated that he is committed to promoting transparency, ethical policing, and accountability to foster trust between law enforcement and the public.

[1:34:31 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS commented that his references said he is well respected, liked, and has a remarkable spouse and children. He said that everyone he spoke to thinks highly of him and believes he would make a great candidate for this position.

[1:35:07 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL referenced the testifier's earlier statement that a lateral move to the Alaska State Troopers allowed him to work in an environment where integrity is paramount. He asked the testifier to describe the experiences or observations that motivated his decision to join the Alaska State Troopers.

MR. COLLINS stated that as a new police officer beginning his career on the East Coast, he initially wanted to remain close to home and family. He said that throughout his career, he had heard about the Alaska State Troopers and took time to research the agency and make calls to Alaska. He recalled that his first exposure was through a National Geographic program that featured the State Troopers and their distinctive work. Observing their professionalism and the way they conducted themselves, he recognized that the agency held itself to very high standards of policing, integrity, and commitment to serving and protecting communities the right way. He said the agency has been very good to him and his family, and that the troopers he serves with in Kodiak and elsewhere have all exemplified that same integrity.

[1:37:25 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked to hear about any instances in the testifier's career where he played a role in upholding, improving, maintaining, or protecting the integrity and standards expected of law enforcement officers.

MR. COLLINS replied that as a supervisor in Kodiak, part of his responsibility is to ensure troopers uphold the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and accountability in their policing. He said that he has, on occasion, had to speak with troopers to ensure they conduct themselves appropriately and maintain those standards. He noted that this sometimes includes disciplining or reprimanding troopers, when necessary, which is essential to maintain integrity, but never pleasant. He stated that he has been involved in such processes and is direct in addressing situations when he observes a trooper or police officer straying from those expectations.

[1:39:19 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN observed that he had served as a state trooper in Emmonak, and as someone who was born and raised in Nome, understands the consequences when law enforcement officers do not uphold appropriate standards. She expressed interest in hearing about his experiences and personal beliefs regarding issues unique to Alaska, such as cultural competency training, trauma-informed care, and opportunities for officers to better understand the nuances of rural communities. She noted that part of his responsibility is to ensure officers assigned to these communities are adequately prepared to serve the residents who live there.

MR. COLLINS replied that working in Western Alaska communities is a very unique experience. He said that when he speaks with former coworkers from the East Coast and Lower 48, they are often surprised by the conditions and the realities of policing in those areas, including the challenges of working alone with very limited resources. He explained that while stationed in Emmonak, he served on a two-weeks-on, two-weeks-off rotation and was the sole trooper responsible for four surrounding villages. He stated that the workload can be difficult for troopers in rural areas. He learned the importance of immersing himself in the community by attending local events and building relationships. He said he still maintains close friendships there and values the connections he built.

MR. COLLINS emphasized that rural law enforcement requires being well-versed in trauma-informed care and maintaining a victim-centered approach. He suggested that the Police Standards Council and related agencies consider requiring the officers assigned to Western Alaska complete more advanced training in sexual assault and domestic violence response before deployment. He said that such preparation would better equip officers for the volume and nature of cases they encounter and would

ultimately benefit both the officers and the communities they serve.

[1:43:08 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN expressed appreciation for the work he does.

[1:43:25 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked whether, during his testimony, he had mentioned the possibility of receiving additional training and moving to a different position within the Alaska State Troopers.

MR. COLLINS replied that he had no plans to leave Kodiak. He stated that at his previous agency, he served as a detective in the Special Victims Unit and was an instructor on topics such as crimes against children.

^CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct

CONFIRMATION HEARING
ALASKA COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

[1:44:54 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced consideration of a governor's appointee to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

CHAIR CLAMAN invited Mr. Satterberg to put himself on the record and proceed with his testimony.

[1:45:19 PM](#)

BILL SATTERBERG, Appointee, Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, Fairbanks, Alaska, testified as a governor's appointee to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct. He provided a brief overview of his background, stating that he came to Alaska in 1959 and grew up in Anchorage. He said he attended the University of Alaska before going east to law school, later studying in London through a program affiliated with Notre Dame, and then returning to Syracuse University, where he completed his law degree and earned a master's in public administration. He explained that upon returning to Alaska, he accepted a position with the Attorney General's Office in Fairbanks, where he worked for a little over four years before taking an assignment in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands as an assistant attorney general in the Saipan-Guam area. He shared that during his first year of marriage, he and his wife moved to Saipan. He said the island became a second home, where he continues to maintain a law practice. He stated that he has been practicing law since 1976, marking about 48 1/2 years in

practice. He shared that he and his wife have two adult children, both adopted from Micronesia, and that they now have grandchildren.

[1:46:55 PM](#)

MR. SATTERBERG stated that his professional experience centers primarily on trial law, divided about evenly between civil and criminal work. He has done a lot of practice before the Alaska Court of Appeals and the Alaska Supreme Court, with numerous cases decided by those courts.

MR. SATTERBERG said he served in a judicial capacity with the Presbyterian Church as part of the Permanent Judicial Commission, which is a statewide role within the church. He also served as an arbitrator in various matters. He emphasized the importance of the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, describing it as, in essence, the body that "judges the judges." He said he takes the appointment seriously, expressed his admiration for the Commission's operations after visiting it the previous week. He asserted that there needs to be a system of checks and balances. He looks forward to confirmation and the opportunity to serve on the Commission.

[1:48:49 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS asked, out of curiosity, whether he had ever observed any particular practices that he believed might warrant further review by the Commission.

MR. SATTERBERG replied that over the years he has seen various things take place, though none come immediately to mind. He stated that there have been occasions when he felt some judges were a bit too informal in their conduct, noting that the judges he was referring to are no longer on the bench. He said that, without naming names, he has represented superior court judges and one justice in matters years ago, observing that judges, like anyone else, can make mistakes and sometimes must be held accountable. He acknowledged that judging is a difficult profession because it requires a degree of isolation from society and demands behavior that is above reproach. He said judges set an example not only for the public but also for the attorneys who appear before them and for their judicial colleagues. He noted that on rare occasions, judges may cross the line. He added that he has appeared twice before the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct representing judges in Alaska, describing the experience as informative. He said one case proceeded to a quasi-trial, while the other was resolved without

that. He stated that, even in those cases where he served as an advocate, he believed the Commission did a good job.

[1:50:50 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS inquired whether the Commission has the authority to remove a judge from office, asking if that responsibility falls within its jurisdiction.

MR. SATTERBERG replied that, to his understanding, the Commission does not have that authority. He explained that while the Commission may issue various sanctions and make recommendations, only the Alaska Supreme Court has the power to remove a judge from office. He stated that in one of his past cases, the Commission forwarded a recommendation to the Supreme Court, which acted on it and issued a public censure of the judge involved.

SENATOR STEVENS expressed appreciation for that explanation.

[1:51:31 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked about the case that went up from the Commission to the Alaska Supreme Court, inquiring whether the Commission's recommendation had been for removal or for censure.

MR. SATTERBERG replied that the recommendation had been for censure, which resulted in a public reprimand.

[1:51:53 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN remarked that the work on the Alaska Judicial Commission can be a heavy burden. She said she had read some of his publicly available writings and noted that he had expressed concerns about the process by which individuals are appointed or selected to serve on the judiciary. She stated that she was interested in hearing how he would navigate his personal beliefs and opinions about judicial selection while also serving on a body responsible for adjudicating judges' conduct.

MR. SATTERBERG responded that one of the primary duties of a judge, and for that matter a member of the Commission, is to set aside personal prejudices and biases. He stated that everyone carries bias, but when serving in a judicial or quasi-judicial capacity, one must put those biases aside and focus solely on the evidence and facts to reach a decision that is properly supported. He said that throughout his career, he has prided himself on maintaining that discipline, often telling clients that while he does not have to believe or like them, he has to represent them. He said some judges even heard him make that

statement. He emphasized that impartiality and integrity are essential.

MR. SATTERBERG said that individuals have already lobbied him a little about the Commission. He made it clear that he would not talk about the position, stating it is inappropriate to lobby a Commission member about matters that involve decision-making of a certain nature.

[1:53:46 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked for his perspective on the importance of maintaining an independent Commission.

MR. SATTERBERG replied that, without question, the Commission must operate independently. He stated that this appointment does not create any obligation of loyalty to the governor, even though the governor appointed him. He emphasized that his duty is to uphold the integrity of the Commission's work and to remain impartial in every matter that comes before it. He said that if a conflict of interest were to arise, he would recuse himself. He added that if he failed to recognize such a conflict, the Commission's executive director or another member might bring it to his attention. He stated that if at any time he felt unable to render an impartial decision, or believed he held a bias for or against a judicial officer, he would not participate in that case.

[1:54:49 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN opened public testimony on the appointments to the Alaska Police Standards Council and the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

[1:55:33 PM](#)

ED MARTIN, representing self, Kenai, Alaska, testified with concerns about the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, stating that there should be no more appointments to the Commission. He said that he called the appointee, who appeared to believe the call was a lobby attempt. He recounted that the appointee expressed surprise at being contacted. He noted the call occurred a couple of weeks after the appointment. He stated that he is in opposition to the legislature [confirming] any board appointee at this late date and this applies broadly to the gamut of all the governor's appointees. He clarified that his intention was not to lobby the appointee but to ask that the appointee review the Commission's prior record. Specifically, his dismissal from a meeting and a suggestion to eliminate or

reduce public comment, which he views as a violation of the First Amendment and the Open Meetings Act.

MR. MARTIN asserted that problems exist within the Commission that require thorough investigation. He noted that he submitted a public records request and has not yet received a response. He petitioned the legislature via email and requested review of his communications and acknowledgment of his written complaints and petition for redress. He expressed appreciation to the committee and urged it make a firm and fair judgment as it proceeds.

1:58:13 PM

SCOTT EGGER, representing self, Kenai, Alaska, testified in opposition to the appointment of Mr. Satterberg to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct. He attended the most recent Commission meeting via a telephone conference. He said it was troubling how, during the course of the meeting, the appointee interjected himself, lobbied for less allotted time for public comment. He stated that this is one of several concerns Alaskans have with the Commission and that Alaskans should have greater access to provide public comment during Commission hearings.

MR. EGGER said the Commission has not properly fulfilled its obligations in responding to records requests. He shared that he filed a complaint with the Commission but never received a response. He concurred with the comments of the previous testifier, asserting that ongoing problems exist within the Commission. He emphasized that one of the key issues is the public's limited ability to communicate with or gain access to the Commission. He expressed concern that the appointee supports reduced access and stated that, for this reason, he opposes the appointment. He further said the Commission is "fraught with problems," alleging that the director filed false paperwork in court proceedings that has never been properly investigated. He asserted that Commission members protect one another and that it is time for transparency and accountability within the Commission's operations.

2:01:00 PM

SUKI MILLER, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, testified with concerns about the appointment of Mr. Satterberg to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct. She noted that the appointee authored an article published by Must Read Alaska in 2020, in which he criticized the judicial selection process and advocated for a different selection method. She stated that such a proposed change to the process is cause for concern. She said

Alaska's judicial selection system is unique and has worked fairly well for the state.

[2:02:25 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN closed public testimony on the Alaska Police Standards Council and the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct.

[2:02:35 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited a motion.

[2:02:37 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated [that in accordance with AS 39.05.080,] the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee reviewed the qualifications of the following governor's appointees and forwards their names to a joint session for consideration:

Alaska Police Standards Council

Timothy Collins - Kodiak

Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct

Bill Satterberg - Fairbanks

SENATOR KIEHL reminded members that signing the report(s) regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

#

[2:03:09 PM](#)

At ease.

^#sjr6

SJR 6-WASHINGTON D.C. STATEHOOD

[2:04:43 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6 Supporting the admittance of Washington, D.C., into the Union as a state of the United States of America.

CHAIR CLAMAN said this is the second hearing of SJR 6 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. He announced his intention to consider a committee substitute for SJR 6.

[2:05:00 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited a motion.

[2:05:06 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to adopt the committee substitute (CS) for SJR 6, work order 34-LS0263\I, as the working document.

[2:05:20 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN objected for purposes of discussion.

[2:05:41 PM](#)

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff, Senator Matt Claman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented the summary of changes for SJR 6 from version N to version I.

[Original punctuation provided.]

Summary of Changes

Senate Joint Resolution 6: Version N to Version I

Page 3, line 31, following "America":

Insert: ", excluding a federal enclave that encompasses at least the White House, the United States Capitol, and the United States Supreme Court"

[2:06:19 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN removed his objection.

[2:06:36 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN invited the sponsor's staff to offer closing comments on SJR 6.

[2:06:39 PM](#)

MAGGIE GRENIER, Staff, Senator Löki Tobin, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, indicated she was available for questions on SJR 6.

[2:06:53 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no questions.

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[2:07:01 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report CSSJR 6, work order 34-LS0263\I, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[2:07:22 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and CSSJR 6(JUD) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

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2:07:57 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Claman adjourned the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting at 2:07 p.m.