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1 IN THE SENATE

2

SENATE BILL NO. 310

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards  
7 Safety Commission."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 \* Section 1. FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

10 (1) although the state has made significant improvements in  
11 disaster preparedness since the great earthquake of 1964, there has been  
12 little corresponding improvement in measures to reduce the disaster  
13 potential of natural hazards and, consequently, to reduce dependence on  
14 disaster relief;

15 (2) there is a pressing need to provide a consistent policy  
16 framework and a means for continuing coordination of hazard-related pro-  
17 grams and public safety practices at all governmental levels and in the  
18 private sector; this need is not being addressed by any continuing state  
19 government organization;

20 (3) through concerted efforts coordinated by a Natural Hazards  
21 Safety Commission, the state can make long-term progress toward mitigating  
22 the effects of natural hazards on persons and property, thereby reducing  
23 the costs of responding to and recovering from natural hazards.

24 \* Sec. 2. AS 44.19 is amended by adding new sections to read:

25 ARTICLE 15. ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION.

26 Sec. 44.19.241. COMMISSION ESTABLISHED. The Alaska Natural  
27 Hazards Safety Commission is established in the Office of the Gover-  
28 nor.

29 Sec. 44.19.242. MEMBERSHIP. (a) The commission is composed of

1 11 members appointed by the governor for terms of three years. A  
2 member holds office until a successor is appointed and confirmed. A  
3 vacancy is filled for the unexpired term. The governor shall appoint  
4 to the commission a representative from the University of Alaska, a  
5 representative from local government, a representative from the De-  
6 partment of Natural Resources, a representative from the Department of  
7 Military and Veterans' Affairs, a representative from an appropriate  
8 federal agency and shall appoint the remaining six members from mem-  
9 bers of the public who are knowledgeable in the fields of geology,  
10 seismology, hydrology, geotechnical engineering, structural engineer-  
11 ing, emergency services, or planning.

12 (b) The commission shall elect annually from its members a  
13 chairman and vice-chairman. A majority of the commission may vote to  
14 replace an officer of the commission.

15 (c) Eight members constitutes a quorum.

16 (d) Commission members receive no compensation but are entitled  
17 to travel and per diem authorized for boards and commissions under  
18 AS 39.20.180.

19 Sec. 44.19.243. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The commission shall

20 (1) recommend goals and priorities for hazard mitigation to  
21 the public and private sectors;

22 (2) recommend policies to the governor and the legislature,  
23 including needed research, mapping, and monitoring programs;

24 (3) offer advice on coordinating disaster preparedness and  
25 hazard-mitigation activities of government at all levels, review the  
26 practices for recovery and reconstruction after a natural disaster,  
27 and recommend improvements to mitigate losses from similar future  
28 events;

29 (4) gather, analyze, and disseminate information of general

1 interest on hazard mitigation;

2 (5) establish and maintain necessary working relationships  
3 with other public and private agencies;

4 (6) review predictions and warnings issued by the federal  
5 government, research institutions, and other organizations and persons  
6 and suggest appropriate responses at the state and local level; and

7 (7) review proposed hazard notifications and supporting  
8 information from state agencies, evaluate possible socioeconomic  
9 consequences, recommend that the governor issue formal hazard noti-  
10 fications when appropriate, and advise state and local agencies of  
11 appropriate responses.

12 (b) The commission may

13 (1) advise the governor and the legislature on disaster  
14 preparedness and hazard mitigation and on budgets for those activi-  
15 ties, and recommend legislation or policies to improve disaster pre-  
16 paredness or hazard mitigation;

17 (2) conduct public hearings;

18 (3) appoint committees from its membership and appoint  
19 external advisory committees of ex-officio members; and

20 (4) accept grants, contributions, and appropriations from  
21 public agencies, private foundations, and individuals.

22 Sec. 44.19.244. DEFINITIONS. In AS 44.19.241 - 44.19.244

23 (1) "commission" means the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety  
24 Commission;

25 (2) "disaster preparedness" means establishing plans and  
26 programs for responding to and distributing funds to alleviate losses  
27 from a disaster as defined in AS 26.23.230;

28 (3) "hazard mitigation" or "mitigation" mean activities  
29 that prevent or alleviate the harmful effects of natural hazards to

1 persons and property, including identification and evaluation of the  
2 hazards, assessment of the risks, and implementation of measures to  
3 reduce potential losses before a damaging event occurs.

4 \* Sec. 3. AS 44.66.010(a) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

5 (13) Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission (AS 44.19.241)

6 -- June 30, 1989.

7 \* Sec. 4. Notwithstanding AS 44.19.242 enacted by sec. 2 of this Act,  
8 four of the initial members of the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission  
9 shall serve terms of two years and three initial members shall serve terms  
10 of four years.

11 \* Sec. 5. Nothing in this Act is intended to transfer to the commission  
12 the authorities and responsibilities of other state agencies, boards,  
13 councils, or commissions or of local governments.