

SB 385

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 4/24/92

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE: _____

The Finance Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 385

"An Act relating to the sale and purchase of handicrafts on certain licensed premises; and providing for an effective date."

DIED

and recommends:

- replace with _____ CS _____ (FINANCE)
- or adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attaches amendment(s)

- same title
- new title
- technical title change (HB only)

adopts _____ Letter of Intent

further referral to the _____

- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations

NEW FISCAL NOTES: Dept/Date

- zero fiscal notes _____
- _____
- fiscal notes _____
- _____
- appropriation--no fiscal note

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTES: Dept/Date

- zero fiscal notes _____
- _____
- fiscal notes _____
- _____

DO PASS:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. _____
Co-Chair: Signature/Recommendation

2. _____
Co-Chair: Signature/Recommendation

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

No. 1

Bill Version: SA 385

(S) Publish Date: 4-24-92

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: _____
 Title: SALE AND PURCHASE OF HANDICRAFTS ON CERTAIN LICENSED PREMISES BRU: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD
 Component: OPERATING
 Sponsor: SEN. ZHAROFF
 Requestor: SEN. JUDICIARY COMM. COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TRAVEL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CONTRACTUAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
SUPPLIES	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-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	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
FEDERAL FUNDS	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
OTHER FUND SOURCE:	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

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

Estimate of current year impact: NONE

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Changes in CSSB 385 (JUD) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate.

4/24
date

GTB
Compte Aide (initial)

Prepared By: PATRICK L. SHARROCK Phone: 277-8638

Division: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD Date: 2-12-92

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature]

Agency: DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE Date: 2/18/92

FISCAL NOTE

No. 2

Bill Version: SB 385

(S) Publish Date: 4-24-92

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Department of Law
 Title: "...sale and purchase of handicrafts on certain licensed premises..." BRU: Prosecution
 Component: All
 Sponsor: Senator Zharoff
 Requestor: Senator Zharoff COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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85 through 91

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL						

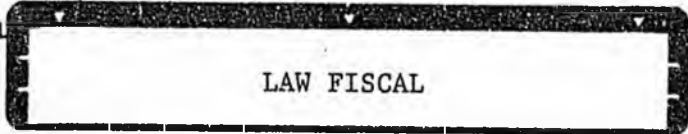
POSITIONS:

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

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)
 Please see the attached analysis.
 Changes in SSD 385 (SUD) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate.
4/24 date 6702 Comte Aide (initial)

Prepared By: Richard I. Pegues, Director Phone: 465-3672
 Division: Administrative Services Date: February 6, 1992
 Approved by Commissioner: Richard I. Pegues / FIK / Charles E. Cole, Attorney General
 Agency: Department of Law Date: February 6, 1992



CONTINUATION of FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

For Bill/Resolution No. SB 385

This bill adds a new section to AS 04.16 that would prohibit a person from offering to sell or offering to purchase, or selling or purchasing handicrafts, if the offer, sale or purchase is made on premises that are licensed to sell alcoholic beverages under AS 04.11.090. A violation of this new provision would be a class A misdemeanor. We do not believe that the number of new offenses that may occur if this bill is adopted will be great. Consequently, there should not be a fiscal impact for the Department of Law.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill 1 No. 3
Bill Version: SB 385
(S) Publish Date: 4-24-92

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Alaska Court System
Title: An Act relating to the sale and BRU: Trial Courts
purchase of handicrafts... Components: _____
Sponsor: Zharoff
Requestor: _____ COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS & CLAIMS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUNDS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

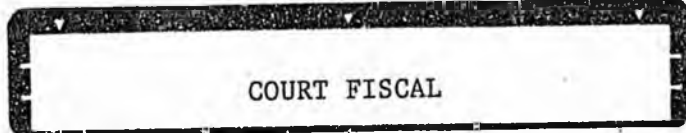
Estimate of current year impact: None

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)
No fiscal impact.
Changes in SB 385 (S) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate.
4/24 6205
Date Comte Aide (initial)

Prepared by: C. S. Christensen III, Staff Counsel Phone: 264-8228
Division: Alaska Court System Date: 02/06/92

Approved by: Arthur H. Snowden, II, Administrative Director
Agency: Alaska Court System Date: 02/06/92

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB, & Impacted Agency(ies).



FISCAL NOTE

No. 4

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version: SB 385

(S) Publish Date: 4-24-92

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Public Safety
 Title: "An Act relating to the sale and purchase of handicrafts on certain..." BRU: Alaska State Troopers
 Sponsor: Senator Zharoff Component: Detachments
 Requestor: Senator Zharoff COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

7	9	9
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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

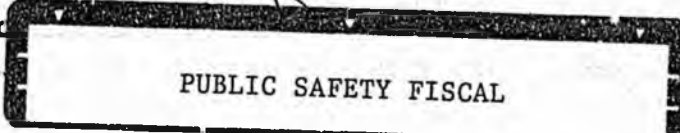
POSITIONS:

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

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)
 No fiscal impact is anticipated.
 Changes in CSB 385 (20) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate.
4/24 G 707
 Date Comte Aide (initial)

Prepared By: Francis C. Allan Phone: 269-5691
 Division: Alaska State Troopers Date: 2/6/92
 Approved by Commissioner: Richard L. Burton
 Agency: Department of Date: 2/7/92



FISCAL NOTE

No. 5

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version: SB 385

(S) Publish Date: 4-24-92

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
 Title: "An Act relating to the sale and purchase of handicrafts..." BRU: Statewide Operations
 Component: Various
 Sponsor: Senator Zharoff
 Requestor: Senator Zharoff COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: 0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Please see the attached analysis.

Changes in CSB385 (JD) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate.

4/24
date

GAS
Compte Aide (initial)

Prepared By: Carl Nickel, Director Phone: 465-3376

Division: Administrative Services Date: 02/05/92

Approved by Commissioner: Lloyd Hames, Commissioner

Agency: Department of Corrections Date: 02/05/92

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. _____ Impacted Agency(ies).

Rev 10/7/91

Page 1 of 2

CORRECTIONS FISCAL

CONTINUATION OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

BILL: SB 385

" An Act relating to the sale or purchase of handicrafts on certain licensed premises; and providing for an effective date."

This bill would make it a Class A misdemeanor to offer to sell or purchase, or to sell or purchase handicraft items on premises licensed to sell alcohol.

The effect of the bill will be to increase the number of misdemeanor bookings and jail sentences, particularly of intoxicated persons. Intoxicated bar patrons and tourists are the most common sellers/purchasers of such items. Intoxicated persons and tourists are also the least likely persons to be aware of the fact that such sales/purchases constitute a Class A misdemeanor. Additionally, some chronic alcoholics have dozens of misdemeanor arrests per year and may not be highly motivated to avoid yet another trip to jail.

Data on the number of such potential arrests is not available since this activity has not been illegal up until now, so estimating the actual fiscal impact on the Department is difficult. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this activity is quite common, however. A bed in a State correctional center averages about \$95.00 per day, not counting program and support services. The prison system is at near capacity at present. Criminalizing additional activities accelerates the rate at which costly prison expansion becomes necessary, in addition to present operating costs. Although the Department cannot claim with certainty that additional staff, additional overtime, or additional prison construction would be needed to respond to this bill, the increase in arrests and convictions for Class A misdemeanors will unquestionably create additional burdens for the correctional system.

If the bill were amended to make licensees subject to fine or loss of liquor license, rather than penalizing patrons, the intent of the bill might be just as effectively carried out with no cost or burden to the Department.

SENATE BILL NO. 385

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR ZHAROFF

Introduced: 3/5/92
Referred: Judiciary, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the sale and purchase of handicrafts on certain licensed premises; and
2 providing for an effective date."

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

4 * Section 1. AS 04.16 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 Sec. 04.16.095. SALE AND PURCHASE OF HANDICRAFTS ON LICENSED
6 PREMISES. A person may not offer to purchase, offer to sell, purchase, or sell handicrafts if
7 the offer, sale, or purchase is made on premises that are licensed under AS 04.11.090 to sell
8 alcoholic beverages.

9 * Sec. 2. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

Alaska State Legislature

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



REPRESENTATIVE FRAN ULMER

MEMORANDUM

April 30, 1992

TO: Senator Pat Purchot, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Rep. Fran Ulmer

RE: SCSHB 385 (L&C) am - Video Display Terminals

I am requesting a hearing on this legislation at your earliest convenience.

HB 385 was created in response to a growing health problem among state workers who spend long hours in front of their Video Display Terminals (VDTs). VDT workplace injuries include eye strain, stress and musculoskeletal disorders (wrist, back and neck injuries) including host of ailments dubbed "repetitive strain injuries" or RSI.

According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, disorders associated with repetitive strain injuries now rank among the highest reported workplace injuries in the U.S. (more than 52%). For instance, in recent years the cases of carpal tunnel syndrome (swelling of tendons in the wrist) have increased more rapidly than any other job related illness. Insurance industry sources believe that keyboard operators are one of the highest at-risk groups.

In many cases, the remedy for these conditions already exists in the workplace. Educating workers on the proper positioning of VDT monitors, keyboards and chairs can go a long way to alleviating this problem. However, phasing out or remodeling "unhealthy" work station configurations and furniture is also essential.

CSHB 385 (L&C) seeks to remedy this situation for state workers by:

- * Requiring the training of supervisory staff about the causes, remedies and prevention of VDT related injuries.
- * Requiring the posting of notices in the workplace to advise state employees about the safe use of Video Display Terminals.



April 30, 1992
CSHB 385 (L&C)
Page Two

- * Requiring that future purchases and installation of office furniture and equipment meet standards that reduce the health risks associated with VDTs.

Think of HB 385 as a dose of preventative medicine. By moving now to answer the health concerns of state workers, we will also be saving the state money by eliminating the causes of a growing number of health insurance claims.



Filipino Community, Inc.

251 South Franklin Street • Juneau, Alaska 99801-1343
Phone (907) 586-4118 • Executive Offices (907) 586-2118

**TO: The House of Representatives
Alaska State Legislature**

DATE: March 11, 1992

**FROM: Lucille J. Santos
Secretary & Legislative Chair
Filipino Community, Inc.**

TELEPHONE NO: 586-2116

SUBJECT: HB385

The Filipino Community, Inc. of Juneau urge the swift passage of HB 385 which pertains to the proper use of VDTs (video display terminals). Our organization strongly believes that this would be a great preventive measure to the physical hazards from the improper use of VDTs. It is the lower range employees in the clerical and support services fields, primarily women, who can least afford to lose their jobs and ill afford the high medical bills which will be highly impacted by the lack of information about VDTs. This bill would also lower the rate of absenteeism due to VDT related health problems.

Thank you for reading this message and your affirmative vote!

distributed by Wilmer

ALASKA STATE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LABORERS

Laborers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO

2501 Commercial Drive, Suite 140
Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • 907/276-1640

Don Valesko
President

Andrew J. "Bear" Piekarski
Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer

POSITION STATEMENT

TO: MEMBERS, ALASKA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FROM: A.J. "BEAR" PIEKARSKI, BUSINESS MANAGER/SECY'TREAS.
RE: HB 385

THE ALASKA STATE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LABORERS SUPPORTS
THE PASSAGE OF HB 385. HAZARD COMMUNICATION TRAINING
FOR VDT USERS BENEFITS BOTH EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE, AND
WE URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE BILL WHEN IT COMES TO A FLOOR
VOTE.

for El Flanagan, SE Rep.
A.J. "BEAR" PIEKARSKI
BUSINESS MANAGER/SECY-TREAS.

TO: Diane in Rep. Chmura's office

**ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT
ALERT**

MEMO TO: All ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Business Agents, Stewards & members

FROM: Bill Kelder, Political Action Coordinator

DATE: March 6, 1992

SUBJECT: House Bill 385

House Bill 385, requiring the state to provide health and safety measures for employees who spend long hours working on visual display terminals, will be up for a vote on the House Floor early next week. We need to get our members sending public opinion messages encouraging the following state Representatives to vote in favor of the bill. These guys are mostly minority republicans and will need a lot of POMs so please get the word out to as many people as possible as quickly as possible. This is one of our bills and the sponsor, our very good friend Rep. Fran Ulmer, D-Juneau, has asked for our help on this. Let's show her we know how to deliver.

H.B. 385 will save the state money in the long run by reducing injury and time missed due to injury. The bill will also help improve morale by showing that the state cares about its workers. Send the POMs to the following:

Rep. Larry Baker, Rep. Ramona Barnes, Rep. Dave Choquette, Rep. Gail Phillips
Rep. Mary Miller, Rep. Mike Miller, Rep. Loren Lehman, Rep. Mark Hanley
Rep. Georgianna Lincoln, Rep. Jerry Mackle, Rep. Richard Foster, Rep. Bill Hudson, and
Rep. Ben Grussendorf.

To send a Public Opinion Message to all these reps., call in Anchorage: 561-7007; and in Fairbanks: 452-4448; and in Juneau 465-4648. Remember to limit the messages to 50 words or less.

Again, many, many thanks to all of you for your help on this.

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671 # of pages > 1

To	Barnaby Dow	From	Jan B. Smith
Co.	Rep. Ulmer	Co.	Fish & Game
Dept.		Phone #	465-4160
Fax #	2108	Fax #	465-4168

January 27, 1992

Mr. Barnaby Dow
State Capitol, Room 421
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Mr. Dow:

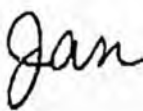
I understand Representative Fran Ulmer is requesting information regarding carpal tunnel syndrome and the use of video display terminals.

My first problem with carpal tunnel syndrome began about two years before I began working for the State of Alaska. At the time, I was employed as a nurse during the day and did medical transcription at home during the evening using an electric typewriter. During this time, I developed pain in my hands and wrists to the extent that at one point I had to wear custom-molded, fiberglass splints, sometimes on one and sometimes on both wrists. This continued until I stopped doing medical transcription at home.

In July 1988, I began working for the state as a clerk typist, and within a few months I began to have problems with my wrists again. While shopping for office supplies one day, I noticed a "wrist rest" device and requested permission to buy one. My supervisor thought I was being silly to want to spend state money in such a manner, but finally allowed the purchase. Coworkers ridiculed me for using the wrist rest, and frequently I returned to my desk to find the wrist rest on the floor. However, soon after beginning to use the wrist rest, my symptoms abated and I have had essentially no problems with carpal tunnel syndrome since.

In August 1990, I began working for the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Fisheries Rehabilitation, Enhancement and Development (FRED). Shortly thereafter, I obtained a wrist rest, received no ridicule for using it, and continue to be symptom-free.

Sincerely,



Jan. B. Smith

Martha Samaniego
P.O. BOX 1893
Kodiak Alaska 99615

March 19, 1992

Representative Fran Ulmer
Alaska State Legislative
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Fran Ulmer:

I am an eighth grader at the Kodiak Junior High. Please don't allow my age to take away some of the attention needed on what I have to say. I am writing in support to the House Bill 385 concerning VDT hazards.

I favor this bill because I believe that adults and children who use video display terminals (such as computers) have the right to know the dangers in connection with VDT's. I have noticed that children are beginning to use computers at younger and younger ages, they use them without the parents knowing what dangers may come with advancement.

Many employees also apply for jobs and work with computers. All these people, adults and children alike are in danger of becoming nearsighted and also putting thier eyes in risk of attracting other RSI's. This issue deserves more attention then it all ready has. This bill will not only help the people now, but will help people for a long time to come.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this opinion and I will be waiting to hear from you concerning the further progress of House Bill 385.

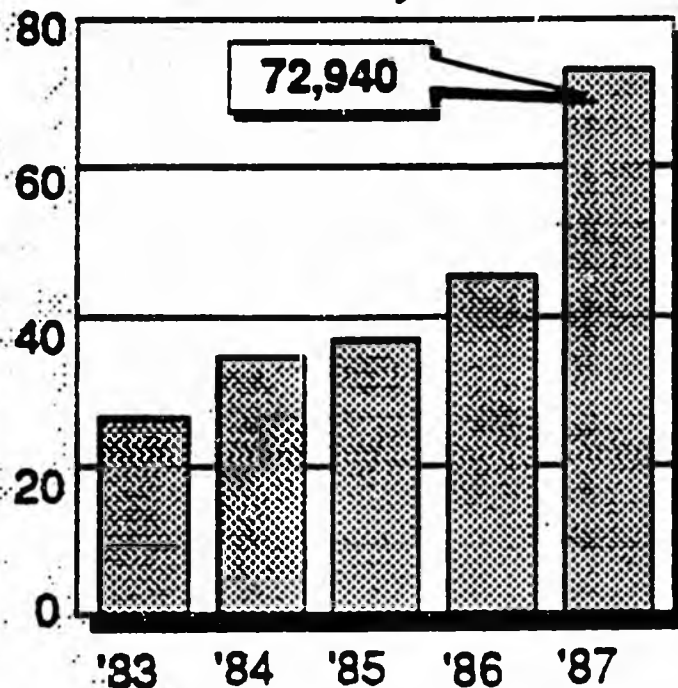
Sincerely,

Martha Samaniego

Strain in the hand

The growth of personal computer use has coincided with an increase in repetitive strain hand injuries in the United States.

In thousands of injuries



SOURCE: Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Knight-Ridder Newspapers

The computer workstation

What are the hazards and how can they be prevented?

Repetitive strain injuries may occur as a result of a combination of repetitive motions with fast forceful movements, awkward positions, lack of sufficient rest time over periods of weeks, months or years. They occur in many different work situations.

Hazards

Cervical disk syndrome:

Pain, numbness and muscular spasm caused by pinching of the cervical nerves by compressed discs.



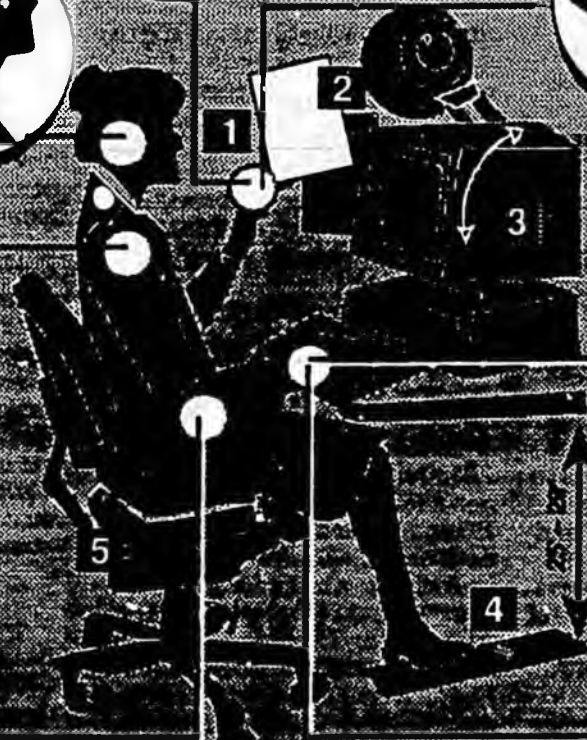
Tenosynovitis: Pain in hands and arms caused by swelling of the tendon and the sheath that covers it.



White finger: Numbness, tingling, paleness and burning sensations caused by damaged blood vessels.



Rotator cuff injury: Pain and limited motion in the shoulder caused when one or more of the four rotator cuff tendons is inflamed.



Carpal tunnel syndrome: Numbness, pain, tingling and aching sensations in the wrist caused by too much pressure on the median nerve of the wrist.



Epicondylitis (tennis elbow): Pain, swelling and weakness in the elbow caused by inflammation of the tendons.

Prevention

the ideal computer workstation

- 1 Eye should be level with the top of the screen.
- 2 Feet should be flat and shoulders should be at table level.
- 3 A video display terminal should be adjustable (tilt) from 0° to 20°.
- 4 An inclined footrest to relieve strain from legs and back.
- 5 A chair with an adjustable seat height and back rest. Elbows should not bend more than 90° to reach the keyboard.

Tendinitis: Swelling, tenderness and weakness in the hand, elbow or shoulder due to inflammation of tendons.



15

Workplace Injury Is Rising, And the Computer Is Blamed

By PETER T. KILBORN

Special to The New York Times

COMPLIMENTS OF THE ALASKA STATE LIBRARY

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — Workplace injuries caused by repetitive motion have increased sharply, the Labor Department said today, and experts called the rise of computer technology a major factor.

In an annual report, the department said repetitive motion disorders accounted for 48 percent of all workplace illnesses and injuries last year, up from 38 percent in 1987 and just 18 percent in 1981.

The report said 4 percent of all full-time workers suffered from some form of illness or injury on the job last year, the highest level since 1980. And they spent more time out of work or doing limited work because of illness or injury than in any year since 1972, the first that the Bureau of Labor Statistics started gathering the information in its current form.

The report did not break down the industries with the highest rates of injury from repetitive motion. But Joseph Kinney, executive director of the National Safe Workplace Institute in Chicago, said the rise of computers in the workplace was obviously a major factor. "Better technology and safer plants and machinery should result in far fewer injuries, and it just doesn't," he said.

The most hazardous jobs were in manufacturing, the report said, led by lumber, steel, food, stone and glass, and automobiles, in that order. Aside from manufacturing, construction was the most hazardous. The automobile industry showed the sharpest increase in injuries last year. The report said lawyers have the safest jobs, followed by insurance agents and stockbrokers.

Cautious Interpretation Urged

Labor Department officials emphasized that the figures in today's report must be interpreted cautiously. Increases in the figures for illness and injury result in part from stronger efforts by the department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration to make businesses keep better records.

"But whatever the reason," said Margaret Seminario, health and safety director for the A.F.L.-C.I.O., "it's obvious that too many workers are being killed, injured and diseased on the job."

The most common repetitive motion disorder is carpal tunnel syndrome, an injury to the hand and wrist that can require surgery. Once limited mostly to meat packers, poultry workers and pianists, it has become a common complaint among workers who use computers or computerized equipment — for example, supermarket checkout clerks, who repeatedly slide customers' purchases over price scanners.

"I don't think you can associate it all with the computer," said Gerard F. Scannel, the head of OSHA. But he added that the proliferation of computer technology in many industries was a significant cause of the increase.

"We seem to be asking people to do their jobs faster and in smaller, more finely defined tasks," Mr. Scannel said. Such tasks, he went on, impose unnatural stresses on the hands, wrists and fingers. In the past, he said, the most common workplace injuries were caused by heavy lifting.

'Repeated Trauma'

Today's report said that of 240,900 occupational illnesses recorded in private industry last year, 115,400 were in the category "disorders associated with repeated trauma": carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis, arthritis and sprains. The next highest category was respiratory problems caused by toxic agents, at 16,200.

Mr. Scannel said carpal tunnel syndrome can be prevented with better design of tools and workplaces. Sometimes, he said, prevention requires little more than changing the height of a desk or chair.

The report also said 3,300 workers died of occupational causes last year, 100 fewer than in 1987. But experts say

Repeated motion replaces heavy lifting as a hazard.

the figure is understated, in part because the Government does not record cases of people who die after they have retired, often from diseases contracted on the job. Mr. Kinney said the actual figure is closer to 50,000.

Since late in the Reagan Administration, OSHA has been expanding its efforts to require companies to submit better health reports and to compile better statistics. It has imposed substantial fines on a blue-ribbon list of American corporations. Just this week, it proposed a \$754,000 fine against Cargill Inc., accusing it of not taking steps to protect its poultry workers from carpal tunnel syndrome.

But the uncertainty over how much the frequency of injury and illness is actually increasing "is a difficulty we have with all the data," said Ethel Cherry Jackson, chief of the Bureau of Labor Statistics survey on occupational safety and health.

**Company News:
Tuesday through Friday,
Business Day**

Alaska State Legislature

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October 4, 1991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Fran Ulmer

FROM: Linda J. Snow *L. Snow*
Legislative Analyst

RE: Repetitive Strain Injury Associated with Use of Video Display Terminals
Research Request 92.043

You asked for information about adverse health effects associated with the use of video display terminals (VDTs). You specifically asked about the incidence and seriousness of repetitive strain injuries (RSI), and what Alaska state government positions are most at risk for this type of injury.

In this report, we present a summary of a recent report by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), entitled *Occupational Health Aspects of Work with Video Display Terminals*.¹ Next we discuss the types of occupations that are most likely to be affected by RSI and other injuries associated with VDT usage.² We then identify which positions held by state employees are most at risk to develop the foregoing types of injuries.

SUMMARY OF RECENT NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REPORT

Today, about half the jobs in the U.S. involve work with VDTs. Many studies have examined the possible health effects of VDT use. A recent unpublished report by the NIOSH (February 1991) entitled *Occupational Health Aspects of Work with Video Display Terminals* reviews and summarizes the existing reports on the subject. The report discusses four areas of health concern for VDT users. These areas are visual system dysfunction (eye strain), musculoskeletal disorders, stress and adverse pregnancy outcomes.

¹This study was completed by NIOSH in February 1991. It has not yet been published.

²Repetitive strain injury results from repeating the same motion over and over. It can lead to inflammation of joints and pain and numbness of extremities.

Eye Strain

Eye strain (including sore eyes, blurred vision and headaches) is the most common health complaint of VDT users. At least 50 percent of VDT users have reported occasional symptoms of eye strain, although eye strain is not unique to VDT work. There is little evidence of enduring functional problems resulting from VDT-related eyestrain. Recent studies suggest no link between the use of VDTs and increased risk of cataract development.

Some suggestions to lessen the adverse impact of VDT work on vision are: 1) to test and correct the vision of the affected workers; 2) to modify VDT display characteristics such as contrast, sharpness, type design, image stability and color to reduce discomfort; and 3) to provide adequate and appropriate workplace lighting.

Musculoskeletal Disorders

Early NIOSH studies have shown that 75 percent of VDT workers experience occasional back and neck discomfort on the job. More recent NIOSH studies show that 20 to 25 percent of VDT workers experience almost daily upper torso discomfort.

Musculoskeletal disorders include repetitive strain injuries (RSI). About 40 percent of 834 newspaper employees studied reported symptoms of cumulative trauma disorder during a one-year period. Neck and shoulder pain were prevalent complaints of the subjects. However, recent studies have shown that the hand and wrist are also susceptible to musculoskeletal disorders in VDT work. Although there is no conclusive evidence of RSI from use of VDTs, the World Health Organization stated in a recent report that injury from repeated stress is possible. Recent studies seem conclusive that chronic pain and disability are influenced by cultural, social and psychological forces. However, physical causes of chronic pain and disability cannot be ruled out.

Evidence exists that ergonomic changes in the work environment can reduce musculoskeletal discomfort associated with VDT use. It appears that the stationary and sedentary characteristics of VDT work are the primary risk factor. Tasks can be redesigned to allow for job rotation and more frequent rest breaks. Improved work station design may lessen musculoskeletal discomfort.

Stress

A third health effect examined in the NIOSH study is stress. In the U.S., increased VDT usage has caused a change in the content and organization of work tasks. Following is a list of factors that contribute to stress in VDT workers:

- increased work pressure;
- reduced autonomy;
- increased management control over the work process;
- concerns about computer breakdowns and delays;
- physical immobility;
- excessive repetition;
- reduced skill and experience levels;
- reduced task variety; and
- more uncertainty over job security and promotion opportunities.

Although stress is apparent in all VDT-related jobs, it is most pronounced in lower-level clerical jobs. Stress may result in mental disorders, cardiovascular diseases and psychological disorders. In California, 70 percent of workers compensation claims from stress came from white collar workers, and 40 percent came from the sales and clerical level. Stress can be relieved by making jobs challenging and varied; making sure that tasks have some kind of closure, or an end product; and by improving the social environment of the workplace.

Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes

It has long been claimed that VDT usage causes adverse pregnancy outcomes; however, no conclusive evidence of any relationship between VDT use and adverse pregnancy outcomes is available. A recent NIOSH report on the subject found no relationship between the two.

AT-RISK OCCUPATIONS

According to Betsy Jordon with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, D.C., disorders associated with repetitive motion (RSI) now make up 52 percent of reported job-related illnesses. Reports of carpal tunnel syndrome have increased more rapidly in recent years than reports of any other job-related illness.³

³Carpal tunnel syndrome is the swelling of the tendons where they pass through the front of the wrist. The resulting pressure can cause pain, numbness and weakness of the hands.

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Barbara Webster, with the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, stated that 1.5 percent of that company's insurance claims, and 2.5 percent of their costs in 1990, were for RSI. The average award per case in 1990 was \$6,168. Ms. Webster said that no one in the insurance industry keeps statistics on the occupations of those making claims for RSI, but managers in the insurance industry generally believe keyboard operators are one of the highest at-risk groups for that type of injury. The industries most affected by RSI are:

- meat and poultry cutting and packing industry;
- electronic manufacturing industry;
- telephone operators; and
- data entry/secretarial agencies.

The fourth category, secretarial and data processing agencies, file 1 percent of all workers' compensation claims in the U.S. A large number of claims for RSI are filed by reporters, automotive workers, and upholsterers.

In Alaska, 289 of 11,998 workers compensation claims made in 1990 were for inflammation of the joints. According to Jim Wilson, labor economist with the Alaska Department of Labor, this category of injury is caused almost exclusively by repetitive motion. Carpal tunnel syndrome is not included in the foregoing category of injury and is difficult to separate from its primary category of nervous system disorders.

STATE EMPLOYEES IN AT-RISK OCCUPATIONS

Table A (attached) presents a list of the most obvious job classes at risk to develop RSI and other VDT-associated health disorders in Alaska state government. It is difficult to tell what the exact duties of a particular position may entail, however, those listed in Table A are likely to require many hours of typing or data entry using VDTs. Just as some of these positions may not use VDTs for a significant portion of their duties, many other job classes not listed here (the state has over 1,300 job classes) may use VDTs for a major portion of their work day. The 2,056 positions represented by these job classes account for nearly 10 percent of the total positions in state government.⁴

I hope this information is helpful to you. If you have further questions, please feel free to call this office.

Attachment

⁴The state FY 92 budget (after vetoes) funds 21,018 positions.

TABLE A

State of Alaska Positions at Risk
for Repetitive Strain Injury
(as of September 1991)

CLASS CODE	CLASS TITLE	NUMBER OF POSITIONS
1122	Clerk Typist II	93
1123	Clerk Typist III	786
1145	Legal Secretary I	99
1146	Legal Secretary II	30
1151	Secretary I	106
1152	Secretary II	24
1182	Correspondence Secretary I	4
1183	Correspondence Secretary II	4
1184	Correspondence Secretary III	12
1185	Administrative Support Technician I	3
1186	Administrative Support Technician II	0
1187	Administrative Support Technician III	9
1188	Administrative Support Technician IV	4
1191	Data Processing Clerk I	38
1192	Data Processing Clerk II	60
1193	Data Processing Clerk III	16
1201	Accounting Clerk I	4
1202	Accounting Clerk II	98
1203	Accounting Clerk III	144
1204	Accountant I	4
1205	Accountant II	26
1210	Accounting Technician I	100
1211	Accounting Technician II	66
1212	Accounting Technician III	32
1217	Permanent Fund Dividend Specialist I	11
1218	Permanent Fund Dividend Specialist II	2
1219	Permanent Fund Dividend Specialist III	2
1610	Data Processing Assistant	2
1611	Data Processing Technician I	14
1612	Data Processing Technician II	27
1613	Data Processing Technician III	12
1621	Analyst Programmer I	10
1622	Analyst Programmer II	26
1623	Analyst Programmer III	64
1624	Analyst Programmer IV	92
1625	Analyst Programmer V	32
Total		2,056

Note: This table presents the number of existing state positions. These positions may or may not be filled at any given time.

Source: Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel.

Prepared by the Legislative Research Agency, October 1991 (92.043A).