

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 11, 2025

3:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Scott Kawasaki

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 114

"An Act relating to an in-state natural gas pipeline developed by the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 114 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 130

"An Act relating to the fisheries product development tax credit; providing for an effective date by amending the effective date of sec. 2, ch. 31, SLA 2022; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 130 (RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 135

"An Act relating to the sharing of tax revenue from the fisheries business tax and fishery resource landing tax with municipalities; relating to municipal reports on the shared tax revenue; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 135 (RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CONFIRMATION HEARING:

Big Game Commercial Services Board

Aaron Bloomquist - Palmer  
Martin Boniek - Glennallen  
Keegan McCarthy - Juneau

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 128

"An Act establishing the Department of Agriculture; relating to the establishment of the Department of Agriculture; transferring functions of the Department of Natural Resources related to agriculture to the Department of Agriculture; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 139

"An Act relating to who may own or hold certain land; relating to certain agreements having to do with critical infrastructure; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19

Urging the United States Congress to honor the terms of the Mineral Leasing Act and the Alaska Statehood Act and provide the state with a 90 percent share of all bonuses, royalties, and rentals received by the federal government from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 114

SHORT TITLE: GAS PIPELINE FAIRBANKS SPUR

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) CRONK

02/28/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/28/25	(S)	RES, FIN
03/21/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/21/25	(S)	Scheduled but Not Heard
04/07/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/07/25	(S)	Heard & Held
04/07/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/11/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 130

SHORT TITLE: FISHERIES PROD DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDIT

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF TASK FORCE EVAL ALASKA SEAFOOD  
INDUSTRY

03/12/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/12/25	(S)	RES, FIN
03/31/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/31/25	(S)	Heard & Held
03/31/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/09/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/09/25	(S)	Heard & Held
04/09/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/11/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 135

SHORT TITLE: REFUND OF FISH BUSINESS TAX TO MUNIS

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF TASK FORCE EVAL ALASKA SEAFOOD  
INDUSTRY

03/18/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/18/25	(S)	RES, FIN
03/31/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/31/25	(S)	Heard & Held
03/31/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/09/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/09/25	(S)	Heard & Held
04/09/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/11/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 128

SHORT TITLE: CREATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SPONSOR(s): RULES

03/12/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/12/25	(S)	RES, FIN
03/28/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/28/25	(S)	Heard & Held
03/28/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/04/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/04/25	(S)	Heard & Held
04/04/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/11/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 139

SHORT TITLE: LAND; OWNERSHIP RESTRICTIONS; AG LAND

SPONSOR(s): HUGHES

03/19/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
03/19/25 (S) RES, JUD  
04/02/25 (S) SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE INTRODUCED-REFERRALS  
04/02/25 (S) RES, JUD  
04/11/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SJR 19

SHORT TITLE: ANWR & NAT'L PETRO RESERVE: STATE SHARE

SPONSOR(s): BJORKMAN

04/10/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
04/10/25 (S) RES  
04/11/25 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

**WITNESS REGISTER**

PAUL MENKE, Staff  
Senator Mike Cronk  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided a brief overview of SB 114 on behalf of the sponsor.

TIM LAMKIN, Staff  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Commented during discussion of amendments to SB 130.

TIM LAMKIN, Staff  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Commented during discussion of amendments to SB 135.

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

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

MARTIN BONIEK, Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Glennallen, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

KEEGAN MCCARTHY Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as the governor's appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

INTIMAYO HARBISON, Staff  
Senator Cathy Giessel  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Explained Amendment 1 to SB 128.

LEONARDO WASSILIE, representing self  
Nenana, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 128.

CHUOL MUT, Legislative Intern  
Senator Shelley Hughes  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave a presentation on SB 139.

WES WARD, Secretary of Agriculture  
State of Arkansas  
Little Rock Arkansas

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 139.

KENDELL CULP, representing self  
Indianapolis, Indiana

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 139.

SCOTT SHARP, representing self  
Ashland, Kentucky

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 139.

DAVID KRUMM, representing self  
Big Lake, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 139.

SENATOR MIKE SHOWER, District E  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 139.

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska  
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of SJR 19.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:30:44 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Hughes, Myers, Dunbar, and Chair Giessel. Senators Wielechowski and Claman arrived immediately thereafter.

**SB 114-GAS PIPELINE FAIRBANKS SPUR**

[3:32:08 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 114 "An Act relating to an in-state natural gas pipeline developed by the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation; and providing for an effective date."

[3:32:37 PM](#)

PAUL MENKE, Staff, Senator Mike Cronk, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, said SB 114 would create a spur to the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough as part of an Alaska liquified natural gas (LNG) pipeline project.

[3:32:54 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that public testimony was previously left open. She found no further public testimony.

[3:33:08 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed public testimony on SB 114.

[3:33:15 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[3:33:31 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report SB 114, work order 34-LS0683\A, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). He gave authorization for Legislative Legal Services to make technical and conforming changes.

[3:33:46 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and SB 114 was reported from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

**SB 130-FISHERIES PROD DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDIT**

3:34:05 PM

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 130 "An Act relating to the fisheries product development tax credit; providing for an effective date by amending the effective date of sec. 2, ch. 31, SLA 2022; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR GIESSEL asked Senator Wielechowski if he would like to offer amendment A.1.

3:34:40 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said not at this time.

3:35:02 PM

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

3:35:05 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to adopt [Amendment 1], work order 34-LS0735\A.2.

34-LS0735\A.2  
Gunther/Bullard  
4/10/25

**AMENDMENT 1**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE BY SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI  
TO: SB 130

Page 1, following line 4:

Insert a new bill section to read:

**\*\* Section 1.** AS 43.05.230(m) is amended to read:

(m) The number of recipients and the total amount of tax credits claimed for each **species** [TYPE] of eligible fish under AS 43.75.037 is public information. In this subsection, "eligible fish" has the meaning given in AS 43.75.037(k)."

Page 1, line 5:

Delete "**Section 1**"

Insert "**Sec. 2**"

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 2, following line 8:

Insert a new bill section to read:

**"\* Sec. 4.** AS 43.75.037(j) is amended to read:

(j) To claim a credit under this section, a taxpayer shall agree that the department may make public the number of recipients and the total amount of tax credits claimed for each species [TYPE] of eligible fish. Notwithstanding any contrary provision in AS 40.25.100 or AS 43.05.230, the number of recipients and the total amount of tax credits claimed for each species [TYPE] of eligible fish is public information."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

[3:35:08 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[3:35:13 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI explained that Amendment 1 clarifies that businesses must report the number of recipients and the amount of tax credit for each species of fish and shellfish. This would ensure that the Legislative Finance Division has the data needed to evaluate the tax credit. He explained that Legislative Finance previously evaluated the tax credit (2021) and found that it was effective for salmon; however, the data for herring was insufficient. The legislature added a disclosure of data requirement in 2022 that included each type of fish. SB 130 expands the tax credit to any species of fish or shellfish. He surmised that recipients may interpret the tax credit data requirement to mean an aggregate of the various fish and shellfish (rather than reporting for individual species). He reiterated that Amendment 1 would clarify that the reporting requirement must be provided for each species.

[3:36:23 PM](#)

At ease.

[3:36:30 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL reconvened the meeting and invited comments on [Amendment 1].

[3:36:46 PM](#)

TIM LAMKIN, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, expressed appreciation for and indicated support of [Amendment 1].

[3:36:59 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection; she found no further objection and [Amendment 1] was adopted.

[3:37:06 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that public testimony on SB 130 was previously held open. She found no further public testimony.

[3:37:36 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed public testimony on SB 130.

[3:37:38 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[3:37:41 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report SB 130, work order 34-LS0735\A, as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). He gave authorization for Legislative Legal Services to make technical and conforming changes.

[3:37:56 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and CSSB 130 (RES) was reported from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

**SB 135-REFUND OF FISH BUSINESS TAX TO MUNIS**

[3:38:08 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 135 "An Act relating to the sharing of tax revenue from the fisheries business tax and fishery resource landing tax with municipalities; relating to municipal reports on the shared tax revenue; and providing for an effective date."

[3:38:25 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[3:38:33 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES moved to adopt Amendment 1, work order 34-LS0768\A.1.

34-LS0768\A.1  
Bullard  
4/10/25

AMENDMENT 1

OFFERED IN THE SENATE  
TO: SB 135

BY SENATOR HUGHES

Page 4, following line 9:

Insert a new bill section to read:

**"\* Sec. 6.** AS 43.75.130 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(i) A municipality that receives a payment under this section shall use 10 percent of the funds received under this section to support or enhance commercial fishing."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 4, line 22:

Delete "sec. 6"  
Insert "sec. 7"

Page 5, line 25:

Delete "sec. 9"  
Insert "sec. 10"

Page 7, line 9:

Delete "sec. 11"  
Insert "sec. 12"

Page 8, line 19:

Delete "sec. 13"  
Insert "sec. 14"

Page 8, line 25:

Delete "a new subsection"  
Insert "new subsections"

Page 8, following line 31:

Insert new material to read:

"(g) A municipality that receives a payment under this section shall use 10 percent of the funds received under this section to support or enhance commercial fishing.

**\* Sec. 17.** AS 43.75.130 (i) and AS 43.77.060 (g) are repealed."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 9, line 5:

Delete "Sections 8 and 15"

Insert "Sections 9 and 16"

Page 9, line 6:

Delete "7, 10, 12, and 14"

Insert "8, 11, 13, 15, and 17"

Page 9, line 7:

Delete "secs. 17 and 18"

Insert "secs. 19 and 20"

[3:38:36 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[3:38:39 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES acknowledged previous testimony from Alaska Marine Lines (AML) that requested freedom for communities to use the tax collected as they see fit. She said that community revenue sharing addresses this. She pointed out that SB 135 was brought forward by the Seafood Industry Task Force to help the industry. She opined that it is important to ensure those funds are used to benefit the industry. She explained that Amendment 1 would require that 10 percent of the funds (rather than the full 60 percent the communities receive) be used on projects that directly benefit the seafood industry. She stated that Amendment 1 does not include an additional reporting requirement. She explained that she attempted to keep the language broad enough to allow for general application by inland communities (e.g. the funds could be used for a road to the airport).

SENATOR HUGHES reiterated that Amendment 1 is intended to ensure that the funds received from the tax credit are used on projects directly related to the seafood industry. She said that the fishing industry requested SB 135 to increase community support for the industry. She opined that it is important to honor that request. She pointed out that the commercial fishing industry faces seasonal uncertainties; therefore, community support for the industry is important. She recalled that the tax credit distribution was previously 10 percent to communities and 90 percent to the State of Alaska. She indicated that the distribution later changed to a 50/50 split. SB 135 would adjust this even further, giving 60 percent to communities and 40 percent to the state. She acknowledged that the State of Alaska

is experiencing fiscal strain; however, she indicated that supporting the seafood industry is a positive investment.

[3:40:47 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR expressed a willingness to support Amendment 1. He recalled his experience growing up around commercial fishermen in Cordova and surmised that they would encourage him to support this amendment. He directed attention to the phrase, "to support or enhance commercial fishing" and stated that this language offers a broad interpretation. He offered an example to illustrate how the fishing industry benefits from infrastructure that may seem unrelated. He expressed hope that Amendment 1 would be interpreted broadly and that this would give communities flexibility. He pointed out that the amendment applies to ten percent of the 60 percent communities would receive, which is a relatively small amount. He stated that, for those reasons, he would support Amendment 1. He added that he would offer two amendments that may address the concerns of AML.

[3:42:47 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL invited the sponsor of SB 135 to comment on Amendment 1.

[3:42:56 PM](#)

TIM LAMKIN, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, said the sponsor does not object to Amendment 1 or to any forthcoming amendments.

[3:43:09 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection. She found no further objection and [Amendment 1] was adopted.

[3:43:18 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[3:43:20 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR moved to adopt [Amendment 2], work order 34-LS0768\A.2.

34-LS0768\A.2  
Nauman/Bullard  
4/10/25

**AMENDMENT 2**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE  
TO: SB 135

BY SENATOR DUNBAR

Page 1, line 9, following "facilities":

Insert ", if the municipality operates harbor facilities"

Page 5, line 5, following "AS 43.75.130 - 43.75.137":

Insert ", if the municipality operates a harbor"

Page 8, line 30, following "revenue":

Insert ", if the municipality operates a harbor"

[3:43:26 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[3:43:28 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR said that Amendment 2 is in response to concerns brought forward by AML relating to communities that receive the tax credit but do not have harbor facilities. He stated that this amendment would add language to specify the intent for the funds if a community has harbor facilities. If the community does not have harbor facilities, the funds can be used in other ways.

[3:44:07 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection; she found no further objection and [Amendment 2] was adopted.

[3:44:18 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[3:44:23 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR moved to adopt Amendment 3, work order 34-LS0768\A.3.

34-LS0768\A.3  
Wallace/Bullard  
4/10/25

**AMENDMENT 3**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE  
TO: SB 135

BY SENATOR DUNBAR

Page 4, line 29:

Delete "Not"  
Insert "Except as provided in (c) of this section, not"

Page 5, following line 7:  
Insert a new subsection to read:  
"(c) A report is not required under this section if 10 percent of the total tax revenue a municipality receives under AS 43.75.130 - 43.75.137 is less than \$1,000."

Page 8, line 25:  
Delete "a new subsection"  
Insert "new subsections"

Page 8, following line 31:  
Insert a new subsection to read:  
"(g) A report is not required under this section if 10 percent of the total tax revenue a municipality receives under this section is less than \$1,000."

[3:44:25 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[3:44:27 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR expressed concerns regarding the wording of Amendment 3. He said he would like to offer a conceptual amendment to Amendment 3.

[3:44:46 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR explained that the conceptual amendment would correct a drafting error that resulted from a miscommunication between himself, Alaska Marine Lines (AML), and Legislative Legal Services. He briefly discussed the error in Amendment 3. He pointed out that \$1,000 is ten percent of \$10,000; therefore, the language could be simplified to "is less than \$10,000."

[3:45:14 PM](#)

[SENATOR DUNBAR moved to adopt Conceptual Amendment 1 to Amendment 3.]

CONCEPTUAL AMENDMENT 1 to AMENDMENT 3

Page 1, line 7:  
Delete "10 percent of"

Page 1, line 8:

Delete "\$1,000"  
Insert "\$10,000"

Page 1, line 16:  
Delete "10 percent of"

Page 1, line 17:  
Delete "\$1,000"  
Insert "\$10,000"

[CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.]

[3:45:42 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR explained the intent behind Conceptual Amendment 1 to Amendment 3. He emphasized that reports are costly and take time. Some communities receive a very small amount from the tax credit (in some cases as little as \$300). For those communities, the cost of writing a report is greater than the amount received. He surmised that \$10,000 is a reasonable cutoff for the reporting requirement. He pointed out that this is a new reporting requirement.

[3:46:37 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL directed attention to lines 14-17 of Amendment 3 and asked whether the conceptual amendment changes would also apply to that section.

[3:46:46 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR replied yes. He clarified that the same changes would be made to both sections (lines 7-8 and 16-17) of Amendment 3. This would remove "10 percent of" and change "\$1,000" to "\$10,000" in both sections.

[3:47:02 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN agreed that some communities receive a very small amount from the tax credit. He recalled the change made by Amendment 1 and asked whether designating how the money can be spent is necessary for communities that only receive \$100. He opined that it is reasonable for larger amounts (e.g. \$10,000). He briefly discussed the anti-dedicated funds provisions in the Constitution of the State of Alaska. He acknowledged that his comments are not directly related to Amendment 3; however, he shared that the discussion of Amendment 3 (which emphasizes that some communities receive small amounts and therefore would remove the reporting requirement) has brought up additional questions regarding the need for Amendment 1.

[3:47:52 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR replied that there is a push and pull between the desire to give communities the maximum flexibility to use the funds while ensuring communities spend the funds responsibly. He agreed that the legislature cannot dedicate funds; however, he suggested that intent language is useful. He shared his understanding that similar intent language is already in statute (e.g. intent language related to the alcohol tax).

CHAIR GIESSEL brought the discussion back to Amendment 3.

SENATOR DUNBAR encouraged support of Amendment 3.

[The committee treated Conceptual Amendment 1 to Amendment 3 as adopted.]

[3:48:46 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection to [Amendment 3], as amended.

CHAIR GIESSEL found no further objection and [Amendment 3], as amended, was adopted.

[3:49:20 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 135; finding none, she closed public testimony.

[3:49:34 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[3:49:37 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report SB 135, work order 34-LS0786\A, as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). He gave authorization for Legislative Legal Services to make technical and conforming changes.

[3:49:52 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and CSSB 135(RES) was reported from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING:**  
**BIG GAME COMMERCIAL SERVICES BOARD**

[3:50:09 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

[3:51:31 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked Mr. Bloomquist to tell the committee about himself and his interest in serving on the .

[3:51:58 PM](#)

AARON BLOOMQUIST, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB), Palmer, Alaska, said he is the current board chair and holds one of the guide seats. He has guiding operations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, and on Kodiak Island. He has served one full term on BGCSB (4 years). He was active with the board in various advisory committee capacities for 20 years prior to this. He shared that he has several board-related projects (addressing board efficiency) that he would like to complete. He indicated that it is difficult to find good staff and expressed hope that the current board staff would remain. He stated that he spends hundreds of hours per year on board projects. He said he was available to answer questions.

[3:53:30 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN asked Mr. Bloomquist his perspective on the independence of BGCSB.

[3:53:42 PM](#)

MR. BLOOMQUIST asked to hear the question again.

[3:53:52 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN repeated the question. He clarified that he is asking about the board's level of independence in its decision-making. He contrasted this with a board that makes decisions at someone's instruction.

[3:53:59 PM](#)

MR. BLOOMQUIST opined that the board is very independent. He shared his belief that this independence is due to the make-up of the board, which includes a wide range of industry members and others. He explained that the board chair is usually also a guide and estimated that roughly 90 percent of licensees are guides. The remainder are transporters. He noted that BGCSB also contains public members and public landowners. He noted that the latter typically represent corporations and there is often only one of those seats filled at any time. He emphasized the diversity of the board. He acknowledged that special interests do sometimes lobby BGCSB but indicated that lobbyists do not impact board decisions. He reiterated that it is an independent board that generally runs smoothly.

[3:55:49 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES expressed appreciation for Mr. Bloomquist's contributions to the board, as well as to conservation efforts and guiding disabled veterans.

[3:56:47 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked Mr. Boniek to tell the committee about himself and his interest in serving on the .

[3:56:54 PM](#)

MARTIN BONIEK, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB), Glennallen, Alaska, said he operates Copper Valley Air Services and gave a brief overview of that company. He indicated that he holds a transporter seat on BGCSB. He said transporters fall into two categories: marine transporters and air taxis. He is an air taxi transporter. He opined that having representation on the board is beneficial to the constituents who are air taxi transporters. He said there is also a marine transporter on BGCSB. He shared that his first term on the board involved a great deal of experiential learning and surmised that this would likely continue in the second term. He indicated that others have not shown interest in taking over his seat on the board and expressed a willingness to continue in his appointed position.

[3:58:47 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS asked how many air taxis and marine transporters BGCSB licenses.

[3:59:04 PM](#)

MR. BONIEK replied that he does not know. He noted that state and federal regulations do not require air taxis hauling incidental hunting operations to hold a special license. However, state regulations do require a transporter license for air taxis that charge a different than normal rate for a particular flight.

[4:00:37 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN asked Mr. Boniek's perspective on the independence of the Board.

MR. BONIEK said he agreed with Mr. Bloomquist. He opined that the board is very independent and said he has not heard of any outside pressure that would impact decision-making. Some constituents have opinions for or against certain ideas; however, there is no organized lobby for transporters (unlike what other boards may experience). He opined that it is valuable to have public input on decisions and added that the board holds

public hearings at most meetings. He stated that he would like to see more public hearings.

[4:02:21 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked Mr. McCarthy to tell the committee about himself and his interest in serving on the .

[4:02:42 PM](#)

KEEGAN MCCARTHY Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, Juneau, Alaska, said that he is a new appointee to the board. He has attended several meetings and is honored to be an appointee. He shared a brief history of his experience working in the fishing and hunting industries. He emphasized his work as a hunting guide in several locations across the state. In 2005, he started a business specializing in boat-based hunting operations. He emphasized that he is actively involved in the industry and is a member of several national and international conservation organizations. He is active with the Alaska Professional Hunters Association. He shared that hunting ethics and conservation are paramount to his work. He expressed excitement for the opportunity to bring a new perspective while learning and working with the board to perpetuate the industry.

[4:04:26 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN noted that Mr. McCarthy indicated previous criminal convictions on his application and asked for more information.

[4:04:40 PM](#)

MR. MCCARTHY replied that one was plea agreement in 2006 or 2007 for a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) violation for improper permitting while commercial fishing. He explained that it resulted from a miscommunication with the processor and roughly 20 others received the same violation. He said he was harvesting salmon roe and did not know that a special DEC permit was needed. He explained that he pled guilty and was placed on probation for two years (this was referred to as a suspended sentence). He stated that he has not had any significant violations since.

[4:05:47 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN shared his understanding that this is considered a "suspended imposition of sentence" for which Mr. McCarthy completed probation. He suggested that, while Mr. McCarthy was convicted, this allows him to declare that he has not been convicted of any crime.

[4:06:03 PM](#)

MR. MCCARTHY replied that this is his understanding. He said that he recently spoke with court representatives who informed him that he is not required to mention the suspended sentence; however, he chose to acknowledge it to provide full transparency.

[4:06:22 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN expressed appreciation that Mr. McCarthy disclosed this information even though it was not required. He opined that the willingness to share this information is a positive indication of how Mr. McCarthy dealt with that situation.

[4:06:40 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS stated that court records indicate a previous charge related to the failure to seal a bear. He asked for more information.

MR. MCCARTHY replied that, at the time, he was told this was the equivalent of a parking ticket. He explained that it was not a misdemeanor, and he did not go to court; rather, he paid a \$100 fine. He said that the fine resulted from confusion. He said that in Juneau Ward Air ships bear hides, and he briefly described that process. He explained that for the time in question, Ward Air accidentally left one bear hide in the freezer. He sent the hide in for sealing as soon as the error was discovered. As the owner of the business, he offered to take on the fine. He reiterated that his legal council informed him that this was the equivalent of a parking ticket.

[4:08:20 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS noted previous appointees who became defensive when asked about past criminal convictions (and were ultimately rejected as appointees) and expressed appreciation for Mr. McCarthy's openness.

[4:08:54 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[4:08:57 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI stated that [in accordance with AS 39.05.080], the Senate Resources Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be advanced to a joint session for consideration:

Big Game Commercial Services Board

Aaron Bloomquist - Palmer  
Martin Boniek - Glennallen  
Keegan McCarthy - Juneau

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI 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 advanced to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

[4:09:22 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that she had not opened public testimony prior to the motion. She then opened public testimony on the confirmation of Aaron Bloomquist, Martin Boniek and Keegan McCarthy to the Big Game Commercial Services Board. Finding none, she closed public testimony.

[4:09:47 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL affirmed the advancement of the governor's appointees to the full legislature for consideration.

**SB 128-CREATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

[4:09:54 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 128 "An Act establishing the Department of Agriculture; relating to the establishment of the Department of Agriculture; transferring functions of the Department of Natural Resources related to agriculture to the Department of Agriculture; and providing for an effective date."

[4:10:29 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[4:10:58 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to adopt Amendment 1, work order 34-LS 0694\N.2

34-LS0694\N.2  
Bullard  
4/7/25

**AMENDMENT 1**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE  
TO: SB 128

BY SENATOR GIESSEL

Page 20, following line 28:  
Insert new material to read:

**"Article 1. Administration."**

Page 21, line 14:  
Delete "Department of Agriculture"  
Insert "department"

Page 21, line 29:  
Delete "of agriculture"

Page 21, line 31:  
Delete "Department of Agriculture"  
Insert "department"

Page 21, following line 28:  
Insert a new section to read:  
**"Sec. 44.38.030. Division of mariculture.** The division of mariculture is established in the department to support and promote mariculture farms and hatcheries in the state. The commissioner shall control and supervise the division of mariculture. In this section, "mariculture" has the meaning given in AS 16.10.945."

Page 21, line 29:  
Delete "**Sec. 44.38.030**"  
Insert "**Sec. 44.38.040**"

Page 21, following line 31:  
Insert new material to read:  
**"Article 2. General Provisions.**  
**Sec. 44.38.900. Definitions.** In this chapter,  
(1) "commissioner" means the commissioner of agriculture;  
(2) "department" means the Department of Agriculture."

[4:11:01 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[4:11:16 PM](#)

INTIMAYO HARBISON, Staff, Senator Cathy Giessel, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, explained that [Amendment 1] to SB 128 would create a new Division of Mariculture within the

Department of Agriculture. This Division would focus on mariculture issues within the state.

[4:11:33 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS recalled that mariculture currently falls under the purview of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). He asked if Amendment 1 would create a new division or move the existing division from ADF&G to the Department of Agriculture.

[4:11:54 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL replied that the intention is to move the existing division from ADF&G to the Department of Agriculture.

[4:11:59 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON shared his understanding that Amendment 1 would move the Division of Mariculture from ADF&G to the Department of Agriculture.

[4:12:23 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR expressed appreciation that Amendment 1 uses the term "mariculture" rather than "aquatic farm."

[4:12:31 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES recalled a recent discussion that added "mariculture" to the definition of "seafood" for the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI). She asked how Amendment 1 would fit with that change.

[4:12:46 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON replied that Amendment 1 does not propose to move ASMI to the Department of Agriculture. He indicated that there is general agreement that ASMI is better suited for the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED).

[4:13:32 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES asked if mariculture products would be eligible for the Alaska Grown label.

[4:13:45 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON surmised that mariculture products would be eligible; however, he pointed out that the Department of Agriculture would decide whether to extend the Alaska Grown label to proposed mariculture products.

[4:14:11 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection to [Amendment 1].

[4:14:19 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no further objection and [Amendment 1] was adopted.

[4:14:22 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[4:14:27 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to adopt Amendment 2, work order 34-LS 0694\N.3.

34-LS0694\N.3  
Bullard  
4/8/25

**AMENDMENT 2**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE BY SENATOR GIESSEL  
TO: SB 128

Page 20, following line 28:  
Insert new material to read:

**"Article 1. Administration."**

Page 21, line 14:  
Delete "Department of Agriculture"  
Insert "department"

Page 21, line 29:  
Delete "of agriculture"

Page 21, line 31:  
Delete "Department of Agriculture"  
Insert "department"

Page 21, following line 28:  
Insert a new section to read:  
**"Sec. 44.38.030. Division of food security.** The division of food security is established in the department to coordinate and develop policies, programs, and planning related to food security in the state. The commissioner shall control and supervise the division of food security."

Page 21, line 29:  
Delete "**Sec. 44.38.030**"

Insert "**Sec. 44.38.040**"

Page 21, following line 31:  
Insert new material to read:

**"Article 2. General Provisions.**

**Sec. 44.38.900. Definitions.** In this chapter,

- (1) "commissioner" means the commissioner of agriculture;
- (2) "department" means the Department of Agriculture."

[4:14:29 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[4:14:35 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON explained that [Amendment 2] would create a Division of Food Security within the proposed Department of Agriculture. He recalled that earlier discussions of the executive order relating to a proposed Department of Agriculture had indicated food security as a primary focus. He stated that this issue falls within the purview of the Department of Agriculture.

[4:15:07 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR expressed his support for Amendment 2. However, he shared his understanding that "food security" is not defined in Alaska Statutes. He surmised that his definition of "food security" is broader than most. He recommended reading the work of Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen, whose work is related to the economics of poverty and the causes of famine. He explained that famines are driven by a lack of income (rather than a lack of food supply) and offered examples to illustrate this. He stated that famine is largely the result of a distribution issue within a society (not a complete lack of food). He connected this to the discussion of food security in Alaska. He emphasized the importance of programs that provide income for food purchases (e.g. the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)) in ensuring food security within communities. He stated that these programs are often more important than growing or importing food. He reiterated that food insecurity is a distribution issue. He reiterated his support of Amendment 2 and expressed hope that a Division of Food Security would focus on food distribution and food affordability.

[4:17:01 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES shared her understanding that there is no plan to move SNAP or other similar programs to the proposed Department of Agriculture. She indicated that the proposed Division of Food Security would have an associated cost and expressed concern that the progression of SB 128 could be slowed by the addition of a fiscal note. She asked whether the division would initially be set up as a part of the office of the Commissioner of the proposed Department of Agriculture or whether a Division of Food Security fiscal note is expected.

[4:17:59 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON answered that Amendment 3 is broadly written. The amendment creates the Division of Food Security but is not prescriptive with respect to how the proposed Department of Agriculture must shape the division. He said it is within the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture's purview to take on the duties of the proposed Division of Food Security. He shared his understanding that Amendment 3 (as written) would not require a fiscal note (unless it was the desire of the Department of Agriculture).

[4:18:43 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that SNAP benefits and other similar programs are within the Alaska Department of Health (DOH), Division of Public Assistance. She pointed out that SB 128 has a fiscal note.

[4:19:04 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS stated that he supports Amendment 2. However, he expressed concern that the definition of "food security" is very broad. He commented that the broad definition of "food security" could impact multiple departments. He offered EBT and SNAP as one example, as these could potentially be moved from DOH, Division of Public Assistance to the proposed Division of Food Security. He briefly discussed transportation-related concerns. He reiterated his support for Amendment 2; however, he said he would continue to monitor SB 128 as it moves through the legislative process to see how these potential impacts play out.

[4:20:34 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL stated that the Department of Agriculture was proposed, in part, due to a lack of focus on food security issues. She agreed that SB 128 is creating new pathways. She explained that the intent of the Division of Food Security is to have a division that would focus on food security issues while engaging in collaborative discussions with other state agencies.

This would improve the concept of "food security" as broadly as intended.

[4:21:20 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS briefly discussed how a potential merger between Kroger, Co. and Albertsons Companies, Inc. would have had an impact on food security in Alaska. He shared his understanding that the federal government stopped the merger, but pointed out that the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED) would have addressed this at the state level. He said that this is another example of an issue that would potentially fall under the purview of the proposed Division of Food Security and expressed concern.

[4:22:04 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES opined that the concerns expressed by Senator Myers could be considered reasons for supporting the establishment of the Department of Agriculture and the Division of Food Security. She shared about her experience on the Alaska Food Strategy Task Force and highlighted discussions related to distribution and transportation. She opined that it would be helpful to have a division that could house those discussions and engage in collaborative discussions across state agencies. She shared her belief that the State of Alaska needs the proposed Division of Food Security.

[4:23:06 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection to Amendment 2.

CHAIR GIESSEL found no further objection and [Amendment 2] to SB 128 was adopted.

[4:23:13 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited a motion.

[4:23:17 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to adopt Amendment 3, work order 34-LS0694\N.7.

34-LS0694\N.7  
Bullard  
4/11/25

**A M E N D M E N T 3**

OFFERED IN THE SENATE  
TO: SB 128

BY SENATOR GIESSEL

Page 21, line 10:  
Delete "and"

Page 21, following line 10:  
Insert new paragraphs to read:  
    "(5) support the improvement of food security for residents of the state;  
    (6) support agricultural businesses and the marketing of state agriculture products;  
    (7) support state mariculture businesses and the marketing of state mariculture products; and"

Page 21, line 11:  
Delete "(5)"  
Insert "(8) engage in agricultural research and"

Page 21, following line 28:  
Insert a new subsection to read:  
"(c) By February 1 of each year, the commissioner of agriculture shall prepare an annual report containing a summary of the Department of Agriculture's efforts and progress under (a)(5) - (8) of this section in addressing food security, supporting state agricultural businesses and the marketing of state agricultural products, supporting mariculture businesses and the marketing of state mariculture products, and engaging in agricultural research. The department shall deliver the report to the senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives and notify the legislature that the report is available."

[4:23:20 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL objected for purposes of discussion.

[4:23:23 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON explained that [Amendment 3] defines the duties of the commissioner of the proposed Department of Agriculture. He acknowledged that some committee members are concerned about the increased fiscal note costs related to creating additional divisions within the department. He said Amendment 3 clarifies the duties of the commissioner. This includes supporting and improving food security for Alaskans, supporting agriculture and mariculture businesses, as well as support for and engagement in

mariculture and agriculture research. In addition, the commissioner must provide a report detailing improvements in those areas to the legislature by February 1 of each year.

[4:24:35 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES recalled a recent discussion with the Director of the Division of Agriculture at the Food and Farm Caucus. She shared her understanding that the University of Alaska is responsible for agricultural research. She noted that the Division of Agriculture, Alaska Plant Materials Center engages in some research; however, she sought to clarify that research is the work of the university. She opined that the commissioner of the proposed Department of Agriculture would be responsible for disseminating that research to the agricultural community across the state. She asked whether Amendment 3 states that the commissioner must conduct research - or whether the commissioner's role would be disseminating the information gained through the University of Alaska's research.

[4:25:31 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON replied that Amendment 3 states that the commissioner would support research. He added that the department would determine the scope of that support. This could include grants, disseminating information, etc. He clarified that Amendment 3 does not explicitly state that the commissioner must be involved in research.

[4:26:06 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL removed her objection.

CHAIR GIESSEL found no further objection and Amendment 3, work order 34-LS0694\N.7 was adopted.

[4:26:21 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL noted that public testimony was previously left open.

[4:26:49 PM](#)

LEONARDO WASSILIE, representing self, Nenana, Alaska, testified in support of SB 128. He said he is on the National Family Farm Coalition executive committee and works for the Nenana Native Association. He also works for Calypso Farm and Ecology Center. He said he supports movement toward strengthening food security in Alaska. He indicated support for legislative involvement in that process. He stated that he supports local agriculture and expressed support for standards for producers. He emphasized the importance of healthy soils and regenerative farming practices.

[4:29:14 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL held SB 128 in committee.

**SB 139-LAND; OWNERSHIP RESTRICTIONS; AG LAND**

[4:29:24 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 139 "An Act relating to who may own or hold certain land; relating to certain agreements having to do with critical infrastructure; and providing for an effective date."

[4:29:58 PM](#)

Senator Hughes, speaking as sponsor of SB 139, said her staff would give a presentation on SB 139.

[4:30:25 PM](#)

CHUOL MUT, Legislative Intern, Senator Shelley Hughes, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced himself.

[4:30:33 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES said SB 139 is an attempt to fix the problem of foreign countries purchasing agricultural land in the US. She stated that foreign countries have purchased roughly 40 million acres of agricultural land in the Lower 48. Of these, China has purchased 384 thousand acres. She pointed out that, while this is not a large amount, the location of the land may negatively impact the US. She stated that 384 acres is roughly half of the total land in production in Alaska.

SENATOR HUGHES explained that SB 139 makes 3 changes. First, it would prohibit citizens of foreign adversaries (there are 6, based on US code) from purchasing agricultural land. It would also prohibit land purchases within 100 miles of a military base. Finally, companies that are owned or controlled by foreign adversaries would not be granted access to critical infrastructure or related cyber security. She emphasized that SB 139 would ensure that Alaska's military installations remain secure, agricultural lands remain productive and unassailable, and communities remain strong and safe.

[4:32:12 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 2:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**SB 139**

Land restrictions on Foreign Adversaries Regarding  
Military Installations and Agricultural Lands.

- Prohibits citizens of China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia and Venezuela from acquiring any land within 100 miles of military installations.
- Prohibits citizens including foreign business entities from these same countries from acquiring agricultural land.
- Exceptions: U.S. citizens from these countries are not restricted. Allows non-citizen to enter into a residential lease agreement.

MR. MUT stated that "foreign adversaries" are identified as such by the US Secretary of Commerce under 15 C.F.R. 791.4.

[4:33:49 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 3:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Enforcement of Provisions**

- A report is made to the Attorney General
- An investigation is conducted
- If violation, land is seized and sold
- Funds owed are returned to lien holders and remainder goes to general fund.

[4:35:03 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 4:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Balancing Restrictions with Fairness**

- U.S. citizens from restricted countries are exempt.
- Pre-existing agricultural leases (before July 1, 2025) can continue under original terms.

- Residential leases are unaffected.
- Bona fide liens and mortgages remain valid post-forfeiture.

[4:36:14 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 5:

[Original punctuation provided.]

#### **Why SB 139?**

Foreign-owned agricultural land data points

##### **Increase in foreign-owned acres**

- Over 45 million acres of U.S. farmland were foreign owned as of 2021, with continued growth.

##### **Chinese ownership**

- China owns over [384,000] acres, sparking concerns over strategic land acquisitions.

SENATOR HUGHES emphasized that the 45 million acres of foreign-owned US farmland are not owned solely by US adversaries.

[4:37:26 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 6:

[Original punctuation provided.]

#### **Why SB 139 IS Necessary for National Security**

##### **Oregon**

A Chinese company invested in a wind farm near a US naval base in Oregon used for weapons testing and training.

##### **Wyoming**

A Chinese firm had holdings in a crypto mining operation in Wyoming located within a mile of Warren Air Force Base

##### **North Dakota**

A Chinese Farm in North Dakota is located about twelve miles from a military site.

##### **Michigan**

A Chinese electric battery plant in Michigan is located within one hundred miles of a US National Guard base that hosts joint training with the Taiwanese military.

[4:39:07 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 7:

[Original punctuation provided.]

### **Why SB 139?**

#### Protecting Critical Infrastructure

- In 2009, Chinese and Russian hackers infiltrated America's electrical grid and installed malware.
- In 2010, Russia hacked NASDAQ stock exchange with "digital bomb" to damage financial networks.
- In 2013, Iranian hackers infiltrated control systems of Bowman Avenue Dam in NY, almost flooding a town.
- In 2022, Russian hackers attacked a food company, which temporarily closed its meatpacking plants in the US.
- In 2023, China-backed hacker network Volt Typhoon accessed Guam critical infrastructure.

[4:40:42 PM](#)

MR. MUT advanced to slide 8:

[Original punctuation provided.]

### **Purpose of Protection**

#### **Alaska Resource Protection**

Safeguards agricultural land for local use and our domestic food supply.

#### **National Military Protection**

Prevents opportunities for gathering intelligence.

#### **Geopolitical Protection**

Amid global tensions, bolsters national security, economic security, and food security.

This is how we, as the Alaska State Legislature, can do our small part to help ensure no tyrannical nation gains a foothold as a dominant world power.

[4:42:02 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES shared that Mr. Mut was born in Nairobi, Kenya and attended school in England. He came to Alaska on his own at age 19. He is now a homeowner and soon-to-be graduate of the University of Alaska. She expressed appreciation for his work.

[4:42:26 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced invited testimony on SB 139.

[4:42:43 PM](#)

WES WARD, Secretary of Agriculture, State of Arkansas, Little Rock Arkansas, expressed appreciation for Alaska and shared several personal anecdotes. He said Arkansas has dedicated significant time to the issue of foreign land ownership. The Arkansas governor was the first to remove Chinese landowners from agricultural land. The Arkansas State Legislature passed legislation in 2023 that further restricted foreign land ownership. He stated that 1.6 million acres of land in Arkansas is foreign owned. He said that this is not always problematic and offered Canada as one example of a good relationship between Arkansas and a foreign landowner. He explained that Arkansas restricted land ownership for the 6 countries that are adversarial to the US. He briefly described the process of removing the Chinese landowners in 2023. He noted that Arkansas is currently fine-tuning the law that restricts foreign land ownership to protect critical infrastructure. He noted several agricultural and national security concerns. He expressed support for SB 139.

[4:46:18 PM](#)

[KENDELL CULP], representing self, Indianapolis, Indiana, shared that as a Representative in the Indiana General Assembly he passed legislation to limit foreign adversaries' access to farmland. He noted that this legislation had overwhelming support. He explained that the intention was to enhance food security by protecting the food supply. He indicated that the adversarial countries are China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia and Venezuela. He explained that, during its passage, the legislation was amended to include protections for military installations. This prohibited foreign adversaries from

purchasing land within a ten-mile radius of a military facility. He briefly discussed how this change impacted the state. He acknowledged concerns and briefly discussed publicly traded companies for which stock ownership is unknown. To address this, the Indiana General Assembly prohibited majority ownership by adversarial countries. He briefly discussed his desire to strengthen this language in the future. He noted that the Indiana law is similar to SB 139. He opined that it is important to be vigilant. He said Indiana also protected water, mineral, and repairing rights from foreign ownership. He stated that this law was well-received in Indiana and farmers appreciate the added protection.

[4:49:55 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL invited Representative Scott Sharp from the Kentucky State House of Representatives to testify.

[4:50:07 PM](#)

[SCOTT SHARP], representing self, Ashland, Kentucky, stated that the Kentucky General Assembly passed legislation (House Bill 315) that is similar to that passed in Indiana and Arkansas. He noted that the Kentucky legislation linked "hostile countries" to those identified in 22 CFR 126, Section 126.1. This section lists eight adversaries: Belarus, Burma, China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela. He explained that linking the state law with 22 CFR 126.1 allows the state law to change as countries are added and/or removed from the list of adversaries. He opined that the Kentucky General Assembly needs to tighten the law and expressed hope that this would be done in the coming year.

[4:51:25 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 139.

[4:51:46 PM](#)

DAVID KRUMM, representing self, Big Lake, Alaska, testified in support of SB 139. He said he is the former Alaskan Command Commander and former Eleventh Airforce Commander. He expressed support for SB 139. He briefly discussed national security concerns and emphasized Alaska's position in national security operations. He stated that if adversaries are able to locate themselves near or around military bases or training locations, they could potentially impede activities at those locations. He recommended securing areas in and around military operations, including airspace where advanced fighters and bombers fly.

[4:53:40 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL expressed appreciation for Mr. Krumm's testimony. She added that she is chair of the Special Committee on Arctic Affairs and agreed that Alaska is strategically located.

[4:54:02 PM](#)

SENATOR MIKE SHOWER, District E, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, testified in support of SB 139. Expressed confidence in Mr. Krumm's knowledge and encouraged strong consideration of his testimony. He stated that Alaska is strategically located. He said that some countries are attempting or may attempt asymmetric warfare. He explained that those countries do not want to engage in direct conflict with the US; however, there are many methods of indirect conflict. These include purchasing land, cross-border drug sales, and obtaining jobs on the Alaska pipeline. He briefly discussed a letter Governor Dunleavy received from China regarding China-Alaska relations. He emphasized the potential for indirect conflict that may not be visible. He stated that SB 139 is important and emphasized the need to protect Alaska's residents, resources, and strategic location. He suggested that the prohibitions in SB 139 should extend to the land below military airspace. He directed attention to SB 139, page 2, and suggested that the sponsor consider amendments related to dwellings.

CHAIR GIESSEL held public testimony on SB 139 open.

[4:56:35 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL held SB 139 in committee.

**SJR 19-ANWR & NAT'L PETRO RESERVE: STATE SHARE**

[4:56:48 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19 Urging the United States Congress to honor the terms of the Mineral Leasing Act and the Alaska Statehood Act and provide the state with a 90 percent share of all bonuses, royalties, and rentals received by the federal government from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

[4:57:15 PM](#)

SENATOR JESSE BJORKMAN, District D, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, paraphrased the sponsor statement for SJR 19:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**SJR 19 ANWR & Nat'l Petro Reserve: State Share**

Version G Sponsor Statement  
April 10, 2025

With the release of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order, "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential," Alaskans are optimistic that we'll see increased production of our petroleum and mining resources. However, this enthusiasm is tempered because Congress has gone back on its promise to provide Alaska with 90 percent of the royalty revenues from production on federal land. Alaska's present and future revenues are also weighed down by the write-offs against State taxes that oil companies can claim for activity on federal lands and necessary upgrades to Alaska's aging infrastructure to support production activity.

When Congress was deliberating granting Alaska statehood, there was recognition that our large, remote state wouldn't have enough of a population and industrial base to be self-sufficient. In exchange for taking on the financial responsibility of providing public services, Alaska was promised 90 percent of the royalties from production on federal lands in both the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 and an amendment to the Mineral Act of 1920.

It was also acknowledged at the time the Statehood Act was under consideration that some of the most valuable land in Alaska, in particular the Naval Petroleum Reserve (now the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska) and the Arctic Wildlife Range (now the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge), had been reserved by the federal government and was not available for the state to select. With roughly two-thirds or more of the North Slope under federal control, Alaska's ability to determine its own revenue stream has been severely impacted.

Senate Joint Resolution 19 asks Congress to uphold the promise made in the Alaska Statehood Act to provide 90 percent of the revenues from production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and to extend that promise to production in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska. This will allow the state to support the programs and infrastructure projects necessary for the petroleum industry and provide services for our citizens.

[4:59:34 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES expressed appreciation for SJR 19. She opined that this is an important issue and noted that Alaska has a higher percentage of federal lands than most other states - an estimated 60-65 percent. She contrasted this with states such as New York, where less than 1 percent of the land is federally owned. She opined that what SJR 19 proposes is the least the federal government can do, and it is the right thing to do.

[5:00:27 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL held SJR 19 in committee.

[5:01:09 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Giessel adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 5:01 p.m.