

H B

520

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

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

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY

May, 1988

Copies of minutes listed below were originally included in this file. The minutes are available on the STAIRS database CMPR. In order to save space copies of minutes have not been left in the files.

Mary Van Nimwegen

HC+RA

3-7-88	3:00 P.M.
3-28-88	3:00 P.M.
4-22-88	3:00 P.M.

2/17
D 3/2

R

F

P

X

BILL PREPARATION/ACTION*

Bill # HB 520

Date Referred: 2/15/88 Out:

Title: Approp: Radon Mitigation Loan Fund

Sponsor: Davis Koponen Wilmer Referrals: CRA Hess Fin

CONTACTS:*****

Name

Davis - Nevada 3/3 [3/7]

Linda Wilder Comptroller will get info for CRA 3-3-88; 2501 - called Dec 2-88; 3/2 - Wilder's PP;

REMARKS:

MEETINGS:*****

Date

Action

3/7/8 1st pub hearing

3/23/8 work CS 3

4/22/8 interim work

*See other side for additional information.

CONTAC.TXT

File Contents

HB 520 - Approp: Radon Mitigation Loan Fund

<u>No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.	Bill - HB 520
1.1.	Position Paper - DCED
2.	HB 375 (Budget Bill) - Page 3
3.	Bill Review - Harrison
4.	Memo - Radon Liability Issue
5.	HUD - Position Paper on Radon Issues



Official Business

COMMITTEE:
HOUSE COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS

DATE: Mon. Mar. 28, 1988

Subject of meeting:

HB 318 Energy Efficient Home Equity Fund
~~HB 319 Approp: AK Energy Efficient Home Program~~

~~HB 519 Radon Mitigation Loans to Homeowners~~
~~HB 520 Approp: Radon Mitigation Loan Fund~~

*HB 522 Planning Commissions

SIGN-IN

NAME (PLS PRINT) **YOUR TITLE & ADDRESS** **PHONE** **REPRESENTING** **DO YOU WANT TO TESTIFY?**

	Scott Burgess	Juneau	C-1325	AML	Yes
HB 519	Katherine Beardor	HB 519			
20	Rep. Davis	520			
	Rep. Miller				
522	Jim Plasmann				
	Mike Miller			Dist. 18	Yes



Official Business

COMMITTEE:

HOUSE COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS

DATE: Monday, March 7, 1988

SIGN-IN

Subject of meeting:

*HB 519 Radon Mitigation Loans to Homeowners

~~*HB 520, Approp. Radon Mitigation Loan Fund~~

NAME (PLS PRINT) YOUR TITLE & ADDRESS PHONE REPRESENTING DO YOU WANT TO TESTIFY?

Jim PLASMAN	Dep. Dir MRAD, Juneau	4750	DCRA	Yes
Rep. Davis	Sponsor HB 519 HB 520			

DATE: MARCH 7, 1988
 SITE: FAIRBANKS
 SPONSOR: HOUSE COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS
 SUBJECT: HB 519 - HB 520 RADON
 MODERATOR: FRAN

 TESTIFY:

NAME \ REPRESENTING ADDRESS PHONE #
 1. PHILIP LOUDON, BOX 2701, FBKS., 99707 457-7844
 2. RICH SEIFERT, 1196 VIOLET DRIVE, FBKS., 99712 474-7201

SIGNED UP TO TESTIFY BUT WERE UNABLE TO:

1. ROBERT FORBES, DGGS, DNR, FBKS., 99701 479-ROCK
 2. MIKE MUSICK, PO BOX 161, ESTER, AK 99715 479-5336

 OBSERVE:

NAME \ REPRESENTING ADDRESS PHONE #
 1.) -0-

 TESTIFIED: 2

MAR - 4 1988

HB 520: An Act making special appropriation to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for the Radon Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund; and providing for an effective date.

The cash available through June 30, 1989 from the alternative energy revolving loan fund has been designated for appropriation to the general fund in Section 17, HB 375.

Therefore, funds would not be available for appropriation from the alternative energy revolving loan fund to capitalize the Radon Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund as proposed in Section 1 of HB 520.

J. Anthony Smith

J. Anthony Smith, Commissioner
Department of Commerce and Economic
Development

3/4/88

Date

DG/dg11050D
030388a

TO: Rep. Henry Springer, Chairman HCRA

FROM: David C. Harrison, P. A., HCRA

HB 520 "An Act making a special appropriation to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for the radon mitigation revolving loan fund; and providing for an effective date."

This bill seeks to appropriate \$500,000 from Department of Commerce and Economic Development alternative energy revolving fund to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

HB 520 is considered a companion bill of HB 519 if such passes and becomes law.

A letter from Department of Commerce and Economic Development declares that the \$500,000. is not now in the alternative energy revolving fund but has been shifted to the general fund for fisheries enhancement.

At this point, I do not know where funding for HB 520 may be made. The author of HB 520 has been notified of this information.

④ HB520

March 22, 1988

TO: Rep. Henry Springer, Chairman HCRA

FROM: David C. Harrison, P. A., HCRA



RE: HB 519 & 520 Radon Issue

I have called banks in Fairbanks, Anchorage, and have visited banks in Juneau asking who may be responsible and who may be liable.

It appears that the issue of radon in homes is too new for most mortgage loan officers or institutional real estate people.

Mr. Bill Simpson: The problem of radon is not know here hardly at all. Banks are servers of loans for institutional lenders such as AHFC, GNMA and FNMA. Of course there are others, no doubt. NBA Branch Mgr. Juneau.

Kevin Sullivan, Mgr/VP First National of Anchorage, Juneau. Did not know of the problem. I explained the radon issue to him, he gave me some names to call in Fairbanks and Anchorage.

Brehends Bank provided me with a real estate agent of theirs and she said that very little was known and had no real information to give me.

Tyaha Hoopes, mortgage department NBA Fairbanks, said that people were becoming aware of the problem. Everybody seems to think it is overblown. We have not received any guidelines from institutional lenders on this issue. Banks do not require tests. It may be that banks are servers of loans to the institutional lenders.

Lucille Steeps, V.P. stated that at this point people are becoming aware of the problem because it has been mentioned at seminars, etc. FNMA, GNMA, AHFC do not require radon tests, etc. At this time, mortgage bankers probably not take a position on the radon issue.

The Fairbanks Daily News Miner story is attached. Date of article Mar. 18th.

P. S. One mortgage lender stated the simple solution is to open your windows and doors and let some fresh air in once and awhile.

The problem seems to have appeared when super insulation had been added to houses - possibly making such houses too tight - the house needs to breathe. However, some places along hillsides in Fairbanks may have a more apparent problem with radon.

At this point it seems buyer and seller should know what this is about.

No doubt, it is against the law to sell a house that is dangerous to live in.

132 homes in area found to have high radon levels

SAM BISHOP
News-Miner Bureau

JUNEAU—The most recent figures show that more than one-third of the homes tested so far in the Fairbanks area have radon gas above the levels researchers believe is safe for long-term exposure.

The state Department of Health and Social Services and a company called Nortech have test results from 304 homes in the Fairbanks area.

Of those, 132 showed radon gas above the level that the federal Environmental Protection Agency thinks is safe for long-term exposure.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that seeps up through the soil and into homes. Long-term exposure can cause cancer and other problems, according to the EPA.

Radon is measured in units called picocuries. A home with more than 4 picocuries of radiation in a liter of air needs work, the EPA recommends. Solutions include sealing basement cracks, increasing crawl-space ventilation, installing collection pipes and installing air exchangers.

Sid Heidersdorf, a radiological physicist with Health and Social Services, said the Fairbanks area has the highest percentage of seriously contaminated homes in the state. One-quarter of the 113 homes tested by the state were above 4 picocuries.

Tests in Juneau, Kodiak and Eagle River have turned up very small numbers of problem houses,

(Continued from page 1)

he said. The state has results from 53 locations around the state, he said.

Data collected by Nortech shows an even higher contamination level in Fairbanks than the state's information. More than one-half of Nortech's 191 home tests have detected radon levels above 4 picocuries.

Phil Loudon, a partner in Nortech, said his company has found more homes with high radon levels because it has done more tests in the hillside areas near Fairbanks. Those areas tend to have the worst problem, Loudon said.

Part of the difference between the state's and Nortech's data may also be attributable to different testing methods.

The state, through the department or the Cooperative Extension Service, distributes testing devices to people who request them. The homeowner places the device in the living area for three months, then sends it back to the state. The state sends the device to Terradex Corp.

in Glenwood, Ill. Terradex analyzes the radon and returns the results to the state.

Test results are taking about a month to get back from the national laboratory.

Nortech provides a testing device that sits in a home for only a week. Loudon said his device, which is also sent to a lab Outside, is more accurate than the state's system, but doesn't provide a long-term picture of radon in a home. He calls it a screening test.

The Outside company he works with, Air-check, returns the test results within two to four days.

Both the state and Nortech charge \$30 for the test, although Loudon has cut his price for the next month in an attempt to build up more data.

Two bills in the Legislature, HB519 and HB520, would set up a loan fund for homeowners who want to get rid of radon. Rep. Mike Davis, D-Fairbanks, sponsored them. Rep. Niilo Koponen, D-Fairbanks, sponsored a resolution, HJR38, that urges state and federal agencies to work cooperatively on the problem.

Loudon said Alaskans are just waking up to the problem.

"A 10 (picocurie result) on the East Coast would stop the sale of a house," Loudon said. "You would cause some people an awful lot of concern. In Fairbanks, we're still at the bottom of the learning curve and that's why we're still a little bit complacent."

He said he believes Alaskans should be more concerned than people elsewhere, because of the long winter. Alaskans probably spend more time inside. Also, a wide gap between the temperature inside a house and the ground outside pulls radon into the house faster than in other parts of the coun-



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Anchorage Office, Region X

701 C Street, Box 64

Anchorage, Alaska 99513-000

(5) HB520

APR 21 1988

David C. Harrison, P.A., HCRA
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Mr. Harrison:

Subject: HB519 and 520
Radon Mitigation Loans

In response to your inquiry of March 9, 1988, this is to advise you that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has no position at this time with respect to the effects of radon or its mitigation where housing in Alaska is concerned. Nor does the Department recognize the establishment of liability in this area as to lenders or to the Department as the insurer of home mortgages or otherwise.


We will appreciate being informed of further developments as this issue continues to be explored by the House Committee on Community and Regional Affairs.

Sincerely,

Susan Olsen
Chief Counsel

Electronic Message Routing Form

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Administration

⑤ HB520 

Use black ink only.

1. When must this message be transmitted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Routine (15 min. to 3 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Priority (15 min. to 2 hours)	2. Check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> here if you want Confirmation of Transmission	3. Date to Comm. Center	For Operator's Use Only / Transmittal Control No.
---	--	-------------------------	---

4. Originating Organization Correspondence Code (the codes are in your phone book) <u>10.1G</u>	4. Name of Originator or the Person most familiar with the material <u>Jeanne Riley</u>	4a. Phone No. <u>271-4608</u>	4b. Room No.
--	--	----------------------------------	--------------

6. Authorizing Official (signature & printed or typed name)
JANIE T. MELTON Janie T. Melton

8. Subject / Remarks (if any) <u>HB 517 - 520</u> <u>Radon Mitigation Loans</u>	7. No. of Pages (excluding this cover sheet)
---	--

9. Complete this section if your message is to be transmitted to a Non-HUD organization. (for additional recipients, use the space in item 11.)

a. Name of Recipient Organization <u>DCRA</u>	b. Name of Recipient Person <u>David C. Harrison, P.A. HCRA</u>
--	--

c. Recipient Location (city, state & zip code)
JUNEAU AK 99811

d. Facsimile Machine Telephone No. <u>415-2948</u>	e. Contact Person's Phone No. <u>David Harrison</u>	f. Telex No.	g. Recipient has no Receiving Equipment: <input type="checkbox"/> Send a Mailgram
---	--	--------------	--

10. Check the field office distribution within HUD. (list specific addresses in item 11 below)

- All Regional Offices
- All Category A Offices
- All Category B Offices
- All Category C Offices
- All Category D Offices
- Other (please list below in item 11)

11. Name(s) / Title(s) of Addressee(s)

Alaska State Legislature
Representative Niilo Koponen

⑥ HB520
APR 21 1988

Sp. / CRA

Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4992

542 4th Avenue, Suite C
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-8161

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL HOUSE AND SENATE MEMBERS

FROM: REPRESENTATIVE NIILLO KOPONEN

DATE: APRIL 20, 1988

RE: RADON PROBLEM IN ALASKA

Enclosed is a press release from the State Geologist concerning the most recent discovery of homes in the Fairbanks area having radon concentrations that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum of 4 picoCuries per liter.

Most significantly, radon has been found in homes situated in areas previously thought to be free of this problem.

Radon is thought to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in this country, cigarette smoking being the first.

FAIRBANKS RADON PROBLEM UPDATE

Based on data acquired over the last few months, over 150 homes in the Fairbanks area have measured radon concentrations that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum of 4 picoCuries per liter (pCi/l).

This increase of approximately 100 Fairbanks 'problem' homes, as compared to about 50 such residences reported a few months ago, is based on additional radon data obtained from charcoal and track etch detectors and DGGs on-site measurements with 'real time' radon monitoring equipment.

The Fairbanks database now includes radon measurements from over 300 households, including detector data obtained from private citizens, the State Radiologist's Office, private sector radon mitigation services (Nortech), the University of Alaska, and on-site field measurements obtained by the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGs). Radon data have been collected during all seasons of the year, dating back to July 1987. Nearly one-half of the detectors placed in Fairbanks households have registered radon levels that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum, and approximately 25 percent of the radon detectors have recorded radon concentrations that exceed 20 pCi/l. Measurements taken in at least 15 homes have produced radon concentrations in excess of 100 pCi/l.

Initially, preliminary radon screening data in the Fairbanks district seemed to indicate that household radon problems were concentrated in residences sited on bedrock in the hills north of Fairbanks. Most recently, however, anomalously high household radon concentrations have also been detected on the floodplain adjacent to, or in the city of Fairbanks.

In addition to the unexpected discoveries on the floodplain, predictably high radon concentrations have recently been detected in homes located on dredge tailings in the Goldstream drainage and on bedrock homesites in the Lakloey Hill, Spinach Creek, Chena Hot Springs Road, and Steele Creek Road areas. Problem households were previously identified in other hillside subdivisions north of Fairbanks, including Ester Dome, Chena Ridge, Becker Ridge, Scenic Heights, and Musk Ox Subdivision.

The location and distribution of radon sampling sites has been strongly biased by the need to identify and define those areas that are local 'hot spots' and by the input of concerned citizens and radon mitigation specialists who have willingly shared proprietary radon data from Fairbanks area homes. Due to limited resources, DGGs has been unable to develop and execute a representative radon screening program for the Fairbanks district or the state, and it is probable that additional 'hot spots' remain to be defined in the Fairbanks district and as yet unidentified regions of the state.

DGGs has initiated numerous follow-up visits to selected residences where commercial test devices have revealed elevated radon levels and where it has become important to understand the geologic setting of the site and the surrounding area. During these visits, DGGs records geologic and other site-specific data in an effort to define the factors that control the source and availability of radon that is entering problem homes. DGGs studies typically include real-time testing of radon levels and entryways in the dwelling and uranium and thorium measurements inside and outside the home.

Discussions with EPA officials and key personnel in radon screening programs in other states indicate that the Fairbanks district radon problem merits concern at the national level, and that accelerated radon survey and mitigation programs should be initiated at the earliest possible date.

Alaska State Legislature
Representative Niilo Koponen

⑥ HB520
APR 21 1988

Spw./CRA

Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4992

542 4th Avenue, Suite C
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-8161

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL HOUSE AND SENATE MEMBERS

FROM: REPRESENTATIVE NIILLO KOPONEN

DATE: APRIL 20, 1988

RE: RADON PROBLEM IN ALASKA

Enclosed is a press release from the State Geologist concerning the most recent discovery of homes in the Fairbanks area having radon concentrations that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum of 4 picoCuries per liter.

Most significantly, radon has been found in homes situated in areas previously thought to be free of this problem.

Radon is thought to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in this country, cigarette smoking being the first.

FAIRBANKS RADON PROBLEM UPDATE

Based on data acquired over the last few months, over 150 homes in the Fairbanks area have measured radon concentrations that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum of 4 picoCuries per liter (pCi/l).

This increase of approximately 100 Fairbanks 'problem' homes, as compared to about 50 such residences reported a few months ago, is based on additional radon data obtained from charcoal and track etch detectors and DGGS on-site measurements with 'real time' radon monitoring equipment.

The Fairbanks database now includes radon measurements from over 300 households, including detector data obtained from private citizens, the State Radiologist's Office, private sector radon mitigation services (Nortech), the University of Alaska, and on-site field measurements obtained by the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS). Radon data have been collected during all seasons of the year, dating back to July 1987. Nearly one-half of the detectors placed in Fairbanks households have registered radon levels that exceed the EPA-recommended maximum, and approximately 25 percent of the radon detectors have recorded radon concentrations that exceed 20 pCi/l. Measurements taken in at least 15 homes have produced radon concentrations in excess of 100 pCi/l.

Initially, preliminary radon screening data in the Fairbanks district seemed to indicate that household radon problems were concentrated in residences sited on bedrock in the hills north of Fairbanks. Most recently, however, anomalously high household radon concentrations have also been detected on the floodplain adjacent to, or in the city of Fairbanks.

In addition to the unexpected discoveries on the floodplain, predictably high radon concentrations have recently been detected in homes located on dredge tailings in the Goldstream drainage and on bedrock homesites in the Lakloey Hill, Spinach Creek, Chena Hot Springs Road, and Steele Creek Road areas. Problem households were previously identified in other hillside subdivisions north of Fairbanks, including Ester Dome, Chena Ridge, Becker Ridge, Scenic Heights, and Musk Ox Subdivision.

April 19, 1988

The location and distribution of radon sampling sites has been strongly biased by the need to identify and define those areas that are local 'hot spots' and by the input of concerned citizens and radon mitigation specialists who have willingly shared proprietary radon data from Fairbanks area homes. Due to limited resources, DGGs has been unable to develop and execute a representative radon screening program for the Fairbanks district or the state, and it is probable that additional 'hot spots' remain to be defined in the Fairbanks district and as yet unidentified regions of the state.

DGGs has initiated numerous follow-up visits to selected residences where commercial test devices have revealed elevated radon levels and where it has become important to understand the geologic setting of the site and the surrounding area. During these visits, DGGs records geologic and other site-specific data in an effort to define the factors that control the source and availability of radon that is entering problem homes. DGGs studies typically include real-time testing of radon levels and entryways in the dwelling and uranium and thorium measurements inside and outside the home.

Discussions with EPA officials and key personnel in radon screening programs in other states indicate that the Fairbanks district radon problem merits concern at the national level, and that accelerated radon survey and mitigation programs should be initiated at the earliest possible date.



Det A
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Anchorage Office, Region X
701 C Street, Box 64
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-0001

4-26-88

Rec'd

APR 21 1988

David C. Harrison, P.A., HCRA
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Mr. Harrison:

Subject: HB519 and 520
Radon Mitigation Loans

In response to your inquiry of March 9, 1988, this is to advise you that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has no position at this time with respect to the effects of radon or its mitigation where housing in Alaska is concerned. Nor does the Department recognize the establishment of liability in this area as to lenders or to the Department as the insurer of home mortgages or otherwise.

We will appreciate being informed of further developments as this issue continues to be explored by the House Committee on Community and Regional Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan Olsen".

Susan Olsen
Chief Counsel