

SB

203

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/20/00

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 1/20/00
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED IN TO OFFICE: 1/27/00

Transportation Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 203

"An Act relating to metropolitan planning organizations and to designation of a metropolitan planning organization for the Anchorage metropolitan area; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to the _____ Committee

- Senate Bill:**
- same title
 - new title
- House Bill:**
- same title
 - technical title
 - new: SCR# _____

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
<i>Pearce</i>	✓	<i>[Signature]</i>	✓		
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>					
<i>[Signature]</i>					
CHAIR: <i>[Signature]</i>	✓	CHAIR:			

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department Date Zero Fiscal

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):*

Department Date Zero Fiscal

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

Alaska State Legislature



Session:
State Capitol, Room 423
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-4921

Interim:
716 W. 4th Avenue, Ste. 450
Anchorage, AK 99501-2133
(907) 258-8183

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

SPONSOR STATEMENT for SB 203 METROPOLITAN PLANNING AUTHORITY

SB 203 codifies that future Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) within the State of Alaska be designated in statute, and amends the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS), the Anchorage MPO, operating agreement by increasing the policy committee membership to seven by adding two Anchorage legislators as nonvoting members; one member each from the senate and house.

Last session Senate Bill 135, a version similar to Senate Bill 203, passed the State Senate by 13 yeas to 6 nays, but failed to be adopted by the House. The final version of SB 135 was not opposed by the Department of Transportation or the Anchorage Mayor's Office. The final version of SB 135 represented a concerted effort of compromise between the sponsor, house committee members and the administration.

The Code of Federal Regulation states that "to the extent possible" metropolitan planning organizations should be established under specific state legislation. This federal law is the basis for *section one* of this legislation which codifies that future MPOs be designated in state statute.

AMATS, the Anchorage MPO, was created in 1976 by an agreement between the Governor and the Mayor of Anchorage to comply with federal law requiring communities over 50,000 in population to have a MPO in order to qualify for federal highway funding. It has never been authorized by statute.

Pursuant to that agreement the AMATS Policy Committee is presently composed of two Anchorage Assembly members, one representative from the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, one representative from the State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Mayor of Anchorage. **The AMATS Policy Committee has representation from all relevant branches of local and state government except the State Legislature.**

While AMATS policy requires legislative authorization before any federal funds can be expended on AMATS priority projects, no member of the Alaska State Legislature sits on the committee.

Senate Bill
Sponsor Statement
Page 2

The current AMATS format has failed to provide adequate planning for Anchorage road projects and has not provided needed leadership for advocating Anchorage's needs in the state budget process.

During the last 10 years, AMATS, to avoid controversy, ignored and failed to deal with major long term traffic problems. During that time, Anchorage witnessed a dramatic increase in both its traffic volume and congestion. Unfortunately, despite the desperate need for traffic solutions, the AMATS committee, until very recently, had not adequately planned for sorely needed major new surface transportation corridors such as; improvements to the intersection at Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road, major improvements to the Glenn and New Seward Highways and the connection of Abbott Loop north to Bragaw.

In 1998, AMATS even increased the ratio of funding allocated to non-road projects to about 15% which is more than 50% above the federal standard despite opposition from the Anchorage Legislative Caucus.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has stated no objection to changing the composition of the AMATS Policy Committee to include members of the State Legislature. Further, the FHWA has stated that there is no reason the AMATS program would not remain in compliance with federal regulations once the change in membership has been instituted.

An example of a successful Metropolitan Planning Organization with state legislative participation is the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OMPO) in Honolulu, Hawaii. Under the auspices of the federal government, created by the State Legislature in 1975 and reorganized in 1986, the OMPO consists of six voting state legislators, five Honolulu City Council members, an appointee of the Governor and an appointee of the Mayor of Honolulu.

SB 203 incorporates the compromises of last session with the standards provided by the FHWA's code of regulations, thus significantly improving the legislation introduced last session.

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SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

FOR

SENATE BILL 203

"AN ACT RELATING TO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS"

Section 1: Amends 19.20 (Chapter 20: Cooperation by and with the State) by adding three sections.

Sec. 19.20.200—Designates Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in state Statute.

Rationale: The designation better coordinates transportation planning in urbanized areas and achieves the planning goals of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5306 when federal law requires an area to participate in a federal transportation program.

Sec. 19.20.210—Sets out the membership of certain MPOs. For a metropolitan area with a population greater than 200,000 persons, the MPO membership will have five voting and two nonvoting members. The nonvoting members will consist of one senator and one representative with districts within the metropolitan area that is required to set up the MPO. The voting members will be appointed by the Governor (2) and by the municipal government of the area (3).

Rationale: It is important to infuse legislators into the MPO process, since they are faced with making decisions concerning the funding of MPO projects with state matching funds. Also, cooperation between the legislature and the MPO will improve the overall process.

Sec. 19.20.220—Requires MPOs to submit their current transportation improvement plan or their updated transportation improvement plan to the legislature by Jan. 15th of each year.

Rationale: This requirement would give the legislature ample time to consider the funding requests within the respective transportation improvement plans, so that those requests can be funded in the legislature's overall budget for that fiscal year.

Section 2: Amends the uncodified law of the State of Alaska by adding a new section which designates the MPO for the Anchorage Metropolitan Area, thus conforming with AS 19.20.200 and AS 19.20.210 added by Sec. 1 of this Act.

Section 3: Sets the effective date of this Act – July 1, 2001.