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1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 297

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act creating the Public Communications Commission."
7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 * Section 1. AS 44.19 is amended by adding new sections in art. 7 to
9 read:

10 ARTICLE 7. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION [EMPLOYMENT
11 ADVISORY COMMISSION].

12 Sec. 44.19.461. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION. There is
13 created in the Office of the Governor the Public Communications
14 Commission.

15 Sec. 44.19.471. MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF OFFICE. (a) The commis-
16 sion consists of nine members appointed by the governor, without
17 regard to political affiliation, subject to confirmation by a majority
18 of the members of the legislature in joint session. In making appoint-
19 ments to the commission, the governor shall give due consideration to
20 representation from such fields as higher education, elementary and
21 secondary education, commercial broadcasting, public health, public
22 works, labor, commerce and the professions. Members serve at the
23 pleasure of the governor.

24 (b) The members of the commission shall serve staggered terms of
25 five years, with the initial terms determined by lot.

26 Sec. 44.19.481. COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES. Members of the com-
27 mission receive no salary, but are entitled to per diem and travel
28 expenses authorized by law for other commissions.

29 Sec. 44.19.491. CHAIRMAN. The governor shall appoint a

1 chairman to serve at his pleasure.

2 Sec. 44.19.501. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMISSION. (a)

3 The commission may

4 (1) establish a telecommunications system for the state;

5 (2) lease, purchase, construct, own, operate, manage and
6 be the licensee of broadcasting stations, production centers, and all
7 other facilities and equipment needed for the development of an inte-
8 grated statewide telecommunications system, including long-line,
9 satellite, microwave, television, radio, telegraph and facsimile
10 communications;

11 (3) apply for and receive from the federal government or
12 its agencies the status of "authorized user" and whatever other
13 approval is needed to construct and operate a telecommunication
14 system in the state;

15 (4) apply for and receive from the federal government, its
16 agencies, or from other public or private sources, gifts, grants, or
17 other aids available in order to carry out the provisions of secs.
18 461 - 551 of this chapter. The commission may use a gift, grant and
19 other aid subject to reasonable limitations imposed by the grantor.

20 (b) The commission shall

21 (1) formulate a continuing program for the development of
22 an integrated statewide telecommunications system, including long-line,
23 satellite, microwave, television, radio, telegraph and facsimile
24 communications;

25 (2) keep currently informed of all local, national and
26 international developments affecting telecommunications in Alaska,
27 and be responsible for briefing the governor on their potential
28 impact;

29 (3) conceive, review and recommend state policies to the

1 governor for the regulation and development of all phases of communi-
2 cations in the state;

3 (4) institute a program of standardization of state communi-
4 cation equipment to provide for an efficient integration of communi-
5 cations throughout the state;

6 (5) coordinate among state agencies telecommunication
7 program creation and broadcasting;

8 (6) provide and institute immediately a statewide emergency
9 communications network system, including medical support, civil defense
10 and other emergency communications;

11 (7) assist the attorney general in preparing for proceedings
12 on telecommunications before the Alaska Public Utilities Commission
13 and the Federal Communications Commission;

14 (8) to the extent allowed by the Federal Communications
15 Commission, provide for the assignment of telecommunications fre-
16 quencies to intrastate users of telecommunications equipment;

17 Sec. 44.19.511. DUTIES AND POWERS OF COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO
18 EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING. (a) The Public Communications Commission
19 shall

20 (1) develop educational broadcast service to the public
21 schools of the state, institutions of higher education, children of
22 preschool age, and supply programs of educational value to the general
23 public;

24 (2) initiate all applications for educational broadcasting
25 licenses submitted to the Federal Communications Commission on behalf
26 of the state;

27 (3) control and supervise the use of broadcasting channels
28 reserved for the state by the Federal Communications Commission for
29 educational broadcasting purposes;

1 (4) provide consultative services in all aspects of edu-
2 cational broadcasting to all public or private agencies in the state
3 which request them;

4 (5) serve as a library and clearinghouse for information
5 on broadcasting for educational and public purposes;

6 (6) receive all federal, state or private funds, property
7 or assistance that may be appropriated, granted or otherwise made
8 available to the state for educational broadcasting purposes at all
9 levels of education, and use and disburse funds and property for
10 purposes consistent with the terms of this chapter, subject to reason-
11 able limitations imposed by the grantor;

12 (7) initiate all state applications for federal or private
13 funds, and receive for review and approval all applications for
14 state participation if the applications involve any form of educational
15 broadcasting.

16 (b) The commission may

17 (1) lease, purchase, construct, own, operate, manage
18 and be the licensee of educational broadcasting stations, production
19 centers, and all other related equipment and facilities necessary to
20 provide fully effective educational broadcasting in the state;

21 (2) perform all other functions necessary to insure the
22 orderly and coordinated development of educational broadcasting in the
23 state.

24 Sec. 44.19.521. ADMINISTRATIVE POWERS OF THE COMMISSION. The
25 commission may

26 (1) employ all consultative, technical and clerical person-
27 nel necessary for the implementation of this chapter, within the
28 limits of available funds;

29 (2) employ a director, who shall be directly responsible

1 to the commission in financial and administrative matters;

2 (3) appoint unpaid advisory committees to assist in
3 development of programs for instructional and public television
4 broadcasts;

5 (4) adopt regulations necessary to carry out the powers and
6 duties of the commission.

7 Sec. 44.19.531. COMMERCIAL BORADCASTING. Nothing in secs. 461-
8 551 of this chapter may be construed to restrict or control commercial
9 broadcast stations or companies operating or licensed in the state.

10 Sec. 44.19.541. UTILITIES REGULATION. Nothing in secs. 461 -
11 551 of this chapter may be construed to exempt or supersede regulatory
12 jurisdiction as established in AS 42.05.

13 Sec. 44.19.551. DEFINITIONS. In secs. 461 - 551 of this chapter

14 (1) "commission" means the Public Communications Commission;

15 (2) "educational broadcasting" means noncommercial trans-
16 mission, programming or distribution intended to serve an educational,
17 public or instructional purpose and includes, but is not limited to,
18 television and radio transmission by 2,500 to 2,690 megahertz, closed
19 circuit or microwave video and audio programming, slow-scan television
20 programming, and satellite, teletype or facsimile transmission and
21 distribution methods;

22 (3) "telecommunications" means the transmission and recep-ti
23 tion of messages, impressions, pictures and signals by means of
24 electricity, electromagnetic waves and any other kind of energy,
25 force variations or impulses whether conveyed by cable, wire, radiated
26 through space, or transmitted through other media within a specified
27 area or between designated points.

28 * Sec. 2. AS 14.58 is repealed.
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