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COMMITTEE REPORT
SENATE

FURTHER: FINANCE

5/6/85

Date 2/26/84

Mr. President

The Committee on STATE AFFAIRS considered SB 310

establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission.

and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass
- do pass with attached amendment(s)
- replace with/or adopt CS for SB 310 (SA)
- new title
- same title and recommends _____
- and attached a "LETTER OF INTENT" NEW FISCAL NOTE
- reports it back without recommendation
- recommends referral to _____ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING
DO PASS

MEMBERS HAVING
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

[Signature]

[Signature]

Chairman

[Signature]

Chairman recommendation

GEOLOGIC-HAZARDS MITIGATION IN ALASKA

A Review of Federal, State, and Local Policies

By R.A. Combellick

Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys
Special Report 35



Fairbanks, Alaska
1986

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GEOLOGIC-HAZARDS MITIGATION IN ALASKA

A Review of Federal, State, and Local Policies

By
R.A. Combellick¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur frequently in Alaska. Because the climate is dynamic, topographic variation is extreme, and thousands of miles of coastline are exposed to the open ocean, Alaska will continue to be affected by these and other natural phenomena such as landslides, snow avalanches, floods, tsunamis, and many localized or chronic events that may be as costly over the long term as major events. Because development is rapidly expanding into areas where geologic hazards once had little effect, the same events may now cause major property damage.

Technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their potential effects on people and property. On the basis of this review of national and state policies, 10 issues were identified in which possible improvements could substantially benefit public safety from natural hazards in Alaska:

1. Policy guidance and coordination of state and local hazard-mitigation programs.
2. Availability of basic technical information on hazards for land-use planning and construction.
3. Continuation of many federally funded hazards studies in Alaska that are being terminated or substantially reduced.
4. Incentives and guidelines to consider geologic hazards in local plans and ordinances.
5. Hazard mitigation in siting, design, and construction of critical facilities.
6. Hazard mitigation in siting, design, and construction of many state-funded public facilities.
7. The relationship between hazard mitigation and eligibility for disaster-relief funds.
8. Capability of state agencies to provide adequate technical services, assistance, and project reviews on geologic hazards for other agencies and local governments.
9. Standards of experience and education for geologists who prepare reports required by state or local laws for siting or designing facilities.

10. State capability to issue formal state notices of serious geologic hazards and coordinate the response by state and local agencies.

A comprehensive review of existing programs in California, Colorado, and the federal government suggests that some common attributes are responsible for the success and public acceptance of many hazard-mitigation programs. These attributes include central policy guidance and coordination; availability of current technical information; incentives and guidelines to consider geologic hazards in local ordinances; immunization of local governments from hazards-related liability under certain circumstances; availability of guidelines and state assistance to recognize and mitigate hazards at the local level; centralized review of design and construction plans for critical and public facilities; appropriate standards for design and construction of facilities that are subject to review for hazard safety; adequate training and experience for reviewers; incentives for hazard mitigation as part of disaster-relief programs; and the ability of programs to be self-supporting through special revenue programs.

The 10 policy issues listed above were discussed by participants at a workshop entitled "Evaluation of regional and urban earthquake hazards and risk in Alaska." The workshop was organized by the U.S. Geological Survey and took place September 5-7, 1985, in Anchorage. Participants included seismologists, geologists, engineers, planners, emergency coordinators, policymakers, and educators that represented levels of government, the private sector, and academia. The participants unanimously adopted nine recommendations for improvements in state policy:

1. Establishment of an Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission to provide policy guidance for the Governor and Legislature and to help coordinate agency programs in natural hazards.
2. Development of state policies for hazard mitigation in Alaska that establish long-term commitments and goals.
3. Establishment of a hazard-monitoring program that ensures availability of basic data needed to evaluate hazards.
4. Amendments to the municipal code and other

¹Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys, 794 University Ave. (Basement), Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

- statutes to promote local-government action in hazard mitigation.
5. State regulation of construction and major alterations of critical facilities to ensure that they are reasonably protected from natural disasters.
 6. Establishment of hazard-mitigation requirements for certain capital-construction projects financed by the State.
 7. Establishment of incentives or requirements for local governments to implement hazard-mitigation measures as a condition for receiving disaster-relief funds.
 8. Improvement in capabilities of state agencies to participate in reviews and to assist other agencies and local governments in problems that relate to hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness.
 9. Establishment of a state hazard-notification system to supplement that of the U.S. Geological Survey and help coordinate responses by state and local agencies.

INTRODUCTION

Many processes that are responsible for Alaska's scenic beauty and abundant resources are also responsible for the wide variety of physical conditions and natural hazards that challenge the human presence. Earthquakes and volcanoes are as active in Alaska as anywhere else in the world, the climate is severe, topographic variation is extreme, and thousands of miles of coastline are exposed to the open ocean. Thus, Alaska is subject to major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, snow avalanches, floods, tsunamis, and many local or chronic hazards, such as permafrost, that can be costly for property owners over a long period of time. Effective mitigation efforts have greatly reduced these costs in other states.

Although the number of major natural events in the recent past is high, few events have significantly affected the general public because of Alaska's relatively sparse population and vast, thinly inhabited areas. Major events will continue to occur intermittently as in the recent geologic past, and with increasing development, the probability will increase that people, businesses, property, and critical facilities will be affected.

Experience in other states demonstrates that local ordinances are among the most effective means of mitigating natural hazards. State governments generally provide guidelines, technical information, and the requirement or incentives for local adoption of risk-reduction measures. All municipalities in Alaska have zoning authority that can incorporate hazard-mitigation measures. Flood-plain-management ordinances have been adopted in at least 20 cities and boroughs. Other hazards have been only generally addressed. A few local governments have recently begun to independently act on

specific issues of local concern. Most major municipalities have adopted the Uniform Building Code published in 1982 by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO). Although this code provides detailed requirements for earthquake-resistant design and construction, it does not provide comprehensive construction and siting requirements for other hazards.

The purposes of this report are fourfold: 1) review geologic-hazard issues in Alaska from an historical perspective; 2) discuss various approaches to hazard mitigation; 3) evaluate hazard-mitigation programs in other states (their strengths, weaknesses, and applicability in Alaska); and 4) review existing state, federal, and local programs dealing with hazards in Alaska. This report also includes a summary of policy recommendations developed in September 1985 during an interagency workshop on earthquake hazards in Alaska. Because major programs of disaster preparedness and response already exist and operate under the Division of Emergency Services and local agencies, these activities are not discussed in detail. This report focuses primarily on activities that reduce the likelihood of injury or damage from natural hazards. Greater emphasis on knowledge of the hazards, public awareness, and effective mitigation measures will reduce vulnerability to hazards and consequently reduce dependence on post-disaster response and relief.

NATURAL DISASTERS IN ALASKA

From 1964 to 1981, there were seven presidential declarations of disaster in Alaska, an average of one every 2.5 yr. These natural disasters included one major earthquake, three floods, one heavy rain and landslide, one severe freeze, and a major fire during a severe freeze. Although a total of about \$76 million in federal aid was provided, it was far short of the total estimated damages. For example, of the \$350 million estimated damages that resulted from the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake in 1964, about \$56 million in federal aid was provided. Except for restoration work performed directly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the remaining burden fell on state and local governments, private businesses, and individuals. Following the Chena River flood in Fairbanks in August 1967 (fig. 1), which resulted in damages that totaled about \$84 million (Pewe, 1982), the federal government provided \$7.3 million in direct financial aid (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1982).

In addition to disaster declarations by the President, for which federal relief funds are available, the Governor of Alaska is authorized to make disaster declarations for which state relief funds are provided, generally through the Alaska Division of Emergency Services (ADES). State funds may supplement federal-relief funds for presidentially declared disasters, but more often are used to provide relief after events that are not declared disasters at the federal level. From January 1973 to February 1982, no disasters were declared in Alaska by

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Opinion

Anchorage Daily News



Winner, 1976 Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal for Public Service

Gerald E. Grilly
Publisher

Howard Weaver
Managing Editor

Suzan Nightingale
Editorial Page Editor

Katherine Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1971 to 1983
Lawrence Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1967 to 1971

Alaska's Only Morning Newspaper • Founded In 1946 by Norman C. Brown

Learn from lesson of 1964 earthquake

Experience is the best teacher, it's difficult to understand why Anchorage has not learned more from the catastrophic 1964 earthquake. The Good Friday quake destroyed a multitude of homes and businesses before its destructive powers were spent. Yet seismic experts believe Anchorage has left important work undone to prepare for another major earthquake — and they are certain another large quake will come.

Alaska is the most active earthquake area in the United States. Quakes are routine here. But in the past 15 years Anchorage buildings have been constructed on areas known to be earthquake risks, such as unstable landslide areas or clay soil that could liquify during a quake. Furthermore, while Anchorage has adopted a Comprehensive Development Plan and numerous zoning ordinances, pressure has grown — not diminished — to build on unstable areas along the shoreline.

During the past few months, the municipality has initiated an earthquake safety study to analyze hazard data, and asked for a Geotechnical Advisory Commission review of projects in high risk zones. Both measures are commendable. But information gathering must be backed by political will — and the voices of an informed public demanding protection from earthquake hazards. The Planning and Zoning Commission recently ruled that proposed construction in earthquake-scarred Turnagain Heights must conform to stringent geotechnic safety measures before it will be approved; that decision is now being appealed to the Anchorage Assembly, where political pressures will be brought to bear.

Seismic experts already recognize that the vagaries of politics can be more of an impediment to earthquake safety than inadequate information. The assembly, though, should support the Planning and Zoning Commission's ruling — not just in Turnagain Heights, but in any area where the burden of safety hasn't been met. Turnagain's dramatic history only demonstrates a threat that can be found in varying degrees around the Anchorage bowl.

Alaska less prepared for an earthquake than in 1964

LIDIA SELKREGG

evaluation of current disaster mitigation practices in Alaska, part of a study led by the National Science Foundation prepared by faculty of the University of Alaska, shows that in terms of the number of people, the amount of property, and the number of economic facilities exposed to risk, Alaska is more vulnerable today than it was decades ago.

Two major earthquakes were to occur today, Alaska would be no better prepared than on March 27, 1964. In fact, as a result of increased population and development in upper Cook County, many scientists, planners and administrators believe that another earthquake would have even greater impact on commerce and industry than in 1964. Destruction of transportation systems and commerce in Anchorage, the state's major city and distribution center, would affect the entire state economy.

Measures which were recommended to reduce the damage from earthquake and tsunami after the March 27, 1964 earthquake have not been instituted and lands designated as "high risk" after the earthquake have, in many instances, been developed for industrial, commercial and residential use.

Although the overall technical expertise to develop safe development in earthquake prone areas has been refined since 1964, many of

the technicians and policy-makers interviewed in several communities in Southcentral Alaska are pessimistic about the prospect of improved risk mitigation efforts. They often cite fragmentation of responsibility, lack of support from the general public and interest groups, inadequate commitment of financial and human resources, exaggerated social and public policy commitment to private property and personal rights, uncertainty about the level of risk and potential of social and economic loss, and an overall weakness in the planning and implementation process at the local, state and federal levels.

Many recommendations related to seismic risk have been offered over the last 21 years. They cover all disciplines from geology and engineering to planning and political science. The recommendations in the recently completed report — called "Seismic Hazard Mitigation: Planning and Policy Implementation — An Alaska Case" — are new only in the sense that they are made within the context of a comprehensive planning and administrative process. This model provides federal, state and local governments a framework within which the public and private sectors can include risk mitigation as part of a comprehensive planning development process.

The model implies that effective risk mitigation planning must take place before dis-



aster strikes. It proposes that risk mitigation studies become an integral part of the data base evaluated as part of the comprehensive planning process, ensuring that mitigation is integrated into future urban and regional development plans and projects.

If a planning process is to be successful, it must include: 1) development of comprehensive goals and objectives based on the understanding of the physical, social and economic makeup of the regional/urban system; and 2) development of a master plan for implementation through team building.

Any plan including seismic risk mitigation must reflect shared responsibility among all levels of government and must be based on a strong public commitment to public safety. So far the public has not shown concern for seismic risk. This is reflected in the lack of citizen participation at public hearings related

to redevelopment of "high risk" areas. Even the experts whose recommendations we should implement have not testified at public hearings in the past. The public has neglected this issue — complacent and sure that an earthquake will not happen again, at least not in our lifetime.

The Great Alaska Earthquake of March 27, 1964, tells us that an earthquake can affect everyone, not just the people who live in specific districts. Utilities, transportation, ports, airports and human services are affected when disasters occur. The economy of the entire state is impacted — and everyone suffers.

Now is the time to chart a course of action to guide future seismic planning efforts. Public and legislative commitments should be directed to 1) research of seismic risk causes and effects; 2) effective emergency preparedness and public education; and 3) application of risk mitigation technology to urban regional growth and development.

□ Lidia Selkregg is professor of resource economics and planning at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and a former member of the Anchorage Assembly. She was principal investigator for "Seismic Hazards Mitigation: Planning and Policy Implementation — An Alaska Case."

4830
11/7/85

RESOLUTION NO. 85-080

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF AN ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION

WHEREAS, natural processes will continue to cause potentially damaging events in Alaska, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamia, and landslides, and

WHEREAS, CONTINUED POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN Alaska increase the likelihood that people and property will be adversely affected by these events; and

WHEREAS, technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their adverse effects on people and property; and

WHEREAS, public safety and economic security from natural hazards in Alaska would benefit substantially from improvements in state and local policies to mitigate hazards through proper land-use and construction practices; and

WHEREAS, numerous federal, state, local, academic, and private organizations perform research or have other responsibilities related to hazard mitigation or disaster preparedness in Alaska without an established means of coordination; and

WHEREAS, there exists a general lack of public awareness of natural hazards in Alaska and a lack of understanding of means to alleviate their adverse effects; and

WHEREAS, improved policy guidance, coordination of activities, and promotion of public education in hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness are best accomplished through a state-level commission composed of members from the public and private sectors,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks North Star Borough supports enactment of Senate Bill 310 (1985), "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission", and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be offered to the 1985 Alaska Municipal League convention for further support.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS ____ DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1985.

Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Assembly

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
GEOTECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMISSION RESOLUTION
NOVEMBER 21, 1985

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 310 (1985): "AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION".

WHEREAS, natural processes will continue to cause potentially damaging events in Alaska, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and landslides, and

WHEREAS, continued population growth and development in Alaska increase the likelihood that people and property will be adversely affected by these events, and

WHEREAS, technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their adverse effects on people and property, and

WHEREAS, public safety and economic security from natural hazards in Alaska would benefit substantially from improvements in state and local policies to mitigate hazards through proper planning and construction practices, and

WHEREAS, numerous federal, state, local, academic, and private organizations perform research or have other responsibilities related to hazard mitigation or disaster preparedness in Alaska without an established means of coordination, and

WHEREAS, there exists a general lack of public awareness of natural hazards in Alaska and a lack of understanding of means to alleviate their adverse effects, and

WHEREAS, improved policy guidance, coordination of activities, and promotion of public education in hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness are best accomplished through a state-level commission composed of members from the public and private sectors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Geotechnical Advisory Commission that the Commission supports enactment of Senate Bill 310 (1985), "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission".

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Municipal Geotechnical Advisory Commission this 21st day of November, 1985.

David A. Cole, Chairman
Don Bruggers
Lidia Selkregg
John Aho
Tom Smith
Alan Krause
John Lambe
Rupert Tart
Alex Sisson



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS

December 17, 1985

Our ref: A/85/163

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Senate Resource Committee
2957 Sheldon Jackson Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

RE: SENATE BILL NUMBER SD 310 (1985)
ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMITTEE ON NATURAL HAZARDS

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Alaska Section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG) I would like to express our organization's support for the above referenced Senate bill. Professional organization which represents over 100 registered geologists in Alaska, AIPG believes the formation of a commission on natural hazards is a positive first step in providing state and local governments with valuable information regarding planning and development in potentially hazardous areas across the state. If this bill is successfully passed, the Alaska section of AIPG urges the selection of professional geologists to the commission to provide input in areas such as earthquakes, landsliding, avalanches, geohydrology, subsidence, volcanic eruptions, etc...

While the population of Alaska is small in comparison to the vast size of the State, the major population centers are situated in areas which have in the past experienced devastating disasters precipitated by natural hazards. The formation of a natural hazard commission will be an important step in addressing state-wide natural hazards with the goal of reducing future loss of property and life.

Respectfully submitted,

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan J. Krause".

Alan J. Krause, P.G.
President, Alaska Section

cc: Rod Combellick, DGGS

AJK:bb

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

POUCH Y - STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
907-465 3800

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

February 25, 1986

SUBJECT: CSSB 310 (State Affairs)
(Alaska Natural Hazards Commission)

TO: Senator Mitch Abood
Chairman, State Affairs Committee

FROM: Teresa B. Cramer *TBC*
Legislative Counsel

Enclosed is the draft Committee Substitute for CSSB 310. After conferring with your staff, I have the following comments.

1. Appointment of the Director of Geological and Geophysical Services to the Commission.

It is not customary to appoint division directors to membership on commissions in the statutes. If the governor were to exercise the power granted under Article III, Section 23 of the state Constitution and reorganize the department, the division might cease to exist. The question of who was to represent the department on the commission would then be unclear. If your committee wishes, we can specify that the representative to the commission from the Department of Natural Resources is the director of geological and geophysical services.

2. Appointment of representatives from departments.

It is more usual to appoint the commissioner of the department to serve on a commission or board and then to permit the commissioner to delegate membership should that be desirable. This is a matter of choice for the committee.

3. Changes to commission membership.

In making the changes to the membership of the commission, the substitution of the representative from the Department

Senator Mitch Abood
Page 2
February 25, 1986

of Community and Regional Affairs for a representative from local government does not reduce the number of public members. The representative from local government was not treated as a public member in SB 310. The addition of the representative from the Department of Public Facilities and Transportation does reduce the number of public members from six to five.

4. Initial terms for public members.

I have redrafted section 4 of the bill to limit its application to public members and to specifically refer to members who serve the statutory term of three years as well as those who serve a term of different length. Since the departmental representatives are not named as the commissioners, it might be appropriate to stagger their terms as well.

If I may be of further assistance, please advise.

TC:mkr
m3/076

Enclosure

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

POUCH M
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
PHONE: 907-465-2400

February 20, 1986

The Honorable Mitch Abood
Alaska State Senate
Juneau, Alaska 99810

Dear Senator Abood:

I am writing with regard to SB 310, establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Commission, which is in the State Affairs Committee for hearing today.

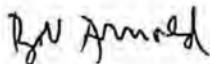
The Department recognizes the great importance of understanding and preparing against natural hazards in Alaska. Our history is replete with examples of natural disasters with loss of life and property in many areas of the state. Fortunately there appears to be growing awareness of the threat of natural hazards in many of our communities and to some degree we are able to plan appropriately against future losses.

The commendable intent of SB 310 is to increase understanding and preparedness for natural hazards. However, the creation of a new commission is recommended at a time when the Legislature and the Governor have been attempting to reduce the number of State boards.

Whether or not the Legislature decides to establish the new commission, our department will continue to attempt to provide natural hazards information and coordination for the public, as our budget will allow.

The Department has no changes to recommend in the body of the bill. A fiscal note is attached.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Arnold
Deputy Commissioner

cc: Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Senator Vic Fischer
Senator Fred Zharoff

STATE OF ALASKA 1986 LEGISLATIVE SESSION FISCAL NOTE

Revision Date : _____

REQUEST

Bill/Resolution No. : SB 310
 Title : Natural Hazards Safety Comm.

Sponsor : Senator Sturgulewski
 Requestor : Senate Resources
 Date of Request : 02-18-86

FISCAL DETAIL

Agency Affected : Natural Resources
 BRU : Resource Appraisal

Components : _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES : (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL		6.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES		1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING		7.0	7.0	8.5	8.5	8.5

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUNDING : (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		7.0	7.0	8.5	8.5	8.5
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		7.0	7.0	8.5	8.5	8.5

POSITIONS :

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : Attach a separate page if necessary

Fiscal note calculations assume an eleven member board with three meetings per year in Anchorage.

Prepared by: Rodney Combellick *RC* Phone: 474-7147
 Division: Geological & Geophysical Surveys Date: 02-19-86

Approved by Commissioner: Wm D. Arnold Date: _____
 Agency: Natural Resources

Distribution (by Agency preparing fiscal note):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)

BILL SHEFFIELD
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mitch Abood
Alaska State Legislature
Senate

DATE: February 21, 1986

FROM: Barbara A. Dale
Special Staff Assistant
to the Governor
Boards and Commissions

SUBJECT: SB 310

It is the long standing policy of the Governor's office of Boards and Commissions not to support the creation of new boards or commissions. Governor Sheffield's policy of not supporting the creation of new boards and commissions is primarily based on budget considerations.

There are currently over 140 official boards, commissions, councils, and task forces which accommodate in excess of 1,245 participants.

Cramer

2/25/86 ✓

Original sponsors: Sturgulewski, V. Fischer,
Rodey and Zharoff

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 310 (State Affairs)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND 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) there is a pressing need to provide a consistent policy
11 framework and a means for continuing coordination of hazard-related pro-
12 grams and public safety practices at all governmental levels and in the
13 private sector; this need is not being addressed by any continuing state
14 government organization;

15 (2) through concerted efforts coordinated by a Natural Hazards
16 Safety Commission, the state can make long-term progress toward mitigating
17 the effects of natural hazards on persons and property, thereby reducing
18 the costs of responding to and recovering from natural hazards.

19 * Sec. 2. AS 44.37 is amended by adding new sections to read:

20 ARTICLE 2. ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION.

21 Sec. 44.37.200. COMMISSION ESTABLISHED. The Alaska Natural
22 Hazards Safety Commission is established in the Department of Natural
23 Resources.

24 Sec. 44.37.210. MEMBERSHIP. (a) The commission is composed of
25 11 members appointed by the governor for terms of three years. A
26 member holds office until a successor is appointed and confirmed. A
27 vacancy is filled for the unexpired term. The governor shall appoint
28 to the commission a representative from the University of Alaska, a
29 representative from the Department of Community and Regional Affairs,

1 a representative from the Department of Natural Resources, a represen-
2 tative from the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, a rep-
3 resentative from the Department of Transportation and Public Facil-
4 ities, a representative from an appropriate federal agency and shall
5 appoint the remaining five members from members of the public who are
6 knowledgeable in the fields of geology, seismology, hydrology, geo-
7 technical engineering, structural engineering, emergency services, or
8 planning. In making appointments to the commission, the governor
9 shall consider the need for representation from all parts of the
10 state.

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

14 (c) Six members constitute a quorum.

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

18 Sec. 44.37.220. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The commission shall

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

21 (2) annually recommend policies to the governor and the
22 legislature, including needed research, mapping, and monitoring pro-
23 grams;

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. 44.37.230. DEFINITIONS. In AS 44.37.200 - 44.37.230

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 44.37.200)
 6 -- June 30, 1990.

7 * Sec. 4. Notwithstanding AS 44.37.210 enacted by sec. 2 of this Act,
 8 two of the initial public members of the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety
 9 Commission shall serve terms of two years, two initial public members of
 10 the commission shall serve terms of three years and one initial public
 11 member shall serve a term of four years.

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

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Alaska State Legislature



SENATOR

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI

Chairman, Senate Resources Committee

Vice Chairman, Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee

Member, Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee

2957 SHELDON JACKSON STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508

Whose in Juneau

POUCH V

JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

(907) 465-3818

Senate

MEMORANDUM

19 February 1986

TO: Senate State Affairs Committee

FROM: Senator Arliss Sturgulewski

RE: Senate Bill 310, Natural Hazards Safety Commission

Senate Bill 310 creates a commission to provide policy advice to the governor regarding hazard-related programs and public safety practices and is designed to fill a gap in public safety services in Alaska.

As the bill is currently drafted, the 11 members of the commission are appointed by the Governor, and include a representative from the University of Alaska, a representative from local government, a representative from the Department of Military Affairs, and a representative from an appropriate federal agency. The remaining six members are public members knowledgeable in the fields of geology, seismology, hydrology, geotechnical engineering, structural engineering, emergency services, or planning.

Earthquake Hazard Mitigation, Planning and Policy Implementation, the Alaska Case, completed in 1984 by the University of Alaska, Anchorage and Urban Regional Research, is a major report designed to look at progress made since the 1964 Earthquake regarding natural hazard risk mitigation. Among the recommendations included in the study are:

1. Develop and institute programs of public education, information, and disclosure to obtain a social commitment to seismic risk mitigation.
2. Renewed commitment at all levels of government to evaluate risk and its effects by supporting the continued development of socioeconomic and physical-biological data bases.
3. Government should support the integration of risk into the comprehensive planning process.
4. Develop guidelines for defining high seismic risk areas as standard for state and local earthquake zoning and for land use decision processes.

5. Establish local, state, and federal institutions to provide for an administrative mandate, intra- and inter-governmental relations, and focus public and governmental attention on seismic risk.

Powers and duties of the commission include:

1. Recommend goals and priorities for hazard mitigation to the public and private sectors.

2. recommend policies to the governor and legislature, including needed research, mapping, and monitoring programs.

3. offer advice on coordinating disaster preparedness and hazard-mitigation activities of government at all levels, review practices for recovery and reconstruction after a natural disaster, and recommend improvements to mitigate losses from similar future events.

4. gather, analyze and disseminate information of general interest on hazard mitigation.

5. establish and maintain necessary working relationships with other public and private agencies.

6. review predictions and warnings issued by the federal government, research institutions, and other organizations and persons and suggest appropriate responses at the state and local level.

7. review proposed hazard notifications and supporting information from state agencies, evaluate possible socioeconomic consequences, recommend that the governor issue formal hazard notifications when appropriate, and advise state and local agencies of appropriate responses.

We have received suggestions from the Administration which would include a representative from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and a representative from the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. This would change the number of public members from six to four.

It has been suggested that the quorum requirement of eight members be changed to six members for a quorum.

Also suggested is that the list of fields in which public members are knowledgeable be expanded to include business.



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

February 18, 1986

The Honorable Arliss Sturgulewski
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

I have reviewed Senate Bill 310 and agree with the intent. In an article by R.A. Combellick of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, reference is made to a recent workshop organized by the U.S. Geological Survey in Anchorage September 5-7, 1985. Recommendations from the workshop were unanimously adopted and are as follows:

1. Establishment of an Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission to provide policy guidance for the Governor and Legislature and to help coordinate agency programs in natural hazards.
2. Development of state policies for hazard mitigation in Alaska that establish long-term commitments and goals.
3. Establishment of a hazard-monitoring program that ensures availability of basic data needed to evaluate hazards.
4. Amendments to the municipal code and other statutes to promote local-government action in hazard mitigation.
5. State regulation of construction and major alterations of critical facilities to ensure that they are reasonably protected from natural disasters.
6. Establishment of hazard-mitigation requirements for certain capital-construction projects financed by the State.

The Honorable Arliss Sturgulewski -2-
Alaska State Senate


February 18, 1986

7. Establishment of incentives or requirements for local governments to implement hazard-mitigation measures as a condition for receiving disaster-relief funds.
8. Improvement in capabilities of state agencies to participate in reviews and to assist other agencies and local governments in problems that relate to hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness.
9. Establishment of a state hazard-notification system to supplement that of the U.S. Geological Survey and help coordinate responses by state and local agencies.

A copy of the article is enclosed for your information.
(First two pages only as article is incomplete.)

The establishment of a Commission is good. My concern is though with the numbers. I don't believe that a Commission this size will be any more effective than a Commission of five (5).

Sincerely,



Richard A. Neve'
Senior Science Advisor

RAN:mac
Enclosure

GEOLOGIC-HAZARDS MITIGATION IN ALASKA

A Review of Federal, State, and Local Policies

By

R.A. Combellick¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur frequently in Alaska. Because the climate is dynamic, topographic variation is extreme, and thousands of miles of coastline are exposed to the open ocean, Alaska will continue to be affected by these and other natural phenomena such as landslides, snow avalanches, floods, tsunamis, and many localized or chronic events that may be as costly over the long term as major events. Because development is rapidly expanding into areas where geologic hazards once had little effect, the same events may now cause major property damage.

Technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their potential effects on people and property. On the basis of this review of national and state policies, 10 issues were identified in which possible improvements could substantially benefit public safety from natural hazards in Alaska:

1. Policy guidance and coordination of state and local hazard-mitigation programs.
2. Availability of basic technical information on hazards for land-use planning and construction.
3. Continuation of many federally funded hazards studies in Alaska that are being terminated or substantially reduced.
4. Incentives and guidelines to consider geologic hazards in local plans and ordinances.
5. Hazard mitigation in siting, design, and construction of critical facilities.
6. Hazard mitigation in siting, design, and construction of many state-funded public facilities.
7. The relationship between hazard mitigation and eligibility for disaster-relief funds.
8. Capability of state agencies to provide adequate technical services, assistance, and project reviews on geologic hazards for other agencies and local governments.
9. Standards of experience and education for geologists who prepare reports required by state or local laws for siting or designing facilities.

10. State capability to issue formal state notices of serious geologic hazards and coordinate the response by state and local agencies.

A comprehensive review of existing programs in California, Colorado, and the federal government suggests that some common attributes are responsible for the success and public acceptance of many hazard-mitigation programs. These attributes include central policy guidance and coordination; availability of current technical information; incentives and guidelines to consider geologic hazards in local ordinances; immunization of local governments from hazards-related liability under certain circumstances; availability of guidelines and state assistance to recognize and mitigate hazards at the local level; centralized review of design and construction plans for critical and public facilities; appropriate standards for design and construction of facilities that are subject to review for hazard safety; adequate training and experience for reviewers; incentives for hazard mitigation as part of disaster-relief programs; and the ability of programs to be self-supporting through special revenue programs.

The 10 policy issues listed above were discussed by participants at a workshop entitled 'Evaluation of regional and urban earthquake hazards and risk in Alaska.' The workshop was organized by the U.S. Geological Survey and took place September 5-7, 1985 in Anchorage. Participants included seismologists, geologists, engineers, planners, emergency coordinators, policymakers, and educators that represented levels of government, the private sector, and academia. The participants unanimously adopted nine recommendations for improvements in state policy:

1. Establishment of an Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission to provide policy guidance for the Governor and Legislature and to help coordinate agency programs in natural hazards.
2. Development of state policies for hazard mitigation in Alaska that establish long-term commitments and goals.
3. Establishment of a hazard-monitoring program that ensures availability of basic data needed to evaluate hazards.
4. Amendments to the municipal code and other

¹Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys, 794 University Ave. (Basement), Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

- statutes to promote local-government action in hazard mitigation.
5. State regulation of construction and major alterations of critical facilities to ensure that they are reasonably protected from natural disasters.
 6. Establishment of hazard-mitigation requirements for certain capital-construction projects financed by the State.
 7. Establishment of incentives or requirements for local governments to implement hazard-mitigation measures as a condition for receiving disaster-relief funds.
 8. Improvement in capabilities of state agencies to participate in reviews and to assist other agencies and local governments in problems that relate to hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness.
 9. Establishment of a state hazard-notification system to supplement that of the U.S. Geological Survey and help coordinate responses by state and local agencies.

INTRODUCTION

Many processes that are responsible for Alaska's scenic beauty and abundant resources are also responsible for the wide variety of physical conditions and natural hazards that challenge the human presence. Earthquakes and volcanoes are as active in Alaska as anywhere else in the world, the climate is severe, topographic variation is extreme, and thousands of miles of coastline are exposed to the open ocean. Thus, Alaska is subject to major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, snow avalanches, floods, tsunamis, and many local or chronic hazards, such as permafrost, that can be costly for property owners over a long period of time. Effective mitigation efforts have greatly reduced these costs in other states.

Although the number of major natural events in the recent past is high, few events have significantly affected the general public because of Alaska's relatively sparse population and vast, thinly inhabited areas. Major events will continue to occur intermittently as in the recent geologic past, and with increasing development, the probability will increase that people, businesses, property, and critical facilities will be affected.

Experience in other states demonstrates that local ordinances are among the most effective means of mitigating natural hazards. State governments generally provide guidelines, technical information, and the requirement or incentives for local adoption of risk-reduction measures. All municipalities in Alaska have zoning authority that can incorporate hazard-mitigation measures. Flood-plain-management ordinances have been adopted in at least 20 cities and boroughs. Other hazards have been only generally addressed. A few local governments have recently begun to independently act on

specific issues of local concern. Most major municipalities have adopted the Uniform Building Code published in 1982 by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO). Although this code provides detailed requirements for earthquake-resistant design and construction, it does not provide comprehensive construction and siting requirements for other hazards.

The purposes of this report are fourfold: 1) review geologic-hazard issues in Alaska from an historical perspective; 2) discuss various approaches to hazard mitigation; 3) evaluate hazard-mitigation programs in other states (their strengths, weaknesses, and applicability in Alaska); and 4) review existing state, federal, and local programs dealing with hazards in Alaska. This report also includes a summary of policy recommendations developed in September 1985 during an interagency workshop on earthquake hazards in Alaska. Because major programs of disaster preparedness and response already exist and operate under the Division of Emergency Services and local agencies, these activities are not discussed in detail. This report focuses primarily on activities that reduce the likelihood of injury or damage from natural hazards. Greater emphasis on knowledge of the hazards, public awareness, and effective mitigation measures will reduce vulnerability to hazards and consequently reduce dependence on post-disaster response and relief.

NATURAL DISASTERS IN ALASKA

From 1964 to 1981, there were seven presidential declarations of disaster in Alaska, an average of one every 2.5 yr. These natural disasters included one major earthquake, three floods, one heavy rain and landslide, one severe freeze, and a major fire during a severe freeze. Although a total of about \$76 million in federal aid was provided, it was far short of the total estimated damages. For example, of the \$350 million estimated damages that resulted from the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake in 1964, about \$56 million in federal aid was provided. Except for restoration work performed directly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the remaining burden fell on state and local governments, private businesses, and individuals. Following the Chena River flood in Fairbanks in August 1967 (fig. 1), which resulted in damages that totaled about \$84 million (Pewé, 1982), the federal government provided \$7.3 million in direct financial aid (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1982).

In addition to disaster declarations by the President, for which federal relief funds are available, the Governor of Alaska is authorized to make disaster declarations for which state relief funds are provided, generally through the Alaska Division of Emergency Services (ADES). State funds may supplement federal-relief funds for presidentially declared disasters, but more often are used to provide relief after events that are not declared disasters at the federal level. From January 1973 to February 1982, no disasters were declared in Alaska by

RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

RESOLUTION NO. 86-14

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF AN ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, natural processes will continue to cause potentially damaging events in Alaska, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and landslides, and

WHEREAS, continued population growth and development in Alaska increase the likelihood that people and property will be adversely affected by these events, and

WHEREAS, technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their adverse effects on people and property, and

WHEREAS, public safety and economic security from natural hazards in Alaska would benefit substantially from improvements in state and local policies to mitigate hazards through proper land-use and construction practices, and


WHEREAS, numerous federal, state, local, academic, and private organizations perform research or have other responsibilities related to hazard mitigation or disaster preparedness in Alaska without an established means of coordination, and

WHEREAS, there exists a general lack of public awareness of natural hazards in Alaska and a lack of understanding of means to alleviate their adverse effects, and


WHEREAS, improved policy guidance, coordination of activities, and promotion of public education in hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness are best accomplished through a state-level commission composed of members from the public and private sectors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Municipal League supports enactment of Senate Bill 310 (1985), "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission".

Adopted this 16th day of November 1985


LEO B. RASMUSSEN, President

ATTEST:


SCOTT A. BURGESS, Executive Director

RESOLUTION NO. 85-080

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF AN ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION

WHEREAS, natural processes will continue to cause potentially damaging events in Alaska, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and landslides; and

WHEREAS, CONTINUED POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN Alaska increase the likelihood that people and property will be adversely affected by these events; and

WHEREAS, technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their adverse effects on people and property; and

WHEREAS, public safety and economic security from natural hazards in Alaska would benefit substantially from improvements in state and local policies to mitigate hazards through proper land-use and construction practices; and

WHEREAS, numerous federal, state, local, academic, and private organizations perform research or have other responsibilities related to hazard mitigation or disaster preparedness in Alaska without an established means of coordination; and

WHEREAS, there exists a general lack of public awareness of natural hazards in Alaska and a lack of understanding of means to alleviate their adverse effects; and

WHEREAS, improved policy guidance, coordination of activities, and promotion of public education in hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness are best accomplished through a state-level commission composed of members from the public and private sectors,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks North Star Borough supports enactment of Senate Bill 310 (1985), "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission", and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be offered to the 1985 Alaska Municipal League convention for further support.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS ____ DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1985.

Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Assembly



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS ALASKA SECTION

Branches at
Anchorage
Fairbanks
Juneau

P.O. Box 73354
Fairbanks, AK 99707
January 24, 1986

Governor Bill Sheffield
State of Alaska
Pouch A
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Gov. Sheffield:

Senate Bill 310 is for an act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission. Believing that such a commission would help prevent destruction of life and property, the Fairbanks Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers passed a resolution in favor of the act. We request your support for SB 310. A copy of the bill and our resolution are attached.

Yours truly,

Marilyn Olson, P.E.
Fairbanks Branch President

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 310 (1985):

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE
ALASKA NATURAL HAZARDS SAFETY COMMISSION"

WHEREAS, natural processes will continue to cause potentially damaging events in Alaska, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and landslides; and

WHEREAS, continued population growth and development in Alaska increase the likelihood that people and property will be adversely affected by these events; and

WHEREAS, technology is available to identify natural hazards, determine their probable severity, and reduce their adverse effects on people and property; and

WHEREAS, public safety and economic security from natural hazards in Alaska would benefit substantially from improvements in state and local policies to mitigate hazards through proper land-use and construction practices; and

WHEREAS, numerous federal, state, local, academic, and private organizations perform research or have other responsibilities related to hazard mitigation or disaster preparedness in Alaska without an established means of coordination; and

WHEREAS, there exists a general lack of public awareness of natural hazards in Alaska and a lack of understanding of means to alleviate their adverse effects; and

WHEREAS, improved policy guidance, coordination of activities, and promotion of public education in hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness are best accomplished through a state-level commission composed of members from the public and private sectors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that *the Fairbanks Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers* strongly supports enactment of Senate Bill 310 (1985), "An Act establishing the Alaska Natural Hazards Safety Commission", and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Sheffield and all state legislators.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 20th DAY OF Dec., 1985.

Marilyn Olson
President

STATE OF ALASKA

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

DEPT. OF COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

February 25, 1986

- POUCH B
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
PHONE: (907) 465-4700
- 949 E. 36TH AVENUE, SUITE 400
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508
PHONE: (907) 563-1073

POSITION PAPER

RE: SB 310

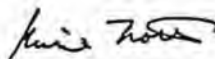
SPONSORS: Senators Sturgulewski, Fischer,
and Zharoff

Effects of Bill: This bill would establish a Natural Hazards Safety Commission composed of eleven members to address hazards mitigation and disaster preparedness issues.

Comments: The Department of Community and Regional Affairs supports the bill as a rational way to address the vital need to coordinate the activities of hazard-related programs and public safety practices at all governmental levels and in the private sector.

Flooding is one of the major natural hazards that regularly occurs in Alaska. Major rivers almost on an annual basis produce floods which cause significant property damage and threaten the health and safety of Alaskan residents. The Department of Community and Regional Affairs is the coordinating office of the National Flood Insurance Program. The potential flood hazard mitigation and post-disaster floodplain management duties of the proposed Commission would benefit greatly our Department's floodplain management community assistance program.

Because of the Department's interest and active involvement in the area of natural hazard mitigation and management, the Department believes SB 310 should be amended to provide for a representative from the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. Even though the existing bill provides for a local government representative, the addition of a DCRA representative would enhance the link between local governments and the hazard mitigation functions of the Natural Hazards Safety Commission.



Emil Notti, Commissioner