

HB

482

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE AFFAIRS

RECAP OF
HB 482

Extend Alaska State Fire Commission

Received February 7, 1990

by Rep. Ulmer, Navarre, Ulmer, Grussendorf,
Gruenberg

Heard February 27, 1990

Passed Out of Committee February 27, 1990
5 Do Pass

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HB 482: Extend Alaska State Fire Commission

- Item 1: HB 482 by Rep. Koponen, Navarre, Ulmer, Grussendorf, Gruenberg
- Item 2: Fiscal Note and Analysis by House State Affairs
- Item 3: Sponsor Statement
- Item 4: Fire Commission Report Excerpts

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred: February 7, 1990

FURTHER REFERRALS:

FINANCE

Date of Committee Action: _____

The STATE AFFAIRS Committee considered:

HB 482

HOUSE BILL NO. 482

EXTEND ALASKA STATE FIRE COMMISSION

"An Act relating to the Alaska State Fire Commission; and providing for an effective date."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- [] be replaced with _____ [] the same title
[] have attached amendment(s) [] a new title
[X] do pass
[] do not pass
[] no recommendation
[] individual recommendations
[] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):
(Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)

- [X] fiscal impact HSA
[] zero fiscal note _____
[] zero with analysis _____

- [] fiscal note(s) _____
[] zero fiscal note(s) _____
[] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

SIGNING:
(Check approp. column)

David Duley
Gene Skarup
Paul Hart
Chris Bragg
R. C. T. Tucker

	Do Not Pass	No Rec	Amend

R. C. T. Tucker

Chairman's Signature

Item 2

STATE OF ALASKA
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION: _____
PUBLISH DATE: _____

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: Extend Alaska State Fire
Commission
Sponsor: Koponen
Requestor: Koponen

Agency Affected: Public Safety
BRU: Commissioner's Office
Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.0	0	0
TRAVEL	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	0	0
SUPPLIES	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	58.5	58.5	58.5	58.5	0	0

CAPITAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
---------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

REVENUE	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
---------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	58.5	58.5	58.5	58.5	-0-	-0-
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	58.5	58.5	58.5	58.5	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	1	1	1	1	0	0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Personnel - Admin Asst 1; Travel & Per diem for 1 meeting, 1 conference, 1 hearing for staff, 9 members and 5 ex officios; Contractual- communications (4.0), printing & advertising (4.0), subscriptions (.4); supplies (1.1).

Prepared by: House State Affairs Phone: 465-4963
Division: _____ Date: Feb 27, 1990

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Boucher, Chair Date: Feb 27, 1990
Agency: _____

Distribution (by preparer):

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

Alaska State Legislature Representative Niilo Koponen

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

House District 21

119 N. Cushman, Suite 207
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-8172

S P O N S O R S T A T E M E N T

H B 4 3 2

HB 482 would extend the Alaska State Fire Commission until 1994, rather than allowing it to sunset this year. It does, however, amend AS 44.44.120 to decrease the cost and increase coordination with fire services in Alaska.

Chapter 157, SLA 1980 established a Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control to: 1) identify fire loss problems in Alaska; 2) identify agencies involved in fire protection activities; 3) recommend modifications to improve the state's fire protection system; and 4) provide documentation to assist agencies in meeting their responsibilities. The Task Force was to submit their final report to the governor and legislature by January 1, 1983. This Task Force was not funded for their third year and terminated June 30, 1983.

A second Task Force was established in 1984 with the same objectives and given 120 days to finish their work. The second Task Force issued a report in December, 1984 detailing eight major areas of concern: 1) fire education and public awareness; 2) fire service training; 3) capital projects; 4) arson; 5) code enforcement; 6) emergency medical services; 7) wildlands fire protection; and 8) interagency planning, coordination and consolidation. Within the last category the Task Force recommended creating a State Fire Commission as a broad based policy setting group to provide direction and coordination of all the fire-related programs.

In 1986 the Alaska State Fire Commission was established (AS 44.41.100-.130) to: 1) develop a state master plan for fire prevention and provide coordination for fire-related programs; 2) establish policy guidelines for agencies with fire protection programs; 3) adopt regulations as necessary; 4) make recommendations for fire-related programs; and 5) report to the governor and legislature when requested. There was a fiscal note of \$180,000.00 funded with the bill establishing the Commission. Due to the revenue shortfall during FY 87, Governor Sheffield recommended that the funding for the Commission be eliminated, and the Commission did not begin its activities.

✓ The Fifteenth Legislature attempted to fund the legislation through a separate account into which a tax on fire insurance premiums would be deposited. Although this device is used in most other states, it was not acceptable to the Alaska Legislature, and the responsibility for providing direction and coordination of fire-related programs was not addressed.] X

✓ PB 482 cuts the number of required meetings to one a year (although others may be called in emergency). That meeting is to be coordinated with the annual meeting of the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association. Typically, the Alaska Fire Fighters Association, Fire Insurers, the Insurance Services Organization, municipal officials responsible for fire services and building codes, and etc. all meet at the same time and place or attend one or another of the above mentioned meetings. All members of the proposed Fire Commission should therefore be at the joint conference. Testimony on policy guidelines for fire protection programs, proposed regulations, the state fire protection master plan and all matters falling within the purview of the Commission can be taken up at that time. The Commission can have a short meeting at the close of the conference to make needed policy decisions.

From those proceedings, the single staff member of the commission can, under the direction of the State Fire Marshall, prepare the needed reports to the governor and the legislature. That same staff assistant, will, during the year, maintain contact with the fire and rescue services statewide. Interim meetings of the board for the purpose of discussing regulations, budget and other matters, can be held by teleconference and/or computer network, alleviating the expense and time of travel.

NK.dm

H. INTERAGENCY PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND CONSOLIDATION

~~Interagency use of fire statistics and data can be improved by reducing the delay in processing such data, better data regarding alcohol abuse as the causal factor in fires, combining wildlands and structural fire data, and determining whether the creation of new Fire Service Districts can be done in a manner that prevents islands wherein no fire protection is provided.~~

~~Finally, the Task Force considers one of its most important recommendations among the many made in their report to be the creation of the State Fire Commission which would be a relatively autonomous, broadly based policy setting group to provide overall direction and coordination of the many diverse state fire-related programs, as well as to provide recommendations for local, federal and private fire-related programs.~~

The Commission is needed because no single agency of state government represents all elements of the Fire Service which includes code compliance, plans review, fire training, public fire education, insurance, wildlands fires, aviation and marine firefighting, local fire departments, industrial fire brigades and more. The state agency with the greatest responsibility for fire protection -- the Division of Fire Prevention (the State Fire Marshal) -- has never had funding or staff adequate to meet their responsibilities since statehood, and remains a small agency within the predominantly law enforcement oriented Department of Public Safety. Although additional staff and funding would materially assist the Fire Marshal, the fact remains that a significant number of elements of the Fire Service are outside the purview of any state agency. Those elements of the Fire Service represented by state local programs are administered through decisions made in the context of individual programs and departmental goals rather than with regard to the entire fire service, resulting in little coordination among state fire-related programs, and even less coordination between state programs and federal

agencies, local governments, and private industry. Needed is a policy level body representing all the elements of the fire service at all levels of government and private industry to assure total coordination among all fire-related programs, provide for their direction, provide policies for state level programs and recommendations for better fire protection to federal and local agencies and private industry.

~~The proposed Commission would serve without compensation, have its members chosen by the Governor, with staggered terms, and meet monthly during the formative period and less frequently thereafter. An Executive Director and two or three person staff would be hired to implement Commission decisions, in a manner similar to the existing State Emergency Medical Services Council, and the Police Standards Council, although the proposed State Fire Commission would have a far wider scope of responsibilities, since it would represent all facets of the Fire Service.~~

Providing for the implementation of the State Fire Commission is viewed as the priority recommendation of the many recommendations made by the Task Force, since it is the best mechanism for assuring a greater return from existing dollars spent by state-level fire protection programs, and as a means to assure change in the future resulting in decreased fire losses for Alaska.

* * * *

~~The Task Force has completed its legislatively prescribed responsibility of inquiring into the fire problem in Alaska - which it finds to be the worst in the western world - and has proposed numerous recommendations to improve fire safety in the state, as more completely described in the full report. The 120 days allotted for its job have elapsed. The Task Force can do no more. The responsibility now shifts~~

BY REP. KOPONEN, Navarre, Ulmer, Grussendorf, Gruenberg

1 IN THE HOUSE

2

HOUSE BILL NO. 482

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the Alaska State Fire Commission;

7

and providing for an effective date."

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

9

* Section 1. AS 44.41.120(c) is amended to read:

10

(c) The commission shall meet annually and shall try to coordi-

11

nate its annual meeting with a meeting of the Alaska Fire Chiefs'

12

Association. The chair, the governor, or three members of the com-

13

mission may call a special meeting.

14

* Sec. 2. AS 44.66.010(a)(13) is amended to read:

15

(13) Alaska State Fire Commission -- June 30, 1994 [1990];

16

* Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

*I meeting, coordinated with annual
fire chiefs meeting.*

I state period

subax → future term