

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

February 17, 2025

3:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senator Bill Wielechowski, Vice Chair
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Forrest Dunbar
Senator Scott Kawasaki
Senator Shelley Hughes
Senator Robert Myers

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 47

"An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 29

"An Act relating to an executive administrator for the Big Game Commercial Services Board."

- MOVED SB 29 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 30

"An Act making certain veterans eligible for a lifetime permit to access state park campsites and the parking and restrooms of developed facilities without charge; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 30 (RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 61

"An Act relating to an electronic product stewardship program; relating to collection, recycling, and disposal of electronic equipment; establishing the electronics recycling advisory council; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 47

SHORT TITLE: CHUGACH STATE PARK EASEMENTS

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) GIESSEL

01/17/25 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/17/25
01/22/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25 (S) TRA, RES
02/04/25 (S) TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/04/25 (S) Heard & Held
02/04/25 (S) MINUTE(TRA)
02/11/25 (S) TRA AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/11/25 (S) Moved SB 47 Out of Committee
02/11/25 (S) MINUTE(TRA)
02/14/25 (S) TRA RPT 2DP 1DNP 1NR
02/14/25 (S) DP: BJORKMAN, KIEHL
02/14/25 (S) DNP: SHOWER
02/14/25 (S) NR: TOBIN
02/17/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 29

SHORT TITLE: BIG GAME COMMERCIAL SERVICES BOARD

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) BJORKMAN

01/10/25 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
01/22/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25 (S) RES, FIN
02/03/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/03/25 (S) Heard & Held
02/03/25 (S) MINUTE(RES)
02/17/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 30

SHORT TITLE: STATE PARK PERMITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) BJORKMAN

01/10/25 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/10/25
01/22/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25 (S) RES, FIN
02/03/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/03/25 (S) Heard & Held
02/03/25 (S) MINUTE(RES)
02/17/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 61

SHORT TITLE: ELECTRONIC DEVICE RECYCLING

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) TOBIN

01/24/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/24/25 (S) RES, FIN
02/05/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/05/25 (S) Heard & Held
02/05/25 (S) MINUTE (RES)
02/17/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

PAIGE BROWN, Staff
Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave a presentation on SB 47.

RICKY GEASE, Director
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 47.

ROGER MARKS, Board of Supervisors
Glen Alps Road Service Area
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 47.

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 29.

SAM ROHRER, President
Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA)
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on SB 29.

JASON BUNCH, Professional Hunter
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on SB 29.

AARON BLOOMQUIST, Chairman
Big Game Commercial Services Board
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on SB 29.

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 30.

RICKY GEASE, Director
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 30.

LOUIE FLORA, Staff
Senator Löki Tobin
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 61 on behalf of the sponsor.

LELANDE REHARD, Environmental Program Coordinator
City of Columbia
Columbia, Missouri

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 61.

SCOTT KLAG, Consultant
Product Stewardship Institute
Portland, Oregon

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 61.

KATIE REILLY, Vice President
Environmental Affairs and Industry Sustainability
Consumer Technology Association (CTA)
Washington, DC

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 61.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:31:02 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Dunbar, Myers, Claman, Wielechowski, Hughes, Kawasaki and Chair Giessel.

SB 47-CHUGACH STATE PARK EASEMENTS

[3:31:38 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 47 "An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date."

[3:31:59 PM](#)

PAIGE BROWN, Staff, Senator Cathy Giessel, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, gave an overview presentation on SB 47.

[3:32:17 PM](#)

MS. BROWN moved to and narrated slide 2:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Chugach State Park (SP) is the most visited Public Land in Alaska

Chugach SP: 495,000 acres
1.5 million visitors annually

[Slide 2 includes a map of Chugach State park.]

[3:32:28 PM](#)

MS. BROWN briefly displayed slide 3, titled "Chugach State Park Use Data", which contains multiple graphic representations of:

- Use
- Distribution of Use (Map)
- Sample Size
- Top 5 Locations of Interest
- Visitor Origins, Percent of Device Days by Season and Year
- Visitor Origins, Percent of Device Days by Borough (Top 5) and Year
- Patterns of Use

[3:32:38 PM](#)

MS. BROWN moved to and narrated slide 4:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Chugach Design & Construction Projects

Completed:

- Completed the parking expansion and paving work at Eklutna Lake
- Completed new vaulted toilets at McHugh Creek, Eagle River Campground, and Bird Creek Campground
- Completed drainage improvements at Upper Huffman

Ongoing:

- Continued construction of a public use cabins at Eagle River Campground and Bird Creek Campground

- 2 at Eagle River
- 1 at Bird Creek
- Began paving and improvements work at Prospect Heights
- Began improvements at Bird Valley Trailhead

Next Year:

- Begin construction of new parking area at Rabbit Valley Trailhead
- Additional new concrete vaulted toilets at Eagle River Campground
- Replace water heater and heating stoves at Bird Point cabin
- Alaska Trails and Chugach Park Fund projects

[3:32:41 PM](#)

MS. BROWN moved to slide 5:

[Original punctuation provided.]

FY24 Chugach SP Fee Station Revenue

Total: \$590,555.00

Slide 5 consists of a pie chart illustrating revenues from the Chugach Park Pay Stations:

Bird Creek Campground,	\$65,395.00
Bird Creek Overflow,	\$9,195.00
Bird Fish Trailhead,	\$12,800.00
Bird Point Trailhead,	\$8,150.00
Bird Ridge Trailhead,	\$4,350.00
Briggs River Campground,	\$3,255.00
Canyon Road Trailhead,	\$12,255.00
Chugach Spare,	\$660.00
Eagle River Campground,	\$100,090.00
Eagle River Day-Use,	\$1,740.00
Eklutna ATV Lot,	\$11,425.00
Eklutna Lake,	\$54,995.00
Eklutna Lake CG,	\$58,670.00
Eklutna Overflow,	\$8,295.00
Glen Alps,	\$117,380.00
Glen Alps Satellite,	\$5,845.00
Indian Ball Field,	\$2,710.00
McHugh Creek,	\$2,810.00
McHugh Parking,	\$2,935.00
Mile 7.4 North Fork Access,	\$5,890.00

Potter Trailhead,	\$5,830.00
Prospect Heights,	\$10,090.00
South Fork,	\$12,055.00

[3:33:06 PM](#)

MS. BROWN moved to slide 6, a map of the interface between the Municipality of Anchorage and Chugach State Park in the vicinity of Canyon Road, Rabbit Creek and the Rabbit Lake Trailhead. She said SB 47 would address access, not only for residents who are increasingly recreating in Chugach State Park, but also for tourists who visit during the summer.

MS. BROWN explained that Canyon Road, the access to Rabbit Lake trailhead, is renowned for its poor condition. The easement created by SB 47 would address this problem. In 2024, Anchorage voters approved a four-million-dollar bond for improvements to 0.6 miles of Canyon Road. She said about half the road lies within Chugach State Park which does not allow municipally funded projects due to state land ownership.

[3:34:23 PM](#)

MS. BROWN pointed to the portions of canyon road that are on state land and on city land. She described the poor condition of the road, especially in the spring, and referred to a State Parks Facebook notice posted on February 7, 2025, with photos of a sloped ice slab.

MS. BROWN said SB 47 was drafted in collaboration with the Municipality of Anchorage City Manager and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Parks. She noted that Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) was responsible for maintenance of Canyon Road but had not been doing it. She said the Municipality of Anchorage was willing to take over maintenance of the road, if they were granted an easement, which would include road upgrades, improving access and safety in the park and allowing the municipality to invest in infrastructure for residents and tourists.

[3:35:15 PM](#)

MS. BROWN presented the sectional analysis for SB 47:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Senate Bill 47 (Version A)

Sectional Analysis

"An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date."

Section 1. Amends AS 41.21.122: Management Responsibility.

This section adds language to the management responsibility of Chugach State Park clarifying that the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is responsible for maintenance within the park except for as provided by the new subsections added in section 2.

Section 2. Adds new subsections to AS. 41.21.122: Management Responsibility.

This section adds new subsections allowing the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to grant an easement or a right-of-way within Chugach State Park to a municipality if DNR provides public notice and holds at least one hearing, and the commissioner of DNR finds that this easement or right-of-way is improving, facilitating, or maintaining public access to the park, and is in the public interest.

Section 3. Provides for an effective date.

This section provides for an effective date of July 1, 2025.

[3:36:17 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI referred to SB 47, section 1, lines 5, 6 and 7 which addressed control, development and maintenance of state land and water and control of the highway access and roadside structures. He asked whether these were conforming changes.

[3:36:43 PM](#)

MS. BROWN said [SB 47] moves language that is already in statute regarding Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, land and Water to a different section of the statute, using the same language.

[3:37:17 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL invited Department of Natural Resources (DNR) representative to answer questions about the changes to statute proposed by SB 47.

[3:37:32 PM](#)

RICKY GEASE, Director, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Anchorage, Alaska, concurred that SB 47 moves language to a different section of [statute]. He said Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) would retain responsibility for the maintenance of the roads within Chugach State Park.

[3:38:05 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked whether SB 47 would give control of the development or maintenance of the state park to the municipality or any other entity.

[3:38:22 PM](#)

MR. GEASE said the easement would give the municipality the ability or right to improve the road providing access to the park using the bond authorization monies approved in 2024. He said this would bring the road up to modern road standards with regard to slope and drainage.

[3:39:23 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI read SB 47, Section 1, lines 4, 5, and 7 and asked whether "the department" referred to Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

[3:39:58 PM](#)

MR. GEASE noted that said [Section 2, (C), lines 17 - 19 state that "the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) shall repair and maintain public roads in the Chugach State Park except for repairs and 19 maintenance performed by a municipality under (b) of this section."

[3:40:27 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR noted discussion with a representative of the municipality of Anchorage regarding a committee substitute (CS) to SB 47. He asked whether an amendment was planned.

[3:41:03 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL said there was an amendment, but she did not intend to offer the amendment at this time. She said SB 47 would be held for further consideration. She noted the collaborative effort by state agency and municipality representatives and said the amendment would be addressed in the future.

[3:41:33 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR said the concern expressed to him represented a small change to SB 47.

[3:41:50 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES referred to SB 47, Section 2, lines 18 - 19. She asked whether the municipality would be required to repair and maintain the road. She suggested hypothetically that the municipality of Anchorage may experience a lack of financial means to repair and maintain the road in the future and asked who would be responsible for the road in that case.

[3:42:48 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL clarified the section of road at issue which crossed between the municipality of Anchorage and Chugach State Park lands. She said Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) was by statute responsible for repair and maintenance of the state park sections of the road, but that they were not doing it. She said that section was effectively abandoned road, as evidenced by the photos from the Facebook post. The municipality was willing to assume responsibility for maintaining the road and improve it.

CHAIR GIESSEL noted future plans by the state park to build a parking lot at Rabbit Lake Trailhead. She said there were federal funds in place for the parking lot and improving the Canyon Road access was important for that development as well.

[3:45:01 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES asked whether the Municipality of Anchorage would have the responsibility of paying for road maintenance and repairs for the next twenty years.

[3:45:14 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL affirmed Anchorage's responsibility and said the amendment Senator Dunbar anticipated would specify that the municipality formally accepts the responsibility.

[3:45:27 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES said she did not see language in SB 47 requiring the municipality to continue maintaining and repairing the road in the future.

CHAIR GIESSEL concurred that there was not that language currently, but there would be, assuming the municipality does accept the responsibility.

[3:45:57 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES said, as she read SB 47, the responsibility would fall back on DOTPF.

[3:46:11 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked whether the suggestion was for the municipality to rescind their offer to assume responsibility for the road.

SENATOR HUGHES sought clarification to avoid confusion in the future should there be less willingness or financial constraints in the future for the municipality.

CHAIR GIESSEL suggested a sunset date amendment.

[3:46:40 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR suggested that an easement provides a right but not a duty, which would allow the municipality to proceed with their present intentions for the road, but not obligate them to maintain it. He acknowledged he was not familiar with the legalities of determining responsibility conditions.

[3:47:27 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL said there were no Department of Law (DOL) or legal drafting personnel available to answer questions. She noted the words of SB 47 with the addition of the amendment to include the municipality's acceptance of responsibility.

[3:47:53 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR acknowledged common interests and the complicated nature of determining responsibility for road repair and maintenance when roads pass through different areas.

[3:48:30 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS noted SB 47, Section 2(b)(2), lines 13 - 16 and asked whether a future commissioner would have the ability to rescind the easement or right of way should the municipality lack the will or the funds to repair and maintain the road.

[3:49:04 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL invited an amendment to SB 47 to address the concern.

[3:49:13 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN said the discussion centered on the way easements work. He said it was his understanding that the easement would provide the right of way to the municipality for perpetuity. He said the second question was about the duty to maintain and whether that also was in place for perpetuity. He posed a hypothetical in which a neighbor obtains an easement for a driveway, but never uses it. He said the easement could eventually pass to future owners, unimproved and unmaintained. However, if a driveway was built across the neighbor's property,

there would be a duty to maintain it. He suggested explicit language for development and to define the duty for continued maintenance. He suggested that the bond process may affect the municipality's future capacity to maintain the road. He also suggested explicit language that the road would revert to the state when and if the municipality was no longer maintaining it. He said determining who was responsible for maintenance once the road was built was a real issue that should be addressed by SB 47.

[3:52:00 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL invited further comment from Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

[3:52:06 PM](#)

MR. GEASE noted plans for [the Rabbit Lake Trailhead] parking lot. He said geotechnical work had been completed and he anticipated design work in the summer of 2025 followed by bids in the next year or two.

[3:52:49 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked what a municipality could do with an easement, for example, could they practice forestry; he asked what rights were granted with an easement.

[3:53:10 PM](#)

MR. GEASE deferred to the legislative legal team and Department of Law (DOL). He said, typically the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, Land and Water handled DNR's easements.

[3:53:44 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 47.

[3:53:59 PM](#)

ROGER MARKS, Board of Supervisors, Glen Alps Road Service Area, Anchorage, Alaska, testified in support of SB 47. He explained the necessity of SB 47 to improve road infrastructure in Anchorage's hillside. These road service areas, funded by local property taxes, manage road maintenance, including repair, grading, drainage, and snow removal. The area, which includes two of the busiest trailheads in Chugach State Park, faces significant wear due to high visitor traffic. Despite a 1982 master plan recognizing the need for funding, the state has only provided minimal resources. In 2023, Anchorage voters created the Chugach State Park Access Service Area (CASA) to finance park access, and in 2024, they approved a \$4 million bond for road improvements. SB 47 would allow the state to grant an

easement to allow bonding for the road, which he said would benefit both locals and tourists. He said the [Glen Alps] road service area was currently providing road maintenance and would be happy to continue.

[3:58:36 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI asked whether the road service area represented by Mr. Marks would maintain the section of road in perpetuity after construction is complete and the easement granted and the improvements are made.

[3:59:14 PM](#)

MR. MARKS affirmed that the road service area was the entity which bore the responsibility to maintain the road. He said the road service area received taxpayer money to keep the road maintained up to the park boundary and noted that there were homes there that required access.

[3:59:50 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN asked for geographic assistance to identify from his recollection the section of road at issue.

[4:00:13 PM](#)

MR. MARKS said the entire 0.6 miles from Canyon Park Road to the park gate was included. He described the section of road as a mishmash of road surfaces. He was at a loss to pinpoint the specific portion of the road segment.

[4:01:06 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL kept public testimony open.

[4:01:15 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL held SB 47 in committee.

[4:01:39 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL set an amendment deadline for Monday, February 24th at 4:00 pm.

SB 29-BIG GAME COMMERCIAL SERVICES BOARD

[4:01:59 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 29" An Act relating to an executive administrator for the Big Game Commercial Services Board."

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that this was the second hearing of SB 29 by the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[4:02:26 PM](#)

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 29, introduced himself and gave an overview of SB 29. He said SB 29 would put an Executive Administrator position for the Big Game Commercial Services board into statute. It would not require additional general fund monies. He emphasized that a dedicated staff member who knows the business of guiding in Alaska would improve the efficiency of the Big Game Commercial Services Board in carrying out their duties. The board handles hunting guide licensing functions, administering board meetings, assisting the board with maintaining and writing exams, generating reports and assisting the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development investigative services. Also, they assist the Department of Public Safety with their game violation investigations. He said the executive administrator position was currently and would continue to be paid for using designated general funds from guide licensing fees. Senate Bill 29 simply codifies the Executive Administrator position and its range in statute.

[4:03:43 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced public testimony on SB 29.

[4:04:05 PM](#)

SAM ROHRER, President, Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA), Kodiak, Alaska, provided invited testimony on SB 29, which proposed the creation of an Executive Administrator position for the Big Game Commercial Services Board. He said SB 29 would ensure the program's effective regulation by providing long-term, industry-specific staff. He highlighted current challenges, including the transient nature of license examiners and the resulting lack of expertise, which created burdens for volunteer board members. He urged the legislature to pass the bill to address these issues and maintain the program's integrity.

[4:06:00 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL said the testimony by Mr. Rohrer and Mr. Bunch was invited testimony rather than public testimony.

[4:06:09 PM](#)

JASON BUNCH, Professional Hunter, Kodiak, Alaska, provided invited testimony on SB 29. He referred to his testimony in favor of SB 29 on February 3, 2025 and said he had nothing further to add. He said he was available to answer questions.

[4:06:44 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked how long Mr. Bunch had served on the [Big Game Commercial Services] Board.

MR. BUNCH said he served on the board from 2018 to 2024, approximately six years.

[4:07:02 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that the [Big Game Commercial Services Board] had a history of being behind in their funding. She recalled a \$1 million deficit. She noted that the board was currently solvent and asked how they arrived at solvency.

[4:07:29 PM](#)

MR. BUNCH noted that the board worked with the division to discern that the administrative burden was in entering and processing hunt records, transporter activity reports, renewing guide licenses, guide use, and area registrations required by statute. He said a \$300 annual administrative fee was applied to all contracting guides and it did not take very long to get out of debt and achieve a good financial position. He said in 2024 the board eliminated the \$300 annual filing fee for contracting guides, and also lowered the assistant guide license [fee]. He said the board was in good fiscal position to take care of any burdensome investigative processes, and account for the cost of the Executive Administrator without increasing licensing fees.

[4:09:34 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL summarized that the board and the profession assumed the financial responsibility for the cost of regulating themselves and succeeded in paying those costs as well as the arrears.

[4:09:55 PM](#)

MR. BUNCH affirmed the summary.

[4:10:14 PM](#)

AARON BLOOMQUIST, Chairman, Big Game Commercial Services Board, Palmer, Alaska, provided invited testimony on SB 29. He described the negative impact of Department of Commerce regulations on the board operations, and said it slowed them down and delayed projects for years. He urged the committee to pass SB 29 and offered to answer questions.

[4:12:53 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed invited testimony on SB 29.

[4:13:01 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[4:13:05 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report SB 29, work order 34-LS0287\A, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[4:13:22 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and SB 29 was reported from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[4:13:29 PM](#)

At ease

SB 30-STATE PARK PERMITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

[4:15:41 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 30 "An Act making certain veterans eligible for a lifetime permit to access state park campsites and the parking and restrooms of developed facilities without charge; and providing for an effective date." She noted this was the second hearing of SB 30 by the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[Before the committee is CSSB 30, work order 34-LS0293\I, adopted February 3, 2025.]

[4:16:01 PM](#)

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 30, gave an overview of SB 30. He paraphrased the following sponsor statement.

[Original punctuation provided.]

**SB 30 State Park Permits for Disabled Veterans
Version I Sponsor Statement**

Senate Bill 30 would allow disabled veterans who have honorably served our country to have a free lifetime permit to Alaska State Parks. The permit will provide access to developed campsites, parking areas, and restrooms.

Currently under statute, disabled veterans qualify for a free annual permit that must be reapplied for each year. By changing the term of the permit to a lifetime pass, it will be easier for disabled veterans to take advantage of this opportunity. In addition, the annual permit does not currently allow for free parking at Alaska State Parks. By including parking, disabled

veterans will have greater access to the benefits provided by our parks.

I believe that those who have served their nation in the military deserve the utmost respect and have earned the right to enjoy the beauty of our great state that they have defended and sacrificed for. I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation for the benefit of our disabled veterans.

SENATOR BJORKMAN noted that disabled veterans qualified for passes to Alaska State Parks, however the current pass system applied only to camping. He said SB 30 would simplify the process for a qualified veteran.

[4:17:27 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that Director Gease was available to answer questions.

[4:17:33 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 30; finding none, she closed public testimony.

[4:17:56 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR asked what definition or degree of disability would qualify for the pass, how many people were expected to obtain the pass and what effect the pass was expected to have on state park revenues.

[4:18:52 PM](#)

RICKY GEASE, Director, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Anchorage, Alaska, said the definition of disability was not in statute or regulation. DNR employed the US Department of Veterans Affairs definition of service-connected disability. He said there were about 2400 people on the current five-year [camping] pass. He thought there were around 18,000 service members in Alaska. He emphasized that the [camping pass] was a benefit that accrued to any veteran in the country, although of the current Disabled Veteran (DAV) passes, he estimated only three to four percent were from out of state. He said that if SB 30 passes there will be two different passes, one for the veterans camping pass, and one will be a parking pass. He said DNR anticipated that the parking pass would be more popular than the camping pass, and at this point, estimated [5,000] people would use it.

[4:20:49 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR assumed it was mostly Alaska residents taking advantage of the current benefit. He asked whether the parking pass was expected to be more popular than the current park [camping] pass.

[4:21:28 PM](#)

MR. GEASE affirmed that DNR anticipated about 5,000 applicants for the parking pass.

[4:22:06 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES referred to the fiscal note from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), OMB Component Number 3001, dated January 31, 2025. She noted that the narrative said the passes were for Alaskan veterans and suggested correcting it to include all US veterans.

[4:22:56 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[4:23:22 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report CSSB 30, work order 34-LS0293\I, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[4:23:40 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and CSSB 30(RES) was reported from Senate Resources Standing Committee.

[4:23:46 PM](#)

At ease.

SB 61-ELECTRONIC DEVICE RECYCLING

[4:25:41 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 61 "An Act relating to an electronic product stewardship program; relating to collection, recycling, and disposal of electronic equipment; establishing the electronics recycling advisory council; and providing for an effective date."

[4:26:10 PM](#)

LOUIE FLORA, Staff, Senator Löki Tobin, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented SB 61 on behalf of the sponsor. He paraphrased the sponsor statement:

[Original punctuation provided.]

SB 61

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 61 creates a manufacturer-funded system for collecting and recycling electronic devices. Flat-screen televisions, computer monitors, and other electronic devices have grown integral to modern life, business, and education. With ever more devices, there is a growing problem of electronic waste in Alaska.

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MR. FLORA continued to paraphrase the sponsor statement for SB 61:

SB 61 introduces the practice of product stewardship for electronic devices sold in Alaska. Product stewardship is where the manufacturer of an electronic device assumes financial responsibility on a life-cycle basis for that device. Manufacturers allocate funding to cover collection and recycling activities. These costs are currently borne by communities, non-profit organizations, Tribes, and businesses.

Electronic waste associated with human health risks includes lead used in the cathode ray tubes found in computer and TV screens, cadmium used in rechargeable computer batteries, contacts and switches, and mercury used in the liquid crystal displays of mobile phones and flat screen computer monitors as well as in switches, batteries, and fluorescent lamps. These components are especially problematic in rural Alaska where community landfills are often unlined, allowing harmful chemicals to be released into local waters. Landfill fires that include electronic devices can cause smoke inhalation hazards in communities.

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MR. FLORA continued to paraphrase the sponsor statement for SB 61:

If SB 61 passes, Alaska will join half the states in the nation, Canada, and many other countries in having a product stewardship law. Under SB 61 a manufacturer offering electronic devices covered under this bill for sale in Alaska would register with the Department of Environmental Conservation and allocate funding for

the collection and recycling of devices proportional to the volume of their sales. Manufacturers would register individually or join a clearinghouse that specializes in implementing these programs and dividing the costs of the program among manufacturers. This will create a funding stream to cover the costs of collection, transportation and recycling which is currently funded by a mix of grants and local tax revenue.

SB 61 was developed by the Alaska Solid Waste Task Force. Stakeholders in the task force include the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Kawerak Incorporated, and Zender Environmental. A product stewardship policy for electronic devices is supported by the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Alaska Municipal League, the Solid Waste Association of North America as well as numerous Alaska communities, organizations, and businesses.

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SENATOR HUGHES quoted from a letter by the Consumer Technology Association saying SB 61 "would establish the broadest, most cumbersome and likely most costly electronics recycling program in the US". She asked whether SB 61 included requirements that were not present in other states and Canada with similar legislation.

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MR. FLORA said the concept and language of SB 61 was drafted looking at the requirements in the other states that have it in place, and picking the model that looked like it would be the best application for our unique circumstances in Alaska. He acknowledged receipt of the recent letter and a similar letter last year from the Consumer Technology Association and said there were points raised that would be addressed in a future committee substitute for SB 61, for example the recommendation that microwave ovens were not appropriate for this program. He highlighted that Senate Bill 61 would establish an advisory group to consider plans submitted by manufacturers and make recommendations. He said the advisory committee included two seats for manufacturers and retailers, allowing them the opportunity to have a voice in the process of creating the program.

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SENATOR HUGHES said that while she desired proper recycling, she was concerned about the impact [of SB 61] on Alaskans. She said a small state like Alaska with its population of less than three quarters of a million risked losing manufacturing businesses by telling them what to do. She said if our little state tells developers and innovators what they must do, big companies like Microsoft will pull out negatively impacting Alaska.

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SENATOR MYERS concurred and added that a lot of people in Alaska buy things online. He said a lot of stuff comes from not only outside the state, but outside the country. He asked how the state would hold manufacturers feet to the fire when items are not being sold at a brick-and-mortar store in-state.

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MR. FLORA answered that SB 61 would require any manufacturer selling product in Alaska to register with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). They would register their product by weight so DEC can determine the proportional amount that they would pay as a registration fee. He said [DEC] would establish protocols for the products coming into Alaska, regardless of where it's coming from. The advisory group would also be reviewing DEC's plan as well. He said the 13-member advisory group with industry experts from across the state would bring their experience from the rural communities of what products had been put into landfills or collection sites. He acknowledged that it might take a couple years to really get a handle on the amount, but that would be handled through the advisory committee process.

MR. FLORA said there were three subject matter experts with experience across the country available online to fill in blanks.

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SENATOR DUNBAR described a scenario in which a manufacturer abroad does not intend to sell in the Alaska market, but their product reaches the state through Amazon or another online platform or a secondary market like Ebay. He asked what the manufacturers' proactive duty would be and what power the state would have to track down [manufacturers] across state lines or across international lines.

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CHAIR GIESSEL asked Mr. Flora to identify the invited experts.

MR. FLORA said Lelande Rehard was a former consultant to the Product Stewardship Institute. He deferred Senator Dunbar's question to Mr. Rehard.

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LELANDE REHARD, Environmental Program Coordinator, City of Columbia, Columbia, Missouri, said the product stewardship approach has been used in many states and [those states] certainly address the issue of products being sold across state lines and online. He said manufacturers register within the state, typically through an organization that helps them meet their obligations and operate the program. That organization assists with the division of the cost of the program, either based on the amount of projected sales going into a given marketplace or on the actual weight of the material being collected, or some formula that combines both. He said ultimately, [the manufacturers] develop a fee schedule allowing them to sell products within the state.

MR. REHARD suggested Mr. Klag might speak to enforcement issues for retail sales and online sales.

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SCOTT KLAG, Consultant, Product Stewardship Institute, Portland, Oregon said there was a tested definition for manufacturer in SB 61 using the same language used in many other states' [legislation], not just for electronics, but for other products. He said this allowed manufacturers to determine who was the responsible party to fulfill the obligations set in legislation. He said it was in the manufacturers' interest to have all the manufacturers that are selling in the state be part of the program and sharing the cost. He noted there were national entities, service providers, that help manufacturers meet their obligations in response to the variety of stewardship laws across the country.

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SENATOR DUNBAR suggested that large companies or more sophisticated manufacturers would join this coalition and work with this council, but he questioned whether every manufacturer across the whole world would join, or even know they're required to join. He suggested that smaller manufacturers may not realize they have this new duty and or realize their products are being sold in Alaska.

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MR. KLAG said it was quite common knowledge at this point, particularly in the western part of the states [that these laws

exist]. He said there may be very low volume manufacturers that slip through, but that most manufacturers know about these programs and join up. He said [the manufacturers] have very active trade organizations that help distribute this information.

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CHAIR GIESSEL noted there may be an amendment from Senator Dunbar and she asked Mr. Flora whether he intended to propose a committee substitute.

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MR. FLORA said the sponsor could assist with amendments as needed.

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CHAIR GIESSEL asked whether the amendment Senator Dunbar offered could be merged with other amendments or a committee substitute.

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SENATOR DUNBAR said it was his understanding that his amendment may not be compatible with the committee substitute, but he said he could wait to offer his amendment after the committee substitute was offered.

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MR. FLORA suggested that he could work with Senator Dunbar on the amendment.

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SENATOR DUNBAR concurred.

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CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 61.

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KATIE REILLY, Vice President, Environmental Affairs and Industry Sustainability, Consumer Technology Association (CTA), Washington, DC, said CTAs members were the manufacturers that would be responsible for delivering an electronic product stewardship program in Alaska under SB 61. She said the industry was committed to ensuring their products were recycled safely and responsibly, but that SB 61 would place a significant burden on electronics manufacturers. She expressed concern about the requirements outlined in SB 61, and about the capacity for the current electronics collection infrastructure within Alaska to safely collect and manage electronics in an environmentally responsible manner. She asserted that manufacturers would bear

the responsibility and high cost of establishing infrastructure from scratch.

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MS. REILLY observed programs developed in other states for which manufacturers leveraged existing collection infrastructure with entities like local governments and nonprofits that already knew how to safely sort, stack, palletize and shrink-wrap electronics for transport. She said annual collection events as described in SB 61 for every community with less than 5500 people, potentially 200 or more collection events throughout the state, may lead to skyrocketing costs for manufacturers, and may be beyond the needs to effectively and efficiently serve the communities of Alaska.

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MS. REILLY noted that, contrary to prior comments, typically in the US, individual manufacturers kept costs manageable by dictating their own programs, independently or as small groups, versus establishing a producer responsibility organization. She said the language of SB 61 would require producers to participate in a producer responsibility organization, increasing overhead or increasing costs for manufacturers.

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MS. REILLY further noted requirements in SB 61 for retailers to provide public education information, and she objected to the inclusion of microwave ovens as covered electronic devices as well as undefined battery-containing electronics, possibly toys or small appliances which she said were incompatible with electronics recycling systems.

MS. REILLY said CTA would be willing to participate in discussions about the inclusion of e-waste in the overall recycling and solid waste management in Alaska. She emphasized that CTA members were not consulted prior to the introduction of SB 61 but would be responsible for the requirements outlined in the bill, even if they held a seat on the advisory committee.

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MS. REILLY said CTA recommended a study by DEC to determine:

- the amount of household generated e-waste in Alaska
- where E-waste was being generated in the state
- the existing collection infrastructure and capabilities throughout Alaska to responsibly manage e-waste

MS. REILLY said CTAs overall concern was that SB 61 would add considerable costs to doing business in Alaska. She asserted that manufacturers should not bear the entire cost of establishing a very broad and potentially cumbersome infrastructure to manage e-waste from scratch. She offered to answer questions from the committee.

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SENATOR DUNBAR referred to product stewardship programs in other parts of the US and asked whether CTA had supported any of those programs in the past or if they opposed them. He asked if there was a program CTA would point to as a model for effective disposal and recycling of e-waste. He highlighted the challenges faced by rural communities regarding the removal of e-waste.

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MS. REILLY observed that CTA's member companies were legally obligated to support collection and recycling in states that have producer responsibility programs for electronics. In addition, she said many member manufacturers also support voluntary programs for their consumers in the other states around the country that may not have mandated producer responsibility programs for electronics. She said CTA had been active in the development of e-waste producer responsibility programs for decades. She said they were currently more focused on tailoring performance programs to the communities they're trying to serve.

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MS. REILLY said she did not have a great program or state to point to [as a model] for the fact that Alaska is unique. She reiterated that CTA members would be required under SB 61 to provide once a year collection events for every community with less than 5500 people, more than 200 collection events throughout the state of Alaska in a year. Those would be in addition to required collections for communities larger than 5500. She said collection events were extremely costly to operate and did not necessarily drive the desired volumes of material.

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MS. REILLY repeated the recommendation that DEC conduct a study to determine the current e-waste conditions in Alaska which would allow CTA to assist in building a better plan specific to the needs of Alaska.

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MS. REILLY said Hawaii was probably the most comparable in terms of the transportation component of the program and not having certified electronics recycling facilities in the state. She said e-waste in Hawaii was collected and transported via water to the US mainland for recycling at certified electronics recycling facilities. She emphasized that the program had the highest per pound cost to manufacturers [of existing programs], but that the high cost did not include stringent convenience requirements like those outlined in Alaska's proposal, nor the multitude of collection events [specified by SB 61]. She noted that when Hawaii's law was passed, there was an existing e-waste collection infrastructure that manufacturers were able to leverage. She said CTA was unclear about existing collection infrastructure in [Alaska], and whether communities were trained on how to sort and stack and palletize and shrink wrap electronics for safe transport to ultimate recycling.

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SENATOR DUNBAR asked whether CTA supported Hawaii's adoption and continuation of e-waste management law. He asked which state's mandatory program worked best, regardless of comparability to Alaska.

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MS. REILLY said she was not employed by CTA when Hawaii passed their law and was not aware of CTA's support or opposition to Hawaii's e-waste law. She said CTA was currently working with Hawaii's Department of Health to reform Hawaii's program to better meet the needs of Hawaii consumers and to meet manufacturers' legal obligations. She said there was not an example of an ideal state program. She said each state was unique with unique needs and suggested developing a program for Alaska's needs as a better approach than trying to adapt another program to fit Alaska's needs.

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SENATOR KAWASAKI asked whether CTA worked in other countries, for example, Canada. He noted that there were similar programs in the [European Union] EU.

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MS. REILLY said CTA was a US trade association. She said CTA did some work in Canada, but not in the environmental space. She said there was a trade association in Canada that handled environmental issues for the industry. She said CTA did not do advocacy or work in Canada or the European Union on issues like extended producer responsibility for electronics.

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CHAIR GIESSEL noted the high costs of selling and recycling [electronic] products. She asked Mr. Rehard whether manufacturers would decide not to sell products in Alaska.

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MR. REHARD said he had not seen that occur. He said that it was possible that per capita or per pound [e-waste] disposal may be more expensive due to Alaska's unique considerations. He observed that the state population was about 738,000 and said he expected waste generation would be fairly low after the first few years of implementation. He hesitated to speculate about the overall costs of the program and whether it would be a detriment to manufacturers, noting that the costs would be distributed amongst other programs nationally. He argued that manufacturers would not attach their costs directly to selling in Alaska. He suggested that Mr. Klag may have experience with manufacturers pulling out of marketplaces because of these programs.

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CHAIR GIESSEL invited Mr. Klag to comment.

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MR. KLAG said he had not experienced that. He noted that there is good infrastructure in Alaska: the back-haul program and communities that were already collecting e-waste. He acknowledged the low population and the absence of a formal process [for e-waste disposal] but suggested that a program such as the one proposed by SB 61 might inspire a producer responsibility organization to form.

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SENATOR MYERS noted that there was at least one business in Tacoma willing to forward products that other producers will not ship directly to Alaska.

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CHAIR GIESSEL held SB 61 in committee.

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There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Giessel adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 4:57 p.m.