

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE

May 12, 2025

1:43 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Gary Stevens

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 167

"An Act relating to a permanent fund dividend for an individual whose conviction has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed; and relating to the calculation of the value of the permanent fund dividend by including payment to individuals eligible for a permanent fund dividend because of a conviction that has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed."

- MOVED CSSB 167(STA) OUT OF COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 35(STA)

"An Act relating to the use and possession of electronic devices by prisoners."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 9

"An Act relating to the surrender of infants; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 9(JUD) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 167

SHORT TITLE: CRIM. CONV. OVERTURNED: RECEIVE PAST PFD

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) KAWASAKI

04/10/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

04/10/25 (S) STA, JUD

04/24/25 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
04/24/25 (S) Heard & Held
04/24/25 (S) MINUTE(STA)
05/01/25 (S) STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
05/01/25 (S) Moved CSSB 167(STA) Out of Committee
05/01/25 (S) MINUTE(STA)
05/02/25 (S) STA RPT CS 2DP 2NR SAME TITLE
05/02/25 (S) DP: KAWASAKI, GRAY-JACKSON
05/02/25 (S) NR: WIELECHOWSKI, BJORKMAN
05/07/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
05/07/25 (S) Heard & Held
05/07/25 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
05/12/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 35

SHORT TITLE: PRISONERS: ELECTRONIC DEVICE ACCESS/USE
SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) HIMSCHOOT

01/22/25 (H) PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
01/22/25 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25 (H) CRA, STA
02/20/25 (H) CRA AT 9:00 AM BARNES 124
02/20/25 (H) Heard & Held
02/20/25 (H) MINUTE(CRA)
02/25/25 (H) CRA AT 9:00 AM BARNES 124
02/25/25 (H) Heard & Held
02/25/25 (H) MINUTE(CRA)
02/27/25 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
02/27/25 (H) Scheduled but Not Heard
03/13/25 (H) CRA AT 8:00 AM BARNES 124
03/13/25 (H) Moved CSHB 35(CRA) Out of Committee
03/13/25 (H) MINUTE(CRA)
03/14/25 (H) CRA RPT CS(CRA) 3DP 3AM
03/14/25 (H) DP: HALL, MEARS, HIMSCHOOT
03/14/25 (H) AM: HOLLAND, PRAX, RUFFRIDGE
03/27/25 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/27/25 (H) Heard & Held
03/27/25 (H) MINUTE(STA)
03/29/25 (H) STA AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/29/25 (H) Heard & Held
03/29/25 (H) MINUTE(STA)
04/08/25 (H) STA AT 3:15 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/08/25 (H) Moved CSHB 35(STA) Out of Committee
04/08/25 (H) MINUTE(STA)
04/09/25 (H) STA RPT CS(STA) 5DP 1DNP 1NR
04/09/25 (H) DP: MOORE, HOLLAND, HIMSCHOOT, STORY,
CARRICK

04/09/25 (H) DNP: MCCABE
 04/09/25 (H) NR: VANCE
 05/02/25 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
 05/02/25 (H) VERSION: CSHB 35(STA)
 05/05/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 05/05/25 (S) JUD
 05/07/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 05/07/25 (S) Heard & Held
 05/07/25 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
 05/12/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 9

SHORT TITLE: SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE
 SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) MYERS

01/22/25 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
 01/22/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 01/22/25 (S) HSS, JUD
 02/20/25 (S) HSS AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 02/20/25 (S) -- MEETING CANCELED --
 02/25/25 (S) HSS AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 02/25/25 (S) Heard & Held
 02/25/25 (S) MINUTE(HSS)
 02/27/25 (S) HSS AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 02/27/25 (S) <Above Item Removed from Agenda>--
 02/27/25 (S) MINUTE(HSS)
 03/13/25 (S) HSS AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 03/13/25 (S) Moved CSSB 9(HSS) Out of Committee
 03/13/25 (S) MINUTE(HSS)
 03/14/25 (S) HSS RPT CS 2NR 1DP SAME TITLE
 03/14/25 (S) NR: DUNBAR, GIESSEL
 03/14/25 (S) DP: HUGHES
 03/31/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 03/31/25 (S) Heard & Held
 03/31/25 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
 04/11/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
 04/11/25 (S) Heard & Held
 04/11/25 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
 05/12/25 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

GENEVIEVE WOJTUSIK, Director
 Permanent Fund Dividend Division
 Department of Revenue
 Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the discussion of SB 167.

NANCY MEADE, General Counsel
Alaska Court System
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the discussion of SB 167.

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff
Senator Matt Claman
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the Explanation of Changes for HB 35 from version T to version O.

APRIL WILKERSON, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Corrections
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the discussion of HB 35.

BRANDON JONES, Superintendent
Hiland Mountain Correctional Facility
Eagle River, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the discussion of HB 35.

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff
Senator Matt Claman
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the Explanation of Changes for SB 9 from version G to version T.

JOE KELSEY, Co-Founder and Senior Project Coordinator
Safe Haven Baby Boxes
Woodburn, Indiana

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation and answered questions during the discussion of SB9.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:43:44 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN called the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:43 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Myers, Kiehl, Tobin, and Chair Claman.

SB 167-CRIM. CONV. OVERTURNED: RECEIVE PAST PFD

[CSSB 167(STA) was before the committee.]

[1:44:18 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 167 "An Act relating to a permanent fund dividend for an individual whose conviction has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed; and relating to the calculation of the value of the permanent fund dividend by including payment to individuals eligible for a permanent fund dividend because of a conviction that has been vacated, reversed, or dismissed."

CHAIR CLAMAN said this is the second hearing of SB 167 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The intention is to look to the will of the committee to report the bill out.

[1:44:51 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS asked page 1, line 12 having to make sure the dismal was ? part of the plea agreement.

[1:45:54 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN noted Ms. Wojtusik from the Permanent Fund Division, Department of Revenue is available to answer questions.

[1:46:09 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS expressed that he is happy to get an answer from whomever is most knowledgeable.

[1:46:25 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN directed the question to Ms. Wojtusik as some of the questions are specific to eligibility.

[1:46:42 PM](#)

GENEVIEVE WOJTUSIK, Director, Permanent Fund Dividend Division, Department of Revenue, Juneau, Alaska, Answered questions during the discussion of SB 167.

[1:47:28 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS asked if then is there the possibility that a previous conviction, conviction vacated as part of a plea deal that

[1:48:29 PM](#)

MS. WOJTUSIK deferred to courts or legal.

[1:48:38 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN directed question to Ms. Meade.

[1:48:53 PM](#)

NANCY MEADE, General Counsel, Alaska Court System, Anchorage, Alaska, Answered questions during the discussion of SB 167. If a person spends some time incarcerated.

[1:50:21 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS satisfied.

[1:50:38 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[1:50:41 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report CSSB 167(STA), work order 34-LS0491\N, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[1:50:57 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and CSSB 167(STA) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

[1:51:01 PM](#)

At ease.

HB 35-PRISONERS: ELECTRONIC DEVICE ACCESS/USE

[1:52:33 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 35(STA) "An Act relating to the use and possession of electronic devices by prisoners."

CHAIR CLAMAN said that this is the second hearing of HB 35 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. SCS CSHB 35, version H, was adopted in the previous hearing. [The intent is to consider adoption of a new Senate committee substitute (SCS), version O.]

[1:52:49 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited a motion.

[1:52:54 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to adopt the Senate committee substitute (SCS) for CSHB 35, work order 34-LS0355\O, as the working document.

[1:53:09 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN objected for purposes of discussion.

[1:53:21 PM](#)

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff, Senator Matt Claman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, Presented the Explanation of Changes for HB 35 from version T to version O.

[Original punctuation provided.]

House Bill 35: Version T to Version O

Page 3, lines 16-18:

Insert: "or as a substitution for in-person visitation, receiving mail, receiving medical services, or other in-person communication"

Page 2, following line 21:

Insert new subsection to read: "(f) The commissioner may not replace in-person visitation with the use of a computer or electronic tablet. To the extent practicable, the commissioner may not replace an existing program or service provided to a prisoner for the purpose of rehabilitation with the use of a computer or electronic tablet authorized under (a)(3)(I) of this section. A computer or electronic tablet may be used only to supplement an existing program or service."

Page 3, line 24:

Conforming changes.

[1:54:28 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN removed his objection and SCS CSHB 35 was adopted as the working document.

CHAIR CLAMAN noted that the superintendent from Hiland Mountain Correctional Facility and the deputy commissioner from the Department of Corrections (DOC) were available to answer questions. He invited committee members to ask questions.

[1:55:10 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN asked

[1:56:07 PM](#)

APRIL WILKERSON, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Corrections, Juneau, Alaska, Answered questions during the discussion of HB 35. Sought clarification the question pertained to how DOC would protect inmates who utilized tablets from cyber phishing and theft.

[1:56:46 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN answered in the affirmative.

MS. WILKERSON responded that the program is operated by a third vendor who ensures

[1:57:30 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN curious if there has been convo in the department about general literacy, knowing that any of those skills might have been developed, lacking the muscle

MS. WILKERSON replied that

[1:58:58 PM](#)

BRANDON JONES, Superintendent, Hiland Mountain Correctional Facility, Eagle River, Alaska, Answered questions during the discussion of HB 35.

[2:00:15 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked subsection (f) in the SCS, what happens if it is not an existing program, but a new program only offered as an online course, does (f) mean the leg will have to amend this sub

[2:00:57 PM](#)

MS. WILKERSON replied that she would defer to the policy, but our understanding behind the intent identify efficiencies in processes as well as in expanding the services to inmate population, some switching to an online platform, capture both when the tablets are the option.

[2:02:12 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no further questions and invited the bill sponsor to make comments.

[2:02:19 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN held SCS CSHB 35, version 0, in committee.

SB 9-SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE

[2:02:22 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 9 "An Act relating to the surrender of infants; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR CLAMAN said this is the third hearing of SB 9 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. [The committee adopted Amendment 3 to CSSB 9(HSS), version G, in the previous hearing.] The intention is to consider the adoption of committee substitute version T.

[2:02:37 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited a motion.

[2:02:40 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to adopt the committee substitute (CS) for SB 9, work order 34-LS0085\T, as the working document.

[2:02:55 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN objected for purposes of discussion.

[2:03:06 PM](#)

BREANNA KAKARUK, Staff, Senator Matt Claman, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, Presented the Explanation of Changes for SB 9 from version G to version T.

[Original punctuation provided.]

Explanation of Changes

Senate Bill 9: Version G to Version T

Page 2, line 15-17:

Removes the authority of the Commissioner of the Department of Family to designate additional appropriate locations for an infant safety device beyond the approved listed designated facilities as requested by the department.

Page 4, lines 4-8:

Deletes assessment considerations for determining whether to approve a proposed infant safety device and adds the requirement that the infant safety device must be installed, operated, and maintained according to the manufacturer's guidelines and regulations that are adopted by the Department.

Adds that the infant safety devices must be inspected upon installation and annually by the manufacturer or the manufacture's designee, and inspected monthly by the designated facility that installed the device. These inspections are required to be logged by the designated facility and must include the testing of the device's alarms, cameras, climate control systems, and locks.

[2:04:31 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN asked about page 4, lines 4 5 6 7 who covers the cost

[2:05:00 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS, speaking as sponsor, replied

[2:06:20 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN who is going to pay for the cost of the inspection.

[2:07:07 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS said an individual from Safe Haven Baby Boxes is available to answer questions, the manufacturer could potentially be a small cost to the fire department, but they do not have to install one,

[2:08:06 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN perspective on the language in subparagraph 6 on page 4, the language that reads upon installation , tend to implies that it is on them to pay for the inspection there is noting to suggest Baby Boxes is online

[2:08:54 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN invited Mr. Kelsey to introduce himself, describe his position with Safe Haven Baby Boxes, and make a brief statement about his perspective on SB 9, then remain online to take questions.

[2:09:11 PM](#)

JOE KELSEY, Co-Founder and Senior Project Coordinator, Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Woodburn, Indiana, Testified by invitation and answered questions during the discussion of SB9. Safe Haven Baby Boxes (SHBB) has an initial program fee, which covers the manufacture of the baby box plus the initial training and testing for the baby box to go to the location. The location typically pays for a contractor to install the baby box, and/or hooking an alarm system up it. Speaking about a fire station, the alarm communicates with the dispatch center locally to that station. Annual fee.

[2:10:47 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN asked \$500 fee of getting someone there, so one of the queries I have

[2:11:30 PM](#)

MR. KELSEY replied, it is \$500, but does anticipate the cost will be higher to get there, airfare, hotel, car, no profit, we check the mechanics of the box, answer questions, bring more supplies, we want to make sure the locat

[2:12:42 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN in the other states where you have boxes setup today, do you have someone in Los A

[2:13:03 PM](#)

MR. KELSEY

[2:13:06 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN and is there

[2:13:15 PM](#)

MR. KELSEY replied that we do not use a contractor, 72 hour turn around,

[2:13:56 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN do you have boxes in Hawaii

MR. KELSEY replied no, AZ and ID two farthest places

[2:14:16 PM](#)

SENATOR TOBIN asked the inspection process, like looking at a fire extinguisher, or bed, who regulates you

MR. KELSEY replied that he has a letter from the FDA that they are not

[2:15:38 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN invited the bill sponsor to make closing comments.

SENATOR MYERS expressed appreciation to the committee and the DOF...for helping put the bill together.

[2:16:11 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN based on Mr. Kelsey's testimony it is not a \$500 cost to do the inspection

[2:16:30 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS I understand your concern, but at the outset the cost will be discussed and it will be something to plan cost for, but it is important

[CHAIR CLAMAN removed his objection to the adoption of CSSB 9, version T, as the working document.]

[2:17:05 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN solicited the will of the committee.

[2:17:07 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL moved to report CSSB 9, work order 34-LS0085\T, from committee with individual recommendations and any accompanying fiscal note(s).

[2:17:26 PM](#)

CHAIR CLAMAN found no objection and CSSB 9(JUD) was reported from the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee.

2:17:49 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Claman adjourned the Senate Judiciary Standing Committee meeting at 2:17 p.m.