

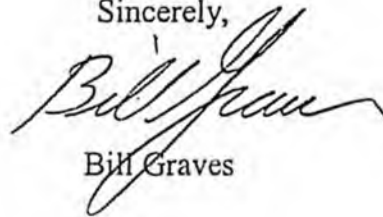
ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES, 2003-2004 8672

11352 SENATE STATE AFFAIRS

The Honorable Frank Murkowski
February 13, 2004
Page Two

You can help us increase safety belt usage among truck drivers. By championing a primary safety belt law, you can provide strong support to this important public safety initiative to save more lives. If your staff would like to discuss ATA's work on this issue, please have them contact ATA's Safety & Operations Department at (703) 838-1847.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Graves". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bill Graves

CC: Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
Jeffrey W. Runge, M.D., Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration
Annette M. Sandberg, Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Mike Barton, Acting Commissioner, Alaska Department of Transportation & Public
Facilities
William Tandeske, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Public Safety
Michael Bell, Alaska Trucking Association, Inc.



**National
Transportation
Safety Board**

Safety Information

Washington, D.C. 20594

STATEMENT OF

KEVIN E. QUINLAN, CHIEF

SAFETY ADVOCACY DIVISION

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

BEFORE THE

ALASKA SENATE

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

ON

SENATE BILL 316

PRIMARY SAFETY BELT ENFORCEMENT

JUNEAU, ALASKA

FEBRUARY 26, 2004

It is our pleasure to provide the following statement regarding Senate Bill 316.

The Safety Board wants to commend you for considering a measure that will so easily save motor vehicle occupants from crash-related deaths and injuries.

The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency charged by Congress to investigate transportation accidents, determine their probable cause, and make recommendations to prevent their recurrence. The recommendations that arise from our investigations and safety studies are our most important product. The Safety Board has neither regulatory authority nor grant funds. However, in our 37-year history, organizations and government bodies have adopted more than 80 percent of our recommendations.

The Safety Board has recognized for many years that traffic crashes are this nation's most serious transportation safety problem. Every year, more than 90 percent of all transportation-related deaths are caused by highway crashes. The single greatest defense against highway fatalities is the seat belt. When used properly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat vehicle occupants by 45 percent.

Unfortunately, seat belt use in the United States remains significantly lower than seat belt use in other industrialized nations. Australia and Canada, for example, have use rates over 90 percent, while seat belt use in the United States is approximately 75 percent. Although 49 States require motor vehicle occupants to use seat belts, 29 States, including Alaska, allow only secondary enforcement of their seat belt laws. Secondary enforcement means that police officers cannot issue a citation for a seat belt violation unless the vehicle has been stopped for another reason.

The Safety Board recommended in June 1995 that States enact legislation that provides for primary enforcement of seat belt laws. In 1997, the Safety Board again called for the States to enact primary enforcement and to provide the political will that will enable law enforcement agencies to vigorously enforce this important lifesaving law. The Safety Board maintains a Most Wanted list of safety recommendations because of their potential to save lives. Primary Enforcement is one of the issues on that list, the one with a greater potential to save lives than any other on the list. It also has more potential to save lives than probably any other piece of legislation you will consider this year.

Today I want to discuss four elements that support the Safety Board's position on seat belt laws. First, seat belts are effective in reducing motor vehicle injuries and fatalities. Second, the remaining 21 percent of motor vehicle occupants who do not use seat belts engage more frequently in high-risk behavior. Third, the economic cost from the failure to use seat belts is substantial. Finally, primary enforcement seat belt laws do increase seat belt use.

Seat Belts Are Effective

Seat belts are the number one defense against motor vehicle injuries and fatalities. Seat belts restrain vehicle occupants from the extreme forces experienced during motor vehicle crashes. Also, seat belts prevent occupant ejections. Only 1 percent of vehicle occupants using seat belts are ejected. Unrestrained vehicle occupants are ejected 30 percent of the time. Seventy-three percent of persons who are totally ejected from a vehicle are killed. From 1975 to 2002, seat belts saved almost 165,000 lives nationwide. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a nationwide seat belt use rate of 90 percent by front seat occupants would prevent an additional 5,000 deaths and 130,000 serious injuries each year.

One issue that particularly concerns the Safety Board is that not all seat belt laws apply to all motor vehicle occupants. In 31 States, including Alaska, the seat belt law permits back seat occupants to ride unrestrained. However, unbelted vehicle occupants frequently injure other occupants, and unbelted drivers are less likely than belted drivers to be able to control their vehicles. An article recently published in the Journal of the American Medical Association stated that a person's risk of death in a crash is associated with the restraint use of other occupants; in the study, the risk was lowest when all occupants were restrained.

Unrestrained Vehicle Occupants More Frequently Engage in High-Risk Behavior

Approximately 20 percent of motor vehicle occupants nationwide do not use seat belts. These drivers, who choose not to buckle up, tend to exhibit multiple high-risk behaviors and are more frequently involved in crashes. According to the National Automotive Sampling System (crash data composed of representative, randomly selected cases from police reports), belt use among motorists in crashes decreases with increasing crash severity.

Fatal crashes are the most violent motor vehicle crashes and can result from high-risk behaviors such as speeding and impaired driving. Unfortunately, people

involved in fatal crashes also tend not to use their seat belts. While observational surveys have identified a 79 percent seat belt use rate, use in fatal crashes is significantly lower. From 1994 through 2002, 799,205 vehicle occupants were involved in fatal crashes. Of those 799,205 occupants, 303,291 died. Approximately 59 percent of the vehicle occupants who died were unrestrained. In Alaska, 596 vehicle occupants died, and nearly 64 percent were unrestrained.

Alcohol-related crashes cause approximately 40 percent of motor vehicle fatalities, and impaired drivers are notorious for not using seat belts. Alcohol-related crashes are also responsible for 22 percent of the total economic cost of motor vehicle crashes. Primary enforcement seat belt laws can help police officers identify impaired drivers and can certainly reduce the death and injury rate associated with impaired driving, since everyone's best defense against drunk driving is a seat belt.

Teenagers are generally considered high-risk drivers because of their inexperience and immaturity. Teen drivers and their teen passengers have the lowest seat belt use rates. In an analysis by the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign, it was reported that among fatally injured 16-to 19-year-old drivers in States with secondary enforcement seat belt laws, belt use is an abysmal 30 percent. Teenagers are our future, and we need to ensure that they get in the habit of using seat belts.

Economic Costs from the Failure to Use Seat Belts are Significant

Although opponents to primary enforcement seat belt laws claim that nonuse is a personal choice and affects only the individual, the fact is that motor vehicle injuries and fatalities have a significant societal cost. For example, the lifetime cost to society for each fatality is over \$977,000, over 30 percent of which is attributed to lost workplace and household productivity. In 2002, more than 7,100 lives could have been saved if everyone had used a seat belt. Society would have saved almost \$7 billion.

Each critically injured survivor of a motor vehicle crash costs an average of \$1.1 million. Medical costs and lost productivity account for 84 percent for the most serious level of non-fatal injury. In a 1996 study, NHTSA found that the average inpatient cost for unbelted crash victims was 55 percent higher than for belted crash victims. In 2000 alone, seat belts could have prevented over 142,000 injuries.

While the affected individual covers some of these costs, overall, those not directly involved in crashes pay for nearly three-quarters of all crash costs, primarily through insurance premiums, taxes, and travel delay. In 2000, those not directly involved in crashes paid over \$170 billion. Just for medical care, lost productivity, and other injury related costs, society annually pays an estimated \$26 billion for motor vehicle injuries and deaths experienced by unbelted vehicle occupants, and a substantial part of this cost is publicly funded.

The emotional and financial costs to Alaska are just as staggering. In 2002, 37 people died while riding unrestrained in motor vehicles on Alaska's roads. Seat belts are 45 to 73 percent effective in preventing fatalities depending on the vehicle type and seating position for the occupant. Therefore, it is reasonable to estimate conservatively that approximately 18 of the unrestrained occupants would have survived crashes in 2002, saving Alaska about \$18 million if they had buckled up. This estimate does not include the reduced costs from reducing the severity and frequency of injury crashes. The Alaska Injury Prevention Center report "Alaska Seat Belt Cost Analysis" provides a conservative estimate of these costs.

Primary Enforcement Seat belt Laws Do Increase Seat belt Use

Primary enforcement seat belt laws can make a difference in seat belt use rates. With primary enforcement, police officers are authorized to execute a traffic stop and cite unbelted vehicle occupants without needing another reason for making the stop. According to the National Occupant Protection Usage Survey (June 2003), seat belt use in primary enforcement law States was 83 percent, while the belt use rate in secondary enforcement law States was only 75 percent. States that recently enacted primary enforcement seat belt laws experienced increased seat belt use rates ranging from almost 5 percent to almost 18 percent. The increased use is based on the perceived risk of being stopped.

Conclusion

Average American citizens, not just highway safety advocates, support primary enforcement. NHTSA conducted a survey in 2000 to determine the public's opinion on primary enforcement seat belt laws. Overall, 61 percent of the population surveyed supported primary enforcement. Among people from States with secondary enforcement seat belt laws, more than half approved of primary enforcement. Minority populations are greater proponents of primary enforcement than whites. For example, 72 percent of Hispanics surveyed and 68 percent of African Americans surveyed endorsed primary enforcement.

Key provisions of a comprehensive primary enforcement seat belt law should include coverage of all vehicle occupants in all seating positions, coverage of all vehicles, and sufficient penalties. By allowing police officers to stop vehicles directly for seat belt violations, Alaska shows that it takes seat belt use very seriously. There are additional benefits to allowing primary enforcement. For example, when police officers stop vehicles for traffic law violations, such as failure to use a seat belt, they often discover additional traffic or criminal violations that otherwise might have gone undetected. Additionally, changing from secondary enforcement to primary enforcement does not impose additional requirements on vehicle occupants.

The measure sponsored by Senator Bunde, SB 316, will save lives and reduce injuries. Enacting this bill is the single most important life-saving and deficit reduction measure you can take this session. It costs nothing, but will save much. Thank you again for inviting the Safety Board to testify about this important problem. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

Service Since 1921

Date: February 19, 2004
To: Senator Con Bunde
From: Captain Ross Plummer Patrol Division
Subject: Seatbelt Law

The Anchorage Police Department in conjunction with State and local law enforcement agencies has the responsibility to protect the public. At times this task is difficult and often compounded by inadequate laws. Anchorage Police Department is contributing to public safety by enforcing the existing occupant protection laws within our jurisdiction. Officers are far too familiar with the often tragic results of not wearing safety belts during a collision. The loss of lives and injuries sustained in our city are far too many.

National studies show seat belts save lives. The Anchorage Police Department is dedicated in the fight to save lives. A primary seat belt law would assist in our efforts to help make our streets safer. At this time Officers are unable to stop drivers who choose not to wear a safety belt. The new proposed seat belt law will enable officers to stop and cite violators. This will help save lives by encouraging more people to wear safety belts. The Anchorage Police Department has dedicated resources to a new traffic unit and believes this bill will allow officers to make a difference in lowering our fatalities and decreasing injuries within the city of Anchorage.

During 2002 there were 36 vehicle fatalities in the city of Anchorage. During 2003 Anchorage Police Department worked with the National Highway Transportation and Safety Office to proactively increase seat belt usage in the state of Alaska. During 2003 Anchorage increased seatbelt use by 13%. This is the highest increase in the nation. Our compliance rate is now over 85%. In 2003 our fatalities went down 13% from 36 to 23. One must ask if this is coincidental or correlated to the increased enforcement.

In the last quarter of 2003 there were 4 fatalities that could have been prevented if the driver would have been wearing a seatbelt. Having a primary seatbelt law will not ensure that everyone will wear them but the possibility of saving one life is something worthy of acknowledgement.

The Anchorage Police Department supports this bill and all efforts towards saving lives and making our streets safer.



Mayor Mark Begich

Municipality of Anchorage

P.O. Box 196650 • Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650 • 825 "L" Street • <http://www.muni.org>



Department of Health and Human Services

February 23, 2004

Senator Con Bunde
State Capitol, Room 506
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subject: Primary Seatbelt Law, SB 316

Dear Senator Bunde,

The Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Health and Human Services strongly supports the primary seatbelt law because it can save more lives by increasing the Alaska use rate to 90%. A seatbelt law already exists but this bill would lift the restriction for public safety officers to pull a motorist over for not wearing a seatbelt.

We know from the Alaska Trauma Registry that 84% of the belted occupants in crashes walked away uninjured compared with only 60% of the unbelted occupants. In a ten year period, the patients who were not buckled up at the time of the crash were almost twice as likely to sustain a serious head injury and over one and a half times more likely to be discharged with a permanent disability. One in three of these people billed a government program for their hospital care and the cost to a rehabilitation or skilled nursing facility. A permanent disability, especially head trauma and brain damage, which many of the injuries are, can cost Medicaid millions of dollars per patient. With a decrease in crashes and injuries, the state can reduce the financial burden for emergency response, public safety officers, hospitalization, rehabilitation and legal expenses.

It has been 12 years since a seatbelt law was first introduced in Alaska. Twenty states and DC have passed a primary seatbelt law and it is time for Alaska to get the benefit of this public health policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Diamond".

Joan Diamond
Municipality of Anchorage
Department of Health and Human Services
Injury Prevention

Community, Security, Prosperity

Dear Senator Bunde,

Thank you for introducing SB316.

The following graph clearly illustrates the effectiveness of primary seat belt laws in the nation.

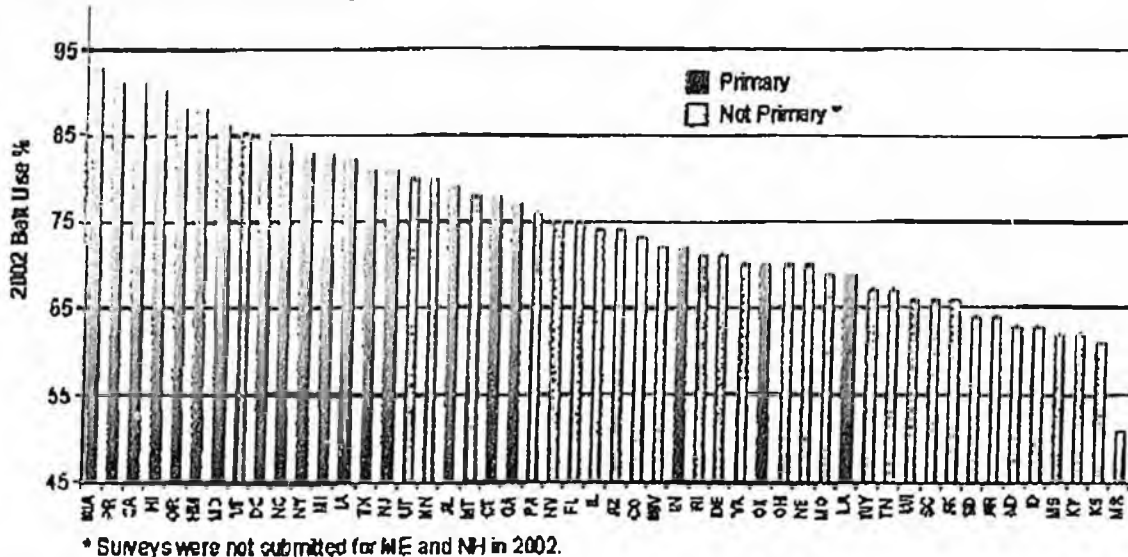


FIGURE 1. Belt use rates in 2002 (Data Source: NHTSA).

According to statistics provided by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), up to 50% of those who die in car crashes in which seat belts were (not) used might have survived if they had been. For example... here in Alaska last year we lost 32 people who were not using seatbelts. Half (16 Alaskans) might have been saved IF ONLY THEY HAD BUCKLED UP!

Considering this potential for saving lives on Alaska's highways the Fairbanks Chapter of MADD supports primary seat belt enforcement.

Sincerely,

Al Near

Al Near

vice-president

MADD Fairbanks Chapter

2/18/2004



State of Alaska
Department of
Public Safety

Frank H. Murkowski, Governor
William Tandeske, Commissioner

February 18, 2004

The Honorable Con Bunde
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room 506
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Bunde:

As I have previously discussed with you, I support the implementation of primary seat belt legislation in Alaska. My support is based on twenty-six years of service as an Alaska State Trooper where I personally investigated a large number of motor vehicle crashes resulting in serious injury or death. Without question, seat belts save lives.

As Commissioner of Public Safety, I am committed to doing all that is reasonable to ensure the safety of all Alaskans. Primary seat belt legislation would provide a viable means for law enforcement to ensure compliance with seat belt regulations and thereby reduce the incidents of serious injury or loss of life.

I believe that primary seat belt legislation and ongoing education efforts are excellent strategies to reduce the alarming number of serious injuries or deaths on our highways. If the Department of Public Safety can be of assistance to you in your legislative endeavors, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Tandeske".

William Tandeske
Commissioner

**FAIRBANKS POLICE**

911 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4616
Phone: (907) 459-6500
Fax: (907) 452-1588
Email: fpd@ci.fairbanks.ak.us



Senator Con Bunde
State Capital Room 506
Juneau, AK 99801

February 18, 2004

Dear Senator Bunde,

I want to take the time to encourage you to support a change to State Law that would make the use of seatbelts truly mandatory. The current situation having a law that only allow a peace officer in the state to cite for a seatbelt violation when they stop a car for another violation is counter productive to having safe highways.

It has been clearly shown that seatbelts reduce injuries and fatalities. Failure to wear a seatbelt is clearly a safety violation. This seems to be like telling a police officer that it is a violation to consume alcoholic beverages while driving but they can not stop a vehicle if they clearly see a driver drinking a beer unless the driver is speeding or runs a stop sign. Using this line of reasoning drinking alcoholic beverages while driving is no less safe than drinking a cup of coffee unless you have a wreck. This is a little silly given what we know about the cost of alcohol related traffic crashes. It seems to me the same thing applies to seatbelt usage. If failure to wear a seatbelt is a safety violation (and we know it is): Why do we not allow police officers the ability to correct the unsafe behavior before there is a violation that could result in an accident with injuries?

Making failure to wear a seatbelt a primary violation in the State of Alaska will cause more people to wear seatbelts and our highways will be safer. When our citizens are involved in traffic accidents the injuries will be less severe and lives will be saved.

Thank you for supporting safer highways in Alaska.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul G. Harris".

Paul G. Harris
Director
Fairbanks Police Department

**Alaska Injury
Prevention Center**



Alaska Injury Prevention Center

PO Box 210736
Anchorage, AK 99521-0736
Tel. 907-929-3941
FAX 907-929-3940
Email: asc1@alaska.net

February 18, 2004

Senator Con Bunde
State Capitol, Room 506
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Bunde,

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my expertise and experience in support of SB 316. I recently completed a study funded by a non-profit group called the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety. This research project, *Alaska Seat Belt Cost Analysis*, compiled and analyzed the hospital costs associated with seat belt use in Alaska. The research is already getting statewide recognition as an argument to be used for primary enforcement of seat belt laws. The study shows that from 1996 through 1999, medical costs for unbelted occupants totaled more than \$13 million dollars of which, 50% were paid with public funds. I've attached a copy of the Executive Summary for your use.

Fairbanks was the first city in Alaska to pass an ordinance giving police the authority to stop someone for not wearing a seat belt – primary enforcement. There was considerable public backlash over the new ordinance and it was eventually repealed, but the fine for the existing law was significantly increased. Anchorage was also considering a similar municipal ordinance that would allow primary enforcement of seat belt use within the city limits and asked for a copy of the research findings.

Alaska was recently chosen by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as one of 13 states to receive special initiatives to reduce our DUI deaths, and to increase our seat belt usage. At 79%, Alaska's seat belt usage rate has improved tremendously over previous years, but there are still a significant number of non-users in the state. If we are able to get a primary enforcement law passed, we would expect to see the seat belt usage rate climb to around 90%.

As the evaluator for the recent Click It or Ticket enforcement campaigns, we conducted random telephone surveys on 1,600 Anchorage residents. One of the questions asked if they were in favor or opposed to police stopping someone for not wearing a seat belt. Sixty-seven (67%) percent said they were in favor of such a law.

I hope this helps,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Perkins".

Ron Perkins, MPH
Executive Director, AIPC



Mothers Against Drunk Driving
JUNEAU CHAPTER
211 4th St., Suite 314
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone (907)463-2562
Fax (907)463-2540
madd@alaska.net
www.madd.org/ak/juneau

February 18, 2004

Senator Con Bunde
State Capitol Building, room 506
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Senate Bill 316, "An Act relating to motor vehicle safety belt violations."

Dear Senator Bunde,

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) supports Senate Bill 316. MADD advocates increase use of occupant protection for all motor vehicle drivers and passengers and recognizes the need for publicized, enforce safety belt and child seat laws as a major defense against alcohol-and other drug-impaired drivers. A seat belt is our best defense against drunk driving.

Studies have found that states which pass a primary seat belt law increase their average seat belt usage by nine to fourteen percentage points. This in turn, decreases crash fatalities by an average of eight percent and decreases the severity of injuries in crashes.

Seat belts are proven to reduce the risk of serious injury or death in a crash by forty five percent, and a study shows 12,177 lives have been lost since 1995 because 30 states, including Alaska, have failed to enact a primary seat belt law.

Some argue that they should be able to choose not to wear a seat belt. However, seat belt use is the law already. Additionally, the decision to wear a seat belt affects those too young to make a conscious choice.

Adults who do not buckle up are sending a message to children that it is all right not to use seat belts-the probability of a fatally injured child being unrestrained is more than twice as likely when the adult driving was unrestrained.

85 percent of the costs of crashes are borne by society, not by the individuals in the crash. Considering that a crash costs 55 percent more when a crash victim is unbelted, we have a financial imperative to enact primary seat belt law, in addition to the moral and ethical imperatives.

Sincerely,

Cindy Cashen
Executive Director

**ALPHA****ALASKA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

Committed To Advancing Alaska's Public Health Since 1978

Testimony Provided to (S)State Affairs February 26, 2004
Re: SB 316 "Primary Seat Belt Law"

Chairman Stevens, members of the State Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Marie Lavigne, I am the Executive Director of the Alaska Public Health Association. I am honored to be here representing over two hundred public health professionals from across Alaska who are deeply committed to developing sound public health policy to improve the health of all Alaskans.

The Alaska Public Health Association and our national organization, the American Public Health Association, have long established resolutions in support of the use of seat belts to save lives.

APHA's first resolution in support of seat belt legislation is from 1958! Then, as now, public health professionals have been strong advocates of the effectiveness of seat belts in minimizing the degree of injury and death resulting from traffic accidents.

As you've heard so eloquently today, enacting a primary seat belt law, as proposed in SB 316, saves lives and money.

Seat belt use is the single most effective safety device in preventing injuries and fatalities. Despite seat belt use being required by statute, our law enforcement officers are currently unable to enforce the use of seat belts.

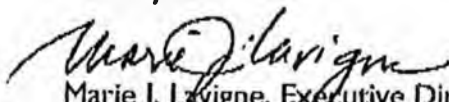
As has been presented here today, changes in law enforcement powers will lead to a 10-15% increase in seat belt use. That increase *alone* will prevent injuries and deaths, as well as the escalating costs in responding to motor vehicle accidents.

Passage of SB 316 also brings to Alaska additional federal highway funding along with the opportunity to save more lives.

Senator Bunde's closing comment in his Intent letter say it best, "Enacting a primary seat belt law may save more lives than any other single piece of legislation before you this session."

As an important public health legislation, we encourage you to support SB 316.

Thank you.

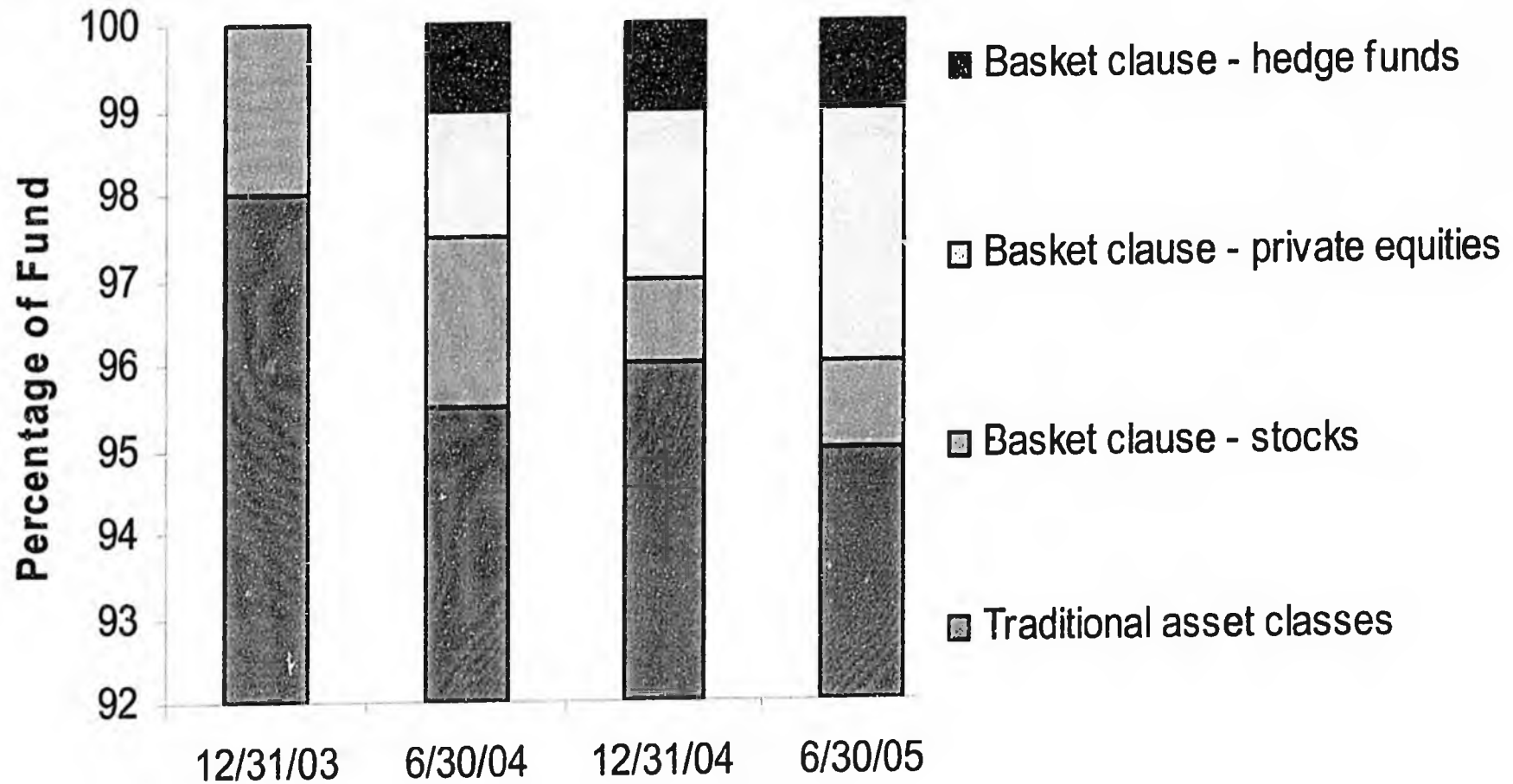

Marie J. Lavigne, Executive Director
Alaska Public Health Association

SB

326



Permanent Fund asset allocation



ACCOUNTABILITY

TO ALASKANS, FOR ALASKANS

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/13/04

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 2/26/04
 (in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED IN TO OFFICE: 3/5/04

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 326

SB 326 PERMANENT FUND INVESTMENTS

"An Act relating to investments of Alaska permanent fund assets; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS SB 326 (STA)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
House Bill:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
<u>DOR</u>	<u>2/24/04</u>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>1</u>

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<u>John J. Caudrey</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<u>Bert H. ...</u>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
CHAIR: <u>[Signature]</u>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: SB 326
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Revenue
 Title Permanent Fund Investments RDU AK Permanent Fund Corporation
 Component AK Permanent Fund Corporation
 Sponsor Rules by request of LBA
 Requester Senate State Affairs Committee Component No. 109

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type-Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: 0.0
 Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2005 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The existing manager fee budget of \$40 million is sufficient to cover any changes in investments under this legislation.

Prepared by: Robert D. Storer, Executive Director Phone 465-2047
 Division Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation Date/Time 2/24/04 9:37 AM
 Approved by: Steve Porter, Deputy Commissioner Date 2/6/2004
 Agency Department of Revenue



Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation

P.O. Box 25500 Juneau, Alaska 99802-5500

(907) 465-2047

Sponsor statement for SB 326

Background

Alaska Statute 37.13.120 provides a list of investment guidelines for the Alaska Permanent Fund, and the Fund's Trustees make investment decisions within these guidelines. Sometimes it is necessary to update the Fund's statutes as investment practices evolve. Periodically the Trustees bring these proposed changes to the Legislature.

In 1999 the Legislature passed HB 156, a bill that made a number of necessary changes to the statutes. One change was the creation of a "basket clause" in AS 37.13.120(k). This clause allows the Trustees to invest up to 5% of the Fund in investments not included in the allowed statutory list, but that are appropriate under the prudent investor rule. The basket clause may also be used for allowed investments in which the Fund has reached its statutory limitation.

However the alternative investments allowed under the basket clause may conflict with the investments not allowed under the statutory list. AS 37.13.120(e) prevents the Fund from borrowing money against assets other than real estate to leverage an investment. AS 37.13.120(h) restricts the situations in which Fund assets may be invested in futures contracts. AS 37.13.120(j) bars investing in any debt instrument on which an interest payment has been defaulted in the preceding five years.

Many alternative investments, such as hedge funds, use one or more of the methods restricted in (e), (h) and (j) as part of their overall investment strategy. The Permanent Fund could not make these investments under current statutes, despite the fact that they might represent sound investment opportunities.

Senate Bill 326

SB 326 achieves two objectives. The first is to provide clean-up language for AS 37.13.120(e) and (k), in part by explicitly stating that the investments restricted under AS 37.13.120(h) and (j) are allowed under the basket clause. According to transcripts of committee hearings, the Legislature was aware when it created the basket clause, that it would be used for these types of alternative investments. The change in this bill would clean up the discrepancy in language between the sections while still maintaining the original legislative intent.

The second would expand the basket clause from 5% to 15%. This is necessary because the 5% limit is too small to allow the Trustees enough flexibility to keep up with changes in investment practices. For example, the Trustees are planning on placing up to 3% of the Fund in private equity investments. If these are successful investments, the value will grow to 4% or more of the Fund, leaving less than 2% of the basket clause for other investments.



Alaska Permanent Fund

Senate State Affairs Committee

Senate Bill 326

Investment Flexibility

ACCOUNTABILITY

TO ALASKANS, FOR ALASKANS



Summary of Fund's statute changes

1980 – SB 161, Sponsored by Sen. Tim Kelly, Sen. George Hohman, Sen. Mike Colletta, and Sen. John Sacket

SB 161 created the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation to manage the Permanent Fund and started the existing statutory list of allowed investments. This list extended beyond the Fund's initial investment limitation of Treasury bonds to include corporate bonds, certificate of deposits and bankers acceptances. The list initially allowed the Permanent Fund to invest in shares of savings and loan associations, but this provision has since been removed.

1982 – SB 684, sponsored by Gov. Jay Hammond

SB 684 allowed the Permanent Fund to invest in common stocks, partial ownership of real estate properties (not to exceed 40%), loans for commercial real estate and deposits of US dollars held overseas.

1989- HB 69, sponsored by Gov. Steve Cowper

HB 69 gave the APFC authority to invest in non-domestic (International) stocks and bonds.



Summary of statute changes (cont.)

1992 – SB 39, sponsored by the Senate Finance Committee

SB 39 gave the APFC authority to invest in A rated corporate bonds to a maximum of 5%. Prior to this change, the Fund could only be invested in bonds rated AA or higher.

1994 – HB 373, sponsored by Legislative Budget and Audit

HB 373 allowed the Fund to own up to 100% in real estate properties worth less than \$150 million, and up to 67% in properties worth greater than \$150 million.

1996 – HB 525, sponsored by the House Finance Committee

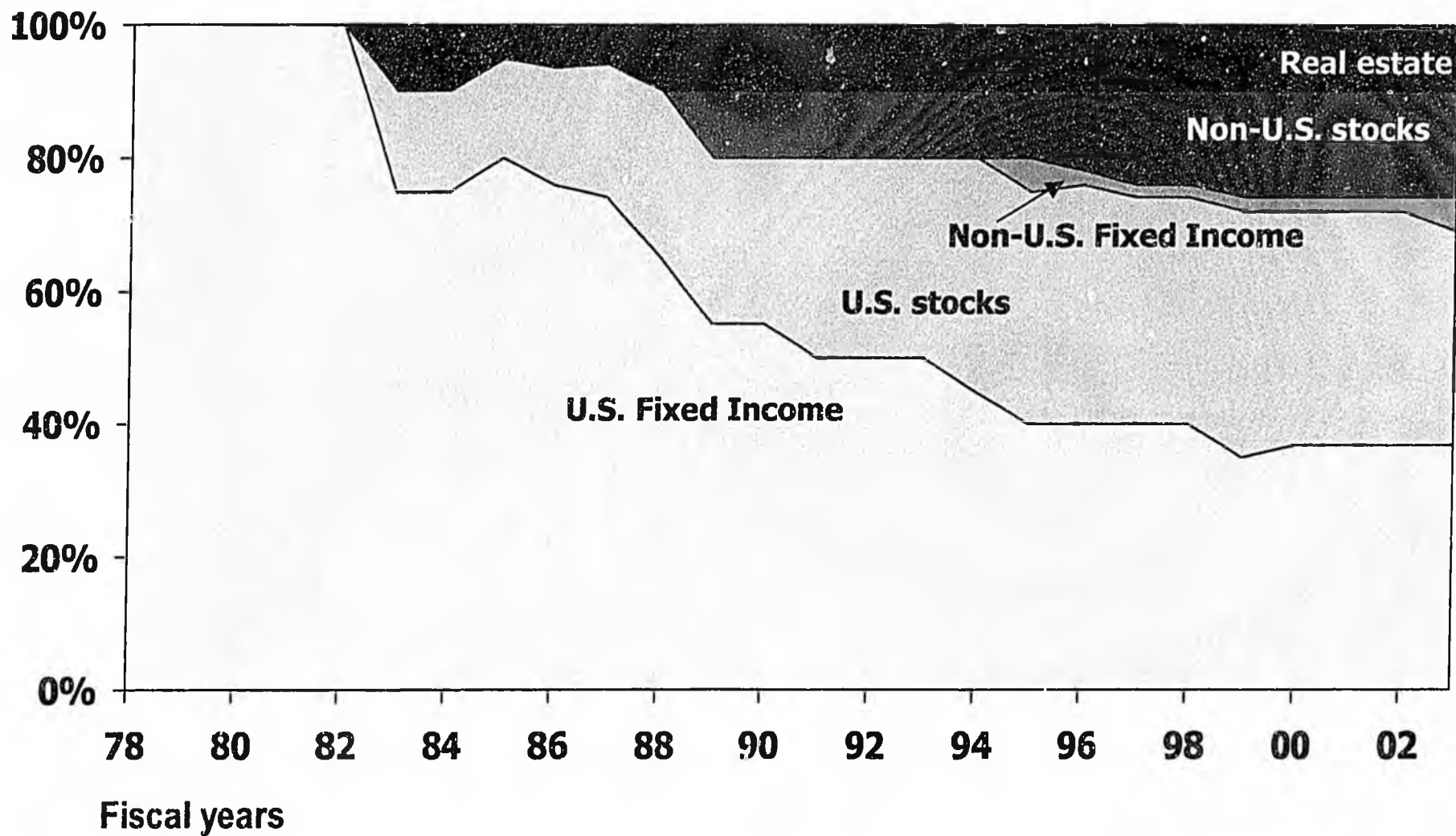
HB 525 gave the APFC authority to invest in corporate bonds rated BBB or higher.

1999 – SB 156, sponsored by the Senate Finance Committee

SB 156 allowed the Fund to leverage real estate investments and increased asset allocation limit for stocks to 55% of the total market value of the Fund. SB 156 also created the “basket clause” that allows up to 5% of the Fund to be invested in alternative investments or to be applied to existing asset allocations to expand their limits.



Fund's historical asset allocation



ACCOUNTABILITY

TO ALASKANS, FOR ALASKANS



Benefits of proposed changes

- Investment flexibility
- Increased returns
- Increased diversification



Potential questions

- Too much risk?
- How will the Board of Trustees use this flexibility?
- Derivatives?



Fund's asset allocation and control bands

Domestic equities	37% +/- 7%
<u>International equities</u>	<u>16% +/- 5%</u>
Total equities	53% +/- 5%
Domestic bonds	32% +/- 7%
<u>Non-Dollar bonds</u>	<u>5% +/- 2%</u>
Total bonds	37% +/- 5%
Total real estate	10% +/- 2%

ACCOUNTABILITY

TO ALASKANS, FOR ALASKANS



Sec. 37.13.120. Investment responsibilities of the board.

(a) The prudent-investor rule shall be applied by the board in the management and investment of fund assets. The prudent-investor rule as applied to investments of the fund means that in making investments the board shall exercise the judgment and care under the circumstances then prevailing that an institutional investor of ordinary prudence, discretion, and intelligence exercises in the management of large investments entrusted to it not in regard to speculation but in regard to the permanent disposition of funds, considering probable safety of capital as well as probable income.

(b) The fund assets shall only be used for income-producing investments.

(c) The board shall maintain a reasonable diversification among investments unless under the circumstances it is clearly prudent not to do so.

(d) The board shall submit long-range and quarterly investment reports to the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee.

(e) The corporation may not borrow money or guarantee from principal of the fund the obligations of others except as provided in this subsection. With respect to real property investments of the fund, the corporation may, through an entity in which the investment is made, borrow money if the borrowing is without recourse to the corporation and the fund.

(f) The board may enter into and enforce all contracts necessary, convenient or desirable for purposes of the corporation.

(g) Subject to the limitations contained in this section, the board may invest fund assets at the competitive national market rates or prices that are applicable to each investment only in

(1) obligations of, or obligations insured by or guaranteed by, the United States or agencies or instrumentalities of the United States;

(2) obligations secured by reserves paid in by the United States or agencies or instrumentalities of the United States or obligations of corporations in which the United States is a shareholder or member;

(3) certificates of deposit and term deposits of United States domestic banks that are members of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and that may be readily sold in a secondary market at prices reflecting fair value or that are fully secured at all times as to payment of principal and interest as described in (m) of this section;

(4) certificates of deposit and term deposits of federally chartered savings and loan associations in Alaska that are fully secured at all times as to payments of principal and interest as described in (m) of this section;

(5) certificates of deposit and term deposits of mutual savings banks in Alaska that are fully secured at all times as to payments of principal and interest as described in (m) of this section;

(6) fixed-term certificates of indebtedness of federally insured credit unions in Alaska that are fully

secured at all times as to payments of principal and interest as described in (m) of this section;

(7) debt instruments that have been issued by domestic entities and that are rated investment grade, or debt instruments of comparable quality issued by nondomestic entities;

(8) short-term

(A) promissory notes that have been issued by domestic entities and that are rated investment grade;
or

(B) promissory notes of comparable quality issued by nondomestic entities, the interest on which may be payable in either United States dollars or nondomestic currencies;

(9) bankers' acceptances drawn on and accepted by United States banks each of which has a combined capital and surplus aggregating at least \$200,000,000;

(10) repurchase agreements, the securities underlying the agreements being any of the items in (1) - (6) of this subsection;

(11) the portions of business and industrial loans made under the Rural Development Act of 1972 that are guaranteed by the Farmers Home Administration;

(12) the guaranteed portion of Farmers Home Administration loans;

(13) notes secured by mortgages granting a first lien on residential real estate improved by completed buildings if the mortgages are insured by a private mortgage insurance corporation that is authorized to do business in this state and has combined capital and surplus aggregating at least \$20,000,000 and if loan-to-value ratios do not exceed 90 percent; however, mortgage insurance is not necessary for residential loans having a loan-to-value ratio of less than 70 percent and the minimum coverage of other residential loans shall be 10 percent for those having a loan-to-value ratio greater than 70 percent but less than 90 percent and 20 percent for those having a loan-to-value ratio of 90 percent;

(14) preferred and common stock and other equity interests in entities organized in the United States;

(15) certificates of deposit, term deposits, or bankers' acceptances, that are issued by a United States or nondomestic bank or trust company located outside of the United States and are denominated in United States or nondomestic currency if either (A) they may be readily sold in a secondary market at prices reflecting fair value, or (B) the issuing bank or trust company has capital, surplus, and retained earnings at the date of issue equaling at least \$500,000,000; investments made under this paragraph are not subject to the collateral requirements for domestic certificates under (m) of this section;

(16) equity interests in, and debt obligations secured by mortgages granting a first lien on, real estate if the real estate is located in the United States, is professionally managed, and is

(A) improved by completed and substantially rented buildings; or

(B) located within the market area of real property in which the fund holds an existing interest and is acquired

(i) for the purpose of creating or adding to a portfolio of similar properties; or

(ii) to retain or service the needs of existing tenants;

(17) securities of nondomestic governments and nondomestic government agencies, the principal of, or interest on, which is payable in either United States dollars or nondomestic currencies;

(18) securities of other nondomestic entities whose dividends, if any, may be payable in either United States dollars or nondomestic currencies;


(19) taxable municipal or state debt instruments that are rated investment grade;

(20) shares in a money market or short-term investment fund that has either collateral securities of a type authorized elsewhere in this section as acceptable collateral or securities of similar quality to those authorized elsewhere in this section as acceptable collateral;

(21) interests in a titleholding entity, real estate investment trust, real estate operating company, or other entity whose assets consist predominantly of

(A) equity interests in real property or debt obligations secured by mortgages granting a lien on real property, so long as the property is of a type in which the corporation is otherwise permitted to invest fund assets under this subsection; or

(B) interests in other entities in which the corporation is permitted to invest fund assets under this paragraph.

 (h) The board may enter into future contracts for the sale of investments purchased under (g) of this section, or for the sale of nondomestic currencies, only for the purpose of hedging an existing equivalent ownership position in these investments or as a means of implementing asset allocation strategies.


(i) The fund may at no time own more than five percent of the voting stock of a corporation unless the issuing corporation is an entity in which the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation is permitted to invest fund assets under (g)(21) of this section. Domestic stocks, except for bank and insurance company stocks and stocks of corporations in which the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation is permitted to invest fund assets under (g)(21) of this section, must be listed at the date of purchase on an exchange registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Except as otherwise permitted under (k) of this section, at the time of each investment, the aggregate investment of the fund in each stated category of investment may not exceed the following stated percentage of the total investments of the fund:

(1) mortgages under (g)(13) of this section - 15 percent;

(2) real estate investments under (g)(16) and (21) of this section - 15 percent;

(3) certificates of deposit, term deposit, or bankers' acceptances under (g)(15) of this section - 20 percent;

(4) interests in domestic and nondomestic entities under (g)(14) and (18) of this section - 55 percent.

 (j) The assets of the fund may not be used for the purchase of debt instruments of a corporation or other entity upon which any regular interest payment has been defaulted within five years before purchase, except debt instruments never in default but which have been outstanding for less than five years.

(k) The board shall establish and from time to time as necessary modify guidelines for the investment of the assets of the fund. Before adoption of any guidelines, the guidelines shall be reported to the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee for review and comment. Notwithstanding (g) of this section or the percentage investment limitations under (i) of this section and so long as doing so satisfies the prudent-investor rule under (a) of this section, the board may invest up to five percent of the total assets of the fund in either or a combination of the following:

(1) other types of investments not specifically listed in (g) of this section;

(2) categories of investment subject to the percentage investment limitations established in (i) of this section, even though investing additional assets in a category will cause the aggregate investment in the category to exceed the applicable percentage limitation.

(l) The board shall invest the assets of the fund in in-state investments to the extent in-state investments are available if the in-state investments

(1) have a risk level and expected yield comparable to alternate investment opportunities; and

(2) are included in the list of permissible investments in (g) of this section.

(m) Certificates of deposit or the equivalent instruments that are not of a quality that may be readily sold in a secondary market at prices reflecting fair value must be secured by a pledge as collateral of

(1) investments authorized for the fund under (g)(1), (2), (4), or (8) - (10) of this section;

(2) obligations of the state or instrumentalities of the state that are rated at least "A" by a major bond rating service and have a demonstrated secondary market;

(3) the guaranteed portion of Federal Small Business Administration loans;

(4) the portion of first lien real estate mortgages guaranteed by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs; or

(5) notes secured by mortgages granting a first lien on commercial or residential real estate improved by completed buildings if the originating financial institution retains at least 25 percent of the mortgage until maturity.

(n) Investments or obligations pledged as collateral under (m) of this section must have value at least equal to the face value of the certificates of deposit being secured. The board may require substitution of collateral in order to ensure continued satisfaction of the requirements set out in (m) of this section.

(o) For purposes of (g) of this section, "investment grade" means a Standard & Poor's Corporation rating BBB or better, or Moody's Investors Service, Inc., rating of Baa or better, including a rating with a "+" or "-" designation or other variations that occur within these ratings, or a comparable rating by

another nationally recognized rating organization.

(p) For purposes of applying the percentage investment limitations established in (i) of this section, if the board determines that a particular form of investment authorized under (g) of this section may appropriately be classified in more than one category of investment, it may elect the category to which that form of investment is assigned.

Sec. 37.13.130. Gains and losses. [Repealed, Sec. 13 ch 81 SLA 1982].

Repealed or Renumbered

Sec. 37.13.140. Income.

Net income of the fund includes income of the earnings reserve account established under AS 37.13.145. Net income of the fund shall be computed annually as of the last day of the fiscal year in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, excluding any unrealized gains or losses. Income available for distribution equals 21 percent of the net income of the fund for the last five fiscal years, including the fiscal year just ended, but may not exceed net income of the fund for the fiscal year just ended plus the balance in the earnings reserve account described in AS 37.13.145.

Sec. 37.13.145. Disposition of income.

(a) The earnings reserve account is established as a separate account in the fund. Income from the fund shall be deposited by the corporation into the account as soon as it is received. Money in the account shall be invested in investments authorized under AS 37.13.120.

(b) At the end of each fiscal year, the corporation shall transfer from the earnings reserve account to the dividend fund established under AS 43.23.045, 50 percent of the income available for distribution under AS 37.13.140.

(c) After the transfer under (b) of this section, the corporation shall transfer from the earnings reserve account to the principal of the fund an amount sufficient to offset the effect of inflation on principal of the fund during that fiscal year. The corporation shall calculate the amount to transfer to the principal under this subsection by

(1) computing the average of the monthly United States Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers for each of the two previous calendar years;

(2) computing the percentage change between the first and second calendar year average; and

(3) applying that rate to the value of the principal of the fund on the last day of the fiscal year just ended.

(d) Notwithstanding (b) of this section, income earned on money awarded in or received as a result of *State v. Amerada Hess, et al.*, 1JU-77-847 Civ. (Superior Court, First Judicial District), including settlement, summary judgment, or adjustment to a royalty-in-kind contract that is tied to the outcome of this case, or interest earned on the money, or on the earnings of the money shall be treated in the same manner as other income of the Alaska permanent fund, except that it is not available for distribution to the dividend fund, and shall be annually deposited into the principal of the Alaska permanent fund.

SB

327

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/13/04

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 2/19/04
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED IN TO OFFICE: 2/27/04

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 327

SB 327 ROLLERBLADERS REGULATED LIKE BICYCLES

"An Act relating to pedestrians using rollerblades, roller skates, and similar devices."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS SB 327 (STA)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New Title
House Bill:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
DPS	2/25/04			✓	1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	✓			
	✓			
			✓	
CHAIR:	X			

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB327-DPS-AST-2-25-04
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Public Safety
 Title Act Relating to Rollerblades RDU Alaska State Troopers
 Component AST Detachments

Sponsor Sen. Seekins
 Requester (S) State Affairs Component No. 2325

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: 0.0
 Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2005 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 327 will amended AS 28.05.011 (a) to require that the Commissioner of Public Safety develop regulations allowing pedestrians using wheeled adjuncts, such as rollerblades, roller skates, and rollerskis, to use roadways and vehicular ways or areas available for use by bicycles. These regulations must include requirements that these pedestrians obey traffic laws, limit activities to daylight hours, wear an appropriate helmet and bright clothing, proceed in single file except when passing, complete all passing maneuvers expeditiously, not use any electronic devices that can inhibit hearing, and stay to the far right and restrict movement when passing by a motor vehicle.

The department does not anticipate the need for additional resources if this bill passes. The required regulation project can be handled using existing resources.

Prepared by: Lt. Al Storey Phone 269-4532
 Division Alaska State Troopers Date/Time 2/25/04 10:50 AM
 Approved by: Commissioner William Tandeske Date 2/23/2004
 Agency Department of Public Safety

ALASKA STATE SENATE



Session:
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-2327
(907) 465-5241 Fax

Interim:
119 N. Cushman, Suite 201
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-8161
Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Ralph Seekins
District D

Senate Bill 327 Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to pedestrians using rollerblades, roller skates, and similar devices.”

For many years roller-skiers' legal use of public roadways was, more or less, taken for granted. This assumption was successfully challenged in the Fairbanks area last fall. Senate Bill 327 seeks to remedy this situation by specifically allowing the use of particular wheeled devices on those public roadways also available to bicyclists. It also recommends a set of safety standards for the use of these devices.

Alaska is home to some of the best international, national, collegiate, and junior cross-country skiers on the planet. In fact, seven of the ten Alaskans competing in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City were cross-country skiers. Imagine that. *Seven* Olympic cross-country skiers from such a small state as ours! This speaks volumes not only about our skiers' work ethic but also their training opportunities.

The natural preference of many of these world-class athletes would, no doubt, have Alaska covered in snow year-round. Since this is not a reasonable near-term possibility, the use of wheeled skis to imitate snow skiing has grown to become an effective training tool for use during non-winter months. What's more, Alaska is becoming well known nationally and internationally as a favored summer-time training site.

For these reasons, it is the intent of the proposed legislation to accommodate this seasonal use of some of our roadways. In fact, other northern locales — such as Norway, Sweden and Canada — have, for many years, supported the efforts of their cross-country athletes with similar provisions. Furthermore, the proposed legislation borrows heavily from Cross Country Canada's policy respecting the use of roller-skis on public roads.

Senate Bill 327 seeks to accommodate this important training activity by utilizing safe and reasonable methods for sharing roadway surfaces with motorized vehicles. It has garnered a groundswell of support throughout the cross-country community ranging from Alaska's Interior region to Southcentral to the Kenai Peninsula.

The 2006 Winter Olympic games are just around the corner. Would it be too much to expect seven (or more) of our cross-country skiers to make the trip to Torino, Italy? Of course not! In fact, a little courtesy and common sense combined with a small statutory revision can help make it happen.

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

Rollerskiers ticketed

By TIM MOWRY
Staff Writer

Saturday, October 04, 2003 - Life for Fairbanks rollerskiers took a sharp U-turn last weekend when Alaska State Troopers issued a ticket to a rollerskier for obstructing traffic one day and then ordered the University of Alaska Fairbanks cross-country ski team to halt its workout on the road the next.

While troopers say the two incidents are not related, they have opened a can of ice worms in Fairbanks, a big-time Nordic ski town where rollerskiers on roads are as common as bicycles in September and October before the snow flies.

"People are rollerskiing on roads all over the country and I've never heard of anything like this," said UAF ski coach Bill McDonnell, who came to Fairbanks from Vermont five years ago. "It's kind of disconcerting, especially when Fairbanks is such a skiing community."

It marked the first time anyone can remember a rollerskier getting a ticket.

"In the 19 years I've been rollerskiing in Fairbanks I've been passed numerous times by troopers or Fairbanks police and not once have I been stopped," said Ken Leary, a 45-year-old elementary school teacher who troopers ticketed on Saturday.

Troopers allege that Leary, who was rollerskiing along Chena Ridge Road with Mike Kramer, swung his ski pole at a passing car. That car just happened to be driven by Capt. Greg Tanner, detachment commander for Alaska State Troopers in Fairbanks, who was off duty at the time.

Leary claims Tanner came close to hitting him and the two exchanged heated words when Tanner pulled over after passing the two skiers.

While Tanner claims he identified himself as a trooper and asked the two skiers to stop when they went by, Leary and Kramer say they did not hear Tanner do so and figured he was just an angry motorist yelling at them.

After the confrontation, Tanner followed the two skiers for more than 20 minutes until an on-duty trooper, whom Tanner had called, showed up on Cripple Creek Road to issue Leary a ticket.

On Sunday, three troopers ordered 11 members of the Nanooks ski team to remove their rollerskis during a workout on Cripple Creek Road. Troopers said they had received complaints from local residents.

Seven of the skiers were given rides back to a school van and four others were told to walk back to the vehicle.

Cripple Creek Road is about 5 miles south of Fairbanks and has become a hot spot for rollerskiers because it is freshly paved. Troopers said Sunday's incident was prompted by calls from concerned residents in the area, not any kind of confrontation from the previous day.

"When somebody calls and says somebody is going to get killed, we respond to that," said trooper Gary Tellep, one of the three troopers who showed up Sunday. "The idea is to prevent people from getting hurt."

In essence, troopers are enforcing a law they said has been on the books for years but has been ignored. According to troopers, rollerskiing is illegal on a public road.

"The statute pretty clearly says you can't rollerski on the highway," said Tanner.

The law Tanner is referring to is Alaska Administrative Code AAC 02.395 (e), which says, "No person may operate a unicycle, coaster, roller skates or a similar device on the roadway."

A rollerski falls into the "similar device" category, Tanner said.

That's news to skiing folks like John Estle, the former UAF and U.S. Ski Team coach who has lived and coached in Fairbanks for three decades.

"This is a brand new interpretation (of the law)," Estle said. "People have been rollerskling in Fairbanks for more than 20 years without a problem. I don't understand why it's become such a problem all of a sudden."

The problem, as Tanner saw it on Saturday, was a safety issue.

"I wouldn't have stopped at all on Saturday if I didn't think they were creating a hazard," the trooper said. "My action was based on the fact that I saw two men side-by-side in the travel portion of the roadway in a no-passing zone and there was a curve."

Had Leary and Kramer stopped and talked to Tanner, the trooper said the situation probably would have been resolved without a ticket.

While troopers won't necessarily be on the lookout for rollerskiers, they will respond if they receive complaints or see rollerskiers in the road, Tanner said.

"We don't have a specific agenda to hunt out rollerskiers on the highway ... but if troopers come across that or if citizens call, we will follow up and take appropriate action," Tanner said. "Any time we see anyone operating on a road in an unsafe manner, we're going to take enforcement action."

Rollerskiers have been left alone for the last 20 years, Tanner said, "because, generally people have done it in a manner that hasn't drawn attention."

Tanner had some advice for rollerskiers.

"I would suggest they use bike paths or get the statute changed."

As far as McDonnell is concerned, the whole thing is "kind of silly." UAF skiers have been training on Cripple Creek Road for the last two years and while McDonnell admitted there are a few motorists who are not rollerskier-friendly, most of the residents are supportive and courteous of the team's efforts.

While he appreciated troopers' safety concern, McDonnell said he didn't appreciate the way they handled the situation. McDonnell described troopers as "downright nasty" when they confronted his skiers.

"When he stopped the skiers, he didn't say anything about why they were being stopped," McDonnell said of Tellep. "He was just yelling and ordering them off their skis."

"They couldn't believe it was happening," he said of the team. "For some of them it was pretty traumatic, being ordered into the back of a police car."

According to McDonnell, Tellep allegedly forced one skier, Bart Dengel, off the road by standing in the middle of the road and ordering him to stop. Dengel ended up crashing and bruising his face when he went off the road.

"He was told to stop and he couldn't stop and he went off the roadway," said Tellep, offering his version of the incident.

Tellep referred to rollerskiers as "guided missiles" and wondered why an "institution of higher learning" such as UAF would encourage such an activity.

"I think it's a little ridiculous; we've got skiers flying down hills on rollerskates when they can't stop and they're not wearing elbow or knee pads," Tellep said. "It's like telling somebody to go out and play football without a helmet. What happens if one of these kids gets hit by car, who's going to get sued?"

While McDonnell acknowledges that rollerskiing is dangerous, the risk is one assumed solely by the skier, he said.

"If someone rollerskis into the side of a car, it's not going to be the car that's going to have a problem," he said. "If you treat a rollerskier like another vehicle and wait for an opportunity to pass, where's the danger?"

Rollerskiing is no different than bicycling, according to those who do it.

"Sometimes you might take up a little extra room but there's nothing dangerous or unlawful about doing that," Kramer said. "Cars have to respect that other people are using the road."

With troopers taking a new, harder stance on rollerskiing, McDonnell said he doesn't know what to do at this point.

"We want to be able to rollerski and we would like to rollerski on Cripple Creek Road because it's the best spot," he said. "We don't want to cause any problems."

For now, the UAF ski team is traveling to North Pole to use the bike paths at Chena Lakes Recreation Area to train.

"To force us onto bike paths that are strewn with gravel so bad that you can barely go forward on them, it's an easy out for them, but it leaves us nowhere," said McDonnell.

Meanwhile, Kramer, a local attorney, said he is considering filing a lawsuit against troopers on Dengel's behalf, in part to get troopers to explain the sudden crackdown on rollerskiing.

"One benefit of that would be to have troopers explain their actions out there," he said.

As for Leary, he said he plans to fight his ticket and Kramer will represent him in court.

"I think the police force could be directed to more law enforcement than harassing rollerskiers," said Leary.

Staff writer Tim Mowry can be reached at 459-7587 or tmowry@newsminer.com.



13 AAC 02.395. Riding on bicycles and certain nonmotorized conveyances

(a) Repealed 6/28/79.

(b) No person operating a bicycle upon a highway may carry a person other than the operator, unless the bicycle is equipped with a seat for the passenger, except that an adult rider may carry a child securely attached to his person in a backpack or sling.

(c) No person operating a bicycle or other nonmotorized conveyance may attach, hold on by hand or otherwise secure the bicycle or conveyance or himself to another vehicle so as to be towed or pulled.

(d) A person operating a bicycle upon a highway shall maintain control of the bicycle and shall at all times keep at least one hand upon the handlebars of the bicycle.

(e) No person may operate a unicycle, coaster, roller skates, or a similar device on a roadway.

(f) This section does not apply upon a roadway closed to motorized vehicle traffic.

History: In effect before 7/28/59; am 12/15/61, Register 3; am 8/10/66, Register 22; am 12/31/69, Register 31; am 6/28/79, Register 70

Authority: AS 28.05.011

13 AAC 02.400. Riding bicycles on roadways and bicycle paths

(a) A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, and shall give way to the right as far as practicable to a motor vehicle proceeding in the same direction when the driver of the motor vehicle gives audible signal.

(b) Persons riding bicycles on a roadway may not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Persons riding bicycles two abreast may not impede traffic and, in a laned roadway, shall ride within the farthest right lane.

(c) When a shoulder of the highway is maintained in good condition, an operator of a bicycle shall use the shoulder of the roadway.

(d) A person operating a bicycle on a trail, path, sidewalk, or sidewalk area shall

(1) exercise care to avoid colliding with other persons or vehicles;

(2) give an audible signal before overtaking and passing a pedestrian; and

(3) yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian.

(e) Repealed 6/28/79.

(f) A person riding a bicycle intending to turn left shall, unless he dismounts and crosses as a pedestrian,

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Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks

Box 80111, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

Sent via fax: 907-465-5241

February 23, 2004

The Honorable Ralph Seekins
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, AK 99810-1182

SB 327 (rollerskiing)

Dear Senator Seekins:

The purpose of this letter is to thank you on behalf of the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks for introducing and supporting SB 327. Rollerskiing is important element of ski training for the national and international caliber cross-country skiers that reside in Alaska. The UAF and UAA skiers compete at the highest levels nationally, and need this important tool that is available in other states and just across the border in Canada. Roller skiing is a must for Olympian and Fairbanks resident Aelin Peterson if she wants to stay competitive and make the US Ski Team at the next Olympic Games. Over a dozen Fairbanks area high school and first year college age skiers will compete in early March at Arctic Winter Games in Alberta, Canada and at Junior Olympics (U.S. junior national championships) in Lake Placid, New York. Most if not all of these skiers use roller skis as a needed part of their training, and some have their own Olympic dreams. Moreover, as you know, there is a large cross-country skiing community in our state and many Alaskans get healthy, ski specific exercise in summer on roller skis.

SB 327 is good legislation not just because it makes clear that roller skiers and other individuals using similar devices can use the same roadways as bicyclists. SB 327 also provides clear safety requirements for roller skiers which also will benefit motorists. The Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks pledges to work with the college and high school ski teams, ski training groups and the ski community at large to make them fully aware of the requirements of this legislation, and any other relevant information on appropriate roller skiing safety and etiquette.

Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely Yours,

James Mery
President

roller skiing

Subject: roller skiing

Date: Mon, 23 Feb 2004 07:25:29 -0900

From: "Faryniarz, Kathy" <KFarynia@provak.org>

To: "'Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us'" <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Please support roller skiing on alaska's roads It is critical for training esp those athletes that represent us nationally and internationally Thanks
Kathy Faryniarz

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Subject: rollerski legislation SB327

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 13:54:53 -0900

From: "Kumin, Jon" <jkumin@kumin.alaska.com>

To: <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Sen Seekins:

In a word - THANK YOU! This is commonsense legislation we should all support.

Sincerely,

Jon Kumin
7921 Charlotte Place
Anchorage, AK 99502

Subject: Roller Ski legislation

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 19:09:03 EST

From: Jrjcsingleton@aol.com

To: Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Seekins

I am the President of Board of the Eagle River Nordic Ski Club and I would like to thank you for your support of bill 327. My son has earned the title of " skimeister" for being the top high school skier for the last two years. Because of this I am very much aware of the dedication and training requirements of the elite skiers of this state. In order for our skiers to be successful in national competition it is essential for them to train in the off season. A large component of this dry land training is on rollerskis. Bill 327 is important legislation for all the skiers of Alaska. Without it our skiers will have a distince training disadvantage over the skiers in the lower 48. Thanks to your bill our Alaskan skiers can contiune to excell in national and international competition.

Sincerely,

James C. Singleton D.D.S.

Subject: Roller Skiing Bill

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 15:12:23 -0900

From: "Sorensen, Steve P." <SorensenSP@alyeska-pipeline.com>

To: "Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us" <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Ralph,
Thanks for introducing the roller skiing bill. In my recreational life I have coached, raced, and instructed skiing for the last 30 years. Cross country skiing has kept a number of our kids "clean" while traversing the sometimes treacherous slopes of Junior High and High School peer pressure. My own kids, now mostly grown, have benefited from the discipline that cross country skiing has provided them and still provides them as high performing adults.

Thanks again!

Best Regards,
Steve Sorensen
Senior Structural Engineer
Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

Subject: SB327

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 19:28:13 -0900

From: Dave & Leila Dengel <dengel@alaska.net>

To: Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Seekins:

Thanks for introducing SB327. Our son Bart was one of the UAF skiers stopped last fall for roller skiing near Fairbanks. Bart has roller skied on Thompson Pass for several years with no problems.
Dave and Leila Dengel

Subject: Roller Skiing

Date: Sun, 15 Feb 2004 14:10:09 -0900

From: "Gooderham's" <brewers1@awcable.com>

To: <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Thank you for introducing the bill to allow roller skiing to be legal.

I have been skiing since age 12 and cannot understand why

we have to legislate common sense. Roller skiing is the best

way to stay in shape before the snow flies again.

Thanks again

Chad Gooderham
Fairbanks Alaska
brewers1@awcable.com

Subject: SB327

Date: Mon, 16 Feb 2004 10:44:12 -0900

From: "quinley" <quinley@alaska.net>

To: <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Senator Seekins,

Thank you for introducing SB327. We are a family of cross country skiers in Anchorage, and our teenage daughter has represented Alaska in national competition for three years. Rollerskiing is an important part of her year-round training, and an enjoyable, safe exercise for the rest of us. Your bill describes how it can be done safely, and we urge the Legislature to pass the bill this year. Thank you again for looking out for the interests of Alaska's athletes. Feel free to pass along this message of support to other legislators.

John Quinley

563-856

Subject: Roller skiing

Date: Thu, 19 Feb 2004 09:07:04 -0800 (PST)

From: Don Pendergrast <don_pendergrast@yahoo.com>

To: Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Senator Seekins,

Thank you for introducing legislation legalizing roller skiing in Alaska. We have a strong skiing community, UAF and UAA are national powers. Alaska has Olympians and Jr. Olympians in abundance. We consistently send cross skiers to national and international competitions.

It's hard to imagine not having enough snow in Alaska, but world class athletes need to train year round and roller skies allows this to happen.

Thank you again,

Don Pendergrast
1358 Spring Glade Rd
Fairbanks, AK 99709

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Subject: Senate Bill 327

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 10:34:45 -0900

From: "Bert Boyer" <ffbbb@uaf.edu>

To: <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Senator Seekins,

I want to personally thank you for introducing Senate Bill 327.

I have been roller skiing in Fairbanks for the last 6-8 years and have found it to be an extremely healthful and enjoyable way to stay fit in the summer. I have had one bad experience with an angry motorist in the summer of 2002, and interestingly, when I called the troopers, they supported my right to roller ski on the road. Thus, I was surprised to see the article in the News Miner last fall that indicated it was illegal.

It is clearly time to introduce a bill to make roller skiing legal in Alaska and I applaud your efforts.

Many thanks!

Bert

Bert Boyer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Molecular Biology
Institute of Arctic Biology
Center for Alaska Native Health Research
311 Irving I Bldg.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775
Phone - 907-474-7733
Fax - 907-474-6967 or -5700
bert.boyer@uaf.edu
http://www.iab.uaf.edu/~bert_boyer
<http://www.alaska.edu/canhr/>

Thank you for your support of Skiers of Alaska

Subject: Thank you for your support of Skiers of Alaska

Date: Thu, 19 Feb 2004 15:02:47 -0900

From: "Kent Karns" <kkarns@hswarehouse.com>

To: <Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us>

Senator Seekins,

Thanks for introducing the bill allowing roller skiing. You have drafted a bill that allows for safe use of the roads for serious skiers, including high school and college athletes from Alaska that continue on the road to national, international and Olympic ski competitions.

Please keep up the good work in Juneau.

Yours,

R. Kent Karns
H&S Warehouse, Inc.
Treasurer

Subject: FW: Legislation letter

Date: Fri, 20 Feb 2004 09:30:18 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian E. Hove" <Brian_Hove@Legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Sigrid Aas [mailto:sigrid-a@online.no]

Sent: Friday, February 20, 2004 1:13 AM

To: Bill.McDonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: Legislation letter

Here is the letter for the rollerskiing proposition. Feel free to correct any spellings or errors in it. I didn't know who to adress it for either, or what to put on the heading.

To Whom it Might Concern

Rollerskiing Legislation

Fairbanks is a town filled with cross country skiers. The two high schools in town have cross country ski teams and UAF has a nordic skiing program. In addition to that, The Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks has numerous members and they offer activities to children and people of all ages and abilities. In the summer time, nordic skiers with ambitions have to train well in order to become better at skiing. Rollerskiing plays a great part in this, and it is basically a way to nordic ski on wheels.

This fall rollerskiing became a hot issue in Fairbanks after me and some UAF skiers got transported by the Troopers after one of our rollerski practises. I can understand that drivers sometimes get anxious and angry after they encounter rollerskiers on the road. Sometimes the road just isn't wide enough to safely pass in turns and curves. With a little cooperation between the rollerskier and the driver, however, it should be perfectly safe to pass in most cases. This is where the problem starts. Sometimes rollerskiers are not being considerative enough of cars coming, and sometimes car drivers are not being considerate enough on behalf of the rollerskiers. However, as far as I know (judging by my own experiences and by training with the UAF team) rollerskiers largely do their best to avvoid dangerous situations and conflicts. After all, it is most likely the rollerskier, and not the car driver who would be left with broken bones after a potential accident. Believe me, I do my uttermost to avoid that from ever happening, and I think that goes for other rollerskiers as well.

Nordic skiers also bike a lot for training in the summer and fall. During many of my bike rides, I have been harrassed by car drivers in the same fashion as while rollerskiing, while safely keeping within the white line on the road shoulder. Now, many drivers apparently think that biking is also dangerous on the roads. Should we forbid biking as well? I think that many drivers are starting to believe that the roads should be a domaine for cars only, so that it is more permissible to drive faster, more recklessly, and without having to worry about hitting a rollerskier, biker or, even, a walking person. Is this right? Should everybody adjust their exercising and commuting habits so that drivers can drive without taking any considerations?

After the insident where UAF skiers were transported with Troopers from Pearl Creek, one of the troopers talked about how the rollerskiing on that road was going to kill someone one day since people were speeding and drunk driving there!! I think that is a fundamentally wrong way of looking at it, since that actually excuses the fact that people are drunk driving and speeding on that road. If the troopers already knew that, perhaps they should focus more on catching those drunk drivers and speeding cars instead of jumping in front of a rollerskier coming down a hill during a workout. (That insident represent the only accident we had on the UAF team so far, and ironically it was only because the Trooper was trying to "prevent" an accident).

All in all, I think that to forbid rollerskiers on the road will be the beginning of somthing that in the long run will make for more dangerous roads and more reckless driving. More resources should be delegated to the real problems as far as road safety, such as drunk driving and speed control.

Sincerely,
Sigrid Aas
UAF Ski Team

Subject: FW: In Support of Roller-Skiing

Date: Wed, 18 Feb 2004 09:15:46 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Wayne Watson [mailto:watson@xyz.net]

Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2004 7:27 AM

To: Bill Mcdonnell

Subject: In Support of Roller-Skiing

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been involved with Cross-country skiing in Alaska for 25 years and President of the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club in the Homer area for the past ten years. I am the current President of KNSC. KNSC has a membership of about 250 members and grooms and manages about 50 kilometers of trails in the Homer area. I am an avid cross-country skier and off-season roller-skier. My wife and I are the proud parents of a 3 time Junior Olympian who also skied in college at the University of Nevada. Off-season roller-skiing was a key element in his training program as a Junior and in college. We also enjoy roller-skiing but are very limited in places we can legally participate in the sport. We strongly believe Nordic skiing is a very healthy, lifelong sport and roller-skiing is part of that pasttime. To that end I'd like to go on record in support of State Senator Ralph Seekins of Fairbanks introduction of a bill to the legislature that will specifically amend the existing statutes to make roller-skiing legal in the state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Wayne Watson

President-Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

PO Box 884

Homer, AK 99603

Subject: FW: rollerskiing

Date: Wed, 18 Feb 2004 09:17:19 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: ida martin [mailto:xc_ski_frog@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 5:08 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: rollerskiing

My name is Ida Martin, I am from Homer Alaska and I am an active cross country skier from Alaska. I am away at college on a skiing scholarship in Gunnison Colorado, I return to Alaska for the summer to work and train for skiing. Rollerskiing is a big part of my summer training, and if I was not able to rollerskiing it would make it hard for me and many other skiers to return to Alaska for training. Also this would affect UAA's and UAF's ski teams, many high schools, and many club teams. Alaska has prouded its self on having a great team at Junior team at the Juniorr Olympics. All over the nation people know that Alaska has the skiers to beat. the Two times I traveled to the Juniorr Olympics as part of thAlaskaka team, wdominateded thcomposition. Puttingng 3 to 7 people in the top team, wining many of the age class relay , and having many of our athletes named Juniorr Olympic champions. As a team we won the team title oy 500 points or more.

University Alaska Anchorage is doing really well on the college NCAA circuit right now in 2004. Sara Handson won her first westerndivisionncollegiatet title at the the Utah races. She uses roller skiing as summer training.

Katie Ronse of the Alaska Winter Stars and the Service High school ski team, was named to the world Junior team of US skiers to go over to Europe and compitcompete; I trained with her over last summer and she was an avide avidroller skier; She used roller skiing to get in shape, and she has gotten to were she is by using summer training, mostly roller skiing.

Alaska has made a name in the US and the world through the skiers that have come out of Alaska. Many if not all skiers use roller skiing as summer training. It is the most accuaccuratem of simulating skiing when a skier can't get on snow.

People use the roads for training with bikes, on foot, and rollroller skiessp; If we allowlowlerskiing to be band were will it stop. Who is to say that bikes won't be band, or you will get a ticket for running on a road that has been part of your traing for years. Alaska is know for its skiers, why short them on all opportunities to get as far as they can. It is like asking a person to work with a handicap that is not natural, one that has been put on them by someone.

I want to know why this is even an issue right now. PeopPeoplee been roller skiing in Alaska for many years. who wants to get rid of roller skiing, people who don't understand the sport of skiing. I feel that I try to be fair when I pass jujudgmentr I keep an open mind. I think that people should also when it comes to the issue of roller skiing.

FW: rollerskiing

I am sstronglyin favor of keeping roller skiing legal in Alaska, as both a citizen and an athlete.

I can be reached at 970-943-2760 or xc_ski_frog@yahoo.com and CPO Box 5477 Gunnison, Co 81231

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Subject: FW: In Support of Roller-skiing
Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 12:37:16 -0900
From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>
To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Debbie & Charlie [mailto:pooregib@xyz.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 12:22 PM
To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu
Subject: In Support of Roller-skiing

Yes, I support roller-skiing in Alaska. We are an outdoors type of people and should have all means of exercise and recreation encouraged. With the unpredictable snow conditions it makes sense that roller-skiing be available for people to continue training and exercising. Roller-skiing is a life-long exercise and helps combat cabin fever and SAD, which many Alaskans are familiar with. Please do all you can to change the legislation in support of roller-skiing.

Thank you. Sincerely, Deborah Poore

Homer, Alaska

Subject: FW: roller-skiing in Alaska

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 08:16:28 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Jay Laxson [mailto:jlaxson1@corecom.net]

Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2004 7:32 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: roller-skiing in Alaska

Dear Senator Ralph Seekins

Thank you for introducing a bill to the legislature that will amend the existing statutes to make roller-skiing legal in the state of Alaska. I

didn't appreciate that this was not legal currently. I have been skiing with the Alaska Pacific University ski team for the past 2 years and, as you can appreciate, this is a valuable addition to the road and mountain

biking, running, hill-bounding and general strength work-outs that we do. Roller-skiing is critical to developing techniques, balance, and strength specific to cross country ski racing.

Road courtesy and safety are of paramount importance in fostering community support for roller-skiing on the paved public roads. Since there was a "major problem" with regards to roller-skiing in Fairbanks, the Anchorage nordic skiing community has become aware of the need to be

responsible when sharing the roads with automobile traffic. Hopefully the lessons learned will make everyone more aware of their skiing etiquette.

Sincerely,

Jay Laxson
11901 Woodbourne Cir
Anchorage, AK 99516
907 345-3639
jlaxson1@corecom.net

Subject: FW: In Support of Roller-skiing

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 08:15:46 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Nathan Wolfe [mailto:nate_the_great_skiier@hotmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2004 5:37 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In Support of Roller-skiing

Hello,

I am Nathan Wolfe, a junior at East High School. I have skied pretty much all my life and love the sport. I train avidly, as do many of my friends. This training includes running, biking, strength, and most importantly, roller-skiing. It is the closest way to mimic and perfect skiing technique and muscles without actually skiing on snow. Without roller-skiing the hard core trainers who would like to make skiing their life, or at least for their college career, and represent Alaska as we accomplish these dreams, lose a very important factor in getting there. Please consider what you are doing when you make roller-skiing illegal on public roads, and question if it really is needed. The majority of skiers are considerate when roller skiing and stay on the far side of the road, farthest from the cars. Please don't jeopardize the dreams of so many highschool skiers. Thank you for your time.

Nathan wolfe, 3336 Upland Dr., Anchorage Ak, 99504

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FW: in support of roller-skiing

Subject: FW: in support of roller-skiing
Date: Thu, 12 Feb 2004 16:58:22 -0900
From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>
To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

I will be making a binder full of the hard copies of all the letters I receive.

Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: quinley [mailto:quinley@alaska.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2004 4:39 PM
To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu
Subject: in support of roller-skiing

February 12, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased Senator Seekins is proposing to amend the existing statutes to make roller-skiing legal in the state of Alaska.

As the mother of two lifelong cross-country skiers (ages 13 and 16), I know the importance of year-round training. I also know nothing comes closer to emulating cross-country skiing than roller-skiing.

Just as I have taught my children to be courteous and accommodating when using sidewalks, hiking trails, biking trails, and other public corridors, I have taught them to be respectful when roller-skiing on public roads. In addition, their coaches have taught them to roller-ski single file and to obey the same laws that apply to bicyclists using public roads. In fact, when one of their coaches noticed two athletes roller-skiing side-by-side, he stopped them, told them to take off their roller-skis, had them walk back to the van and made them wait out the practice. This is how seriously the cross-country ski community regards this form of training, and the lengths to which they will go to preserve it.

I believe the majority of roller-skiers are at least as courteous and law-abiding as the motorized users with whom they share the public roads. I am hopeful Mr. Seekins' commonsense proposal meets with approval.

Sincerely,

Constance K Quinley
1812 Bowdoin Circle
Anchorage, AK 99508
(907) 563-8569

Subject: FW: in support of rollerskiing

Date: Fri, 13 Feb 2004 13:07:00 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Sally Johnson [<mailto:salgalpal11@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, February 13, 2004 12:57 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: in support of rollerskiing

I have cross county skied in Alaska for most of my life. I began with junior nordic and went on to high school racing, racing at junior nationals, and now college ski racing. Alaska is a wonderful place to ski; we have great ski trails, a supportive ski community, and fairly reliable snow.

These factors and others have allowed Alaskans to excel at nordic skiing, our Junior team has won Nationals countless times and we have produced some of the nation's best skiers. We generally have good snow through the winter months, allowing Alaskan skiers quality training, but this is not so in the summer. The majority of my summer trianing is rollerskiing. If Alaskan nordic skiers were unable to rollerski, they would be at a great disadvantage to many of their competitors living elsewhere. Please amend the current statutes and allow rollerskiing to be legal in Alaska.

Thanks,

Sally Johnson

1334 Bannister Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99508

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Subject: FW: support of roller skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 10:15:54 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Kiki Abrahamson [<mailto:kabrahamson@kpbsd.k12.ak.us>]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 10:07 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: support of roller skiing

I support making roller skiing legal.

My 15 year old daughter won gold and silver medals in international biathlon competition in Sweden, but training in Alaska has been problematic. She trained in Lake Placid and with the Minnesota team and with them learned how to roller ski and develop a year round training plan. Although this worked for several years, it became too expensive for our family. Now she could rollerski to maintain her training here, but not if it is illegal.

That roller skiing is illegal seems completely ludicrous to me. We are constantly faced with challenges to help young people make wise activity choices and encourage everyone to keep up exercising for health as a life long pursuit. Then why would there be an ordinance against an activity that promotes a healthy activity? What is the message lawmakers are sending out... Sorry, you can't roller ski so why don't you go hang out at the beach with your friends and smoke some pot... Or, why don't you just sit down in front of the TV, drink a few beers and catch a game or two. If you're lucky you may even get a peek at Janet Jackson's breast.

Kiki Abrahamson

Subject: FW: rollski

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 10:02:06 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: tigerdemers@att.net [mailto:tigerdemers@att.net]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 9:59 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: rollski

fyi

Judy & Tiger E. Demers
P.O. Box 991
26975 Williwa St.
Kasilof AK 99610 0991
tigerdemers@att.net
907-283-5133

February 17, 2004

Bill McDonnell
University of Alaska Fairbanks
P.O. Box 757440
Fairbanks Alaska 99775

Dear Mr. McDonnell,
The purpose of this letter is to express our support for the proposed roller-ski legislation.

We are residents of Kasilof , a small rural community with no public recreational facilities. No sidewalks, no bike paths, and hardly any paved roads other than the Sterling Highway and Kalifornski Beach Road. The one thing that we like to do is either bicycle and or roller ski on Coho Loop Road which has a low volume of local traffic. In the past, the state police have observed us roller skiing and for what ever reason have never talked to us about any inrractions.

I am 64 years old and an ex Olympic athlete, the 1964 Nordic Winter Olympic Team at Innsbruck Austria. One other to consider is our current Olympian and World Cup Biathlon competitor , Jay Hakkinen of Kasilof. And, there are others who will be positively affected by this legislation.

Thank you for your kind attention. If any additional information is desired, we will make every effort to meet your request.
Au Revoir Mon Ami,
Tiger Demers

--
Au Revoir Mon Ami
Tiger & Judy Demers
P.O.Box 991
26975 Williwa St.
Kasilof AK 99610
907-283-5133

Subject: FW: Groseclose support for rollerskiing bill w/address

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:53:08 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Bob [mailto:bob@alaskalaw.com]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 10:17 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: RE: Groseclose support for rollerskiing bill w/address

Bill, I overlooked my address, below.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bob [mailto:bob@alaskalaw.com]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 9:56 AM

To: 'bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu'

Subject: Groseclose support for rollerskiing bill

Bill,

Add my name to those supporting legislation which would modify the existing

statute/regulation so as to tolerate and accommodate roller skiing.

Cross-country skiing is to Alaska as surfing is to California. The law

should reasonably accommodate this Alaskan pastime. Roller skiing is an

off-season, ski-training activity. Certain roadways can accommodate the

sharing of roller-skiing with other users. A total ban effectively

eliminates off-season cross-country ski training. The law should be

relaxed

to allow roller-skiing when traffic safety is not unreasonably

comprised.

There are many roadways in the state where roller-skiers have for many

years

peacefully coexisted safely and in harmony with other users. The law

should

accommodate such usage. The total ban should be modified.

Bob Groseclose

520 Marshall Drive

Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

907/457-5498

FW: I support Roller Skiing!

Subject: FW: I support Roller Skiing!

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:52:11 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "'Brian Hove'" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: The Harrisons [mailto:hhhomer@alaska.net]

Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2004 3:54 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: I support Roller Skiing!

My name is Brian Harrison and I am in favor of keeping roller skiing legal. As a Homer resident we are often the victims of unseasonably warm winter weather. The ability to roller ski makes training less of an issue due to poor snow conditions. It also makes training possible year round. My daughters both have been on the school cross country ski teams. Having this avenue open to them to improve their skills is invaluable. When the national spot light is on obesity in our population, why would anyone take away another method of all important exercise. I can be reached at 1065 Larkspur Ct., Homer Ak. 99603, or 907-235-8922 should you have questions. Thank you for taking the time to consider this very important issue.

Brian Harrison

Subject: FW: In Sjuupport of Roller Skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:51:06 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: spirit1@ptialaska.net [mailto:spirit1@ptialaska.net]

Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2004 9:59 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In Sjuupport of Roller Skiing

Dear Bill,

I am the parent of several former high school cross country skiers and I am

a skier myself. I am very much in favor of our skiers at all levels having

the option of training on roller skis when there is no snow. Rather than

being annoyed by the skiers using the road, I am always impressed at their

dedication to their sport. While I would be happy to have wider

shoulders on our roads for the use of all sports including bicycles and running strollers, I am more than willing to slow down for others using the roads.

I am in support of roller skiing on the roads; I am in fact in support of

use of our roads for non-motorized travel as well. Thank you.

Gail Davidson
1547 Chena Ridge Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
(907) 479-7127

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<http://mail2web.com/> .

Subject: FW: Re: SB 327-Rollerskiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:50:14 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Brennan Walsh [mailto:bwalsh01@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 3:54 PM

To: Bill.McDonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: FW: Re: SB 327-Rollerskiing

>From: Senator French <senator_hollis_french@legis.state.ak.us>

>To: Brennan Walsh <bwalsh01@hotmail.com>

>Subject: Re: SB 327-Rollerskiing

>Date: Mon, 16 Feb 2004 13:58:56 -0900

>

>Dear Brennan,

>Thank you for your letter regarding SB 327. I will look this bill over
>carefully. It certainly seems like a good idea. I am an avid
recreational

>skier, and I am certainly supportive of any legislation that makes it
>easier for

>Alaskans to get out and exercise!

>Best of luck in your endeavors,

>Hollis French

>

>

>Brennan Walsh wrote:

>

> > Dear Sen. Hollis,

> >

> > My name is Brennan Walsh and I am an active cross country skier in
>Anchorage

> > and on the NCAA college circuit. I competed for West High Team
Alaska,

>the

> > US Junior Biathlon Team, and now I race for the University of
Nevada,

>Reno.

> > I am writing to ask for your support to pass SB 237. The bill allows
the

>use

> > of Rollerskiing on roadways. As any serious skier will tell you, the
> > importance of rollerskiing in the summer outweighs any other type
of

> > training activity an athlete can do. I can say first hand that I
would

>not

> > have been able to go as far as I have, without the use of summer

> > rollerskiing. Please vote in favor of this bill for myself, the
skiing

> > community of our district, and for all the similar athletes around
the

> > state. Thank you for your time.

> >

> > Brennan Walsh

> >

> > (school address)

> > 905 Washington St.
> > Reno, NV, 89503
> >
> > (Alaska address)
> > 1901 Belair
> > Anchorage, AK 99517
> >
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>
>--
>Sen. Hollis French
>State Capitol, Room 504
>Juneau, AK 99801
>toll free (866) 465-3892
>
>visit my website at <http://www.akdemocrats.org>
>
>

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Accelerator. <http://click.atdmt.com/AVE/go/onm00200361ave/direct/01/>

Subject: FW: Roller-skiing on Public Right of Ways

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:47:02 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Karen Mannix [mailto:karen_mannix@yahoo.com]

Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2004 7:20 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: Roller-skiing on Public Right of Ways

My name is Karen Mannix. I am a 24-year resident of Talkeetna, Alaska, co-founder of Denali Junior Nordic ski Club and the Su Valley High School Cross Country Ski Coach for the past 6 seasons. I am writing in support of the legislative effort to allow roller-skiing on public roads. Although I would agree that there is a degree of risk involved in roller-skiing on roads in Alaska, I see no great difference between roller-skiing and bicycling, and I highly doubt there could be legal merit for determining one use more unsafe than the other.

However, my primary concerns for legislating AGAINST roller-skiing are these: 1) Our state has produced some of the best Nordic skiers in the country, in part because these athletes can summer train on roller-skis. 2) There are inadequate bike path systems to allow for roller-skiing. A perfect example is in the Talkeetna area, where a person can't travel from point A to point B anywhere in the area unless he/she is on a public road, the railroad, or in the woods! Several years ago, a side-road off the Talkeetna Spur (the Comsat) was freshly paved and allowed the only roller-skiable surface within a 60-mile radius. The Spur itself was pitted, pot-holed, and cracked. Last summer a bike path was constructed and may finally be used, but the Comsat is still able to provide variety and can be accessed by some residents without having to drive there. True, it might be safer to roller-ski solely on the bike path, BUT there is no legislation which denies anyone the right to ride a bike on the Comsat, and having done both, I personally see no difference between the two. 3) Bicycling and roller-skiing are very similar activities; many people commute, train, recreate using either/or or both forms of transportation...if one legislates against one, the other should follow. However, our State doesn't feel compelled to disallow bicycles on the busy city streets of Anchorage; how does roller-skiing on less busy public right-of-ways differ? 4) Compelling roller-skiers to use bike paths will seriously disable the use of good, paved training areas for serious nordic skiers. This would likewise be true for the serious bicyclist, and I would oppose any legislation which would hamper either activity.

We currently have a helmet law which mandates helmet use on motorcycles and snow machines. I maintain that any road user (motor vehicle or other) needs to be adequately prepared for safety; when I summer coach nordic athletes, they are required to wear helmets, but they are also allowed to ski on the sides of paved roads...otherwise, our Nordic ship would have been sunk years ago!

When our legislators begin to tackle public use "restrictions" on public right-of-ways, it is very important to be consistent. I don't see how it is possible for one to tell a resident of a neighborhood that they can bike to their friend's house but they can't roller-ski (or in-line skate, for that matter). I also feel that if the State of Alaska were really paying attention to types of recreation on public right-of-ways, it would more wisely use its time citing the many young snow-machiners, kids under 16 years old, without any type of driving permit, who spend hours snow-machining at high speeds on (non-motorized) bike paths all over Alaska in winter. How many fatalities have we seen related to snow machine use vs roller-skiing?

As a skier, roller-skier, and coach, I feel it is necessary to allow roller-skiing activity on roads unless the State is willing to build a "non-motorized paved path" adjacent to each road. Whether training or commuting, roller-skiing should be allowed. I would suggest we tackle the snow machine issue (on non-motorized bike paths in winter) before attempting to legislate against something much more "healthy" and much less potentially injurious to others or self (roller-skiing on roads in summer).

Karen Mannix

PO Box 284

Talkeetna, Ak. 99676

907-733-2615

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FW: in support of roller-skiing

Subject: FW: in support of roller-skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:44:10 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Elizabeth Quinley [mailto:queen_elizabeth05@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, February 13, 2004 5:26 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: in support of roller-skiing

February 12, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

As an avid skier for both APUNSC and East Anchorage High School, I am happy that Senator Seekins is proposing to make roller-skiing legal. Rollerskiing is very important to the nordic skiing community, and ensuring its legality is a good idea. To excel in nordic skiing, roller-skiing is crucial. It provides year-round training and a motion very similar to skiing on snow.

When roller-skiing, my team and I are careful and accomodating to oncoming traffic as well as pedestrians. Our coaches are adamant about skiing single file and getting to the side of the road when cars need to get by. We wear helmets, stay on the correct side of the road, and try hard not to obstruct traffic. We follow the rules just as bike-riders and pedestrians do, and would greatly appreciate it if rollerskiing was recognized as legal.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth O. Quinley

1812 Bowdoin Circle

Anchorage, AK 99508

(907) 563-8569

queen_elizabeth05@hotmail.com

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Subject: FW: In Support of Roller Skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:42:30 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim Stallard [mailto:fntws@uaf.edu]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 10:01 AM

To: Bill McDonnell (E-mail)

Subject: In Support of Roller Skiing

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for legislation that legalizes roller skiing on Alaska's roads. Nordic skiing is a sport in which our Alaskan athletes are competitive at an international level. While we are blessed with one of the longest ski seasons anywhere, our nordic athletes need to train year round to stay competitive.

Our public roads offer the only easily accessible place where Alaska's nordic athletes can train in the summer - so I urge you to make this possible.

Thank you,

Tim Stallard
1001 Mia St.
Fairbanks, AK 99712
(907) 452-8980

Tim Stallard < tim.stallard > Outdoor Adventures coordinator University of Alaska Fairbanks Explore Alaska: www.uaf.edu/outdoor

Subject: FW: In Support of Roller Skiing Legislation

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:42:11 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Ron Klein [mailto:xcsg@gci.net]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 6:46 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In Support of Roller Skiing Legislation

Bill,

Thank you for working with Senator Seekins to support amending state statutes to make roller skiing legal. I was shocked to learn last summer that roller skiing was illegal. Skiing is a way of life in Anchorage. Roller skiing is an essential activity for maintaining ski conditioning and training for winter races. I have skied with APUN Nordic in the past and roller skiing has been an essential component of the training plan. Alaska has been a significant contributor to the US National Ski and Biathlon Teams and the ability for Alaskan team members to roller ski during the off season is essential to maintaining the competitive edge.

Ron Klein

3316 Knik Ave

Anchorage, AK 99517

Subject: FW: In Support of Roller-Skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:40:53 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Martins [mailto:tadida@xyz.net]

Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2004 12:01 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In Support of Roller-Skiing

Dear Committee Members:

We are a cross-country ski family in Homer and roller skiing is a big part of our summer fun. Larry Martin, my husband, is a former US Olympic team member. He grew up in Homer. Our daughter Ida Martin is a collegiate cross-country skier in Colorado. Our son is a member of the Homer High School ski team. A favorite summer workout for Larry and Ida is to roller ski up Friz Creek Hill east of Homer. They also enjoy roller skiing up East Hill and up West Hill and across Skyline Drive. The Homer High School Ski Team also uses roller skis in these areas as a great pre-season training method.

My job in these workouts is to meet the roller skiers at the tops of the hills and give them a ride home. These are joyous, vigorous workouts. We're all four very much in favor of the use of roller skis. Legislation against such an activity is a vote in favor of atrophy and laziness and the use of automobiles instead of the human body!!!

Sincerely,

Linda Martin, for Larry, Ida and Tad

364 Rangeview

Homer, AK 99603

(907) 235-6758

Subject: FW: In Support of Roller-Skiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:39:01 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Frode Lillefjell [<mailto:skitur@alaskapacific.edu>]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 10:53 AM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In Support of Roller-Skiing

Anchorage and Alaska has a very large cross- country skiing community that rely on roller-skiing on public roads as one of the main forms of specific training during the summer and fall. If roller-skiing were to be banned from public roads, many high level skiers training would be compromised and Alaskans would be at a clear disadvantage compared to skiers from a lot of other states.

For us skiers this is a serious problem, that need to be addressed. One option that we skier would like to have, in addition to public road, is trails made especially for roller- skiing, however these trails cost a lot of money to build and as of today we have none. If we had one good roller-ski trail in Anchorage and Fairbanks respectively it would take a lot of the pressure of the public roads and only the highest level skiers would still need to use the roads some. Until then we hope we can continue to use public roads for our training in a safe and cooperative manner with other people on the roads.

Sincerely,

Frode Lillefjell

Assistant Coach Alaska Pacific University Nordic Ski Center

4101 University Drive Anchorage, AK 99508

E-mail: Skitur@alaskapacific.edu

Subject: FW: In support of rollerskiing

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 08:37:51 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "'Brian Hove'" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Sugai [mailto:fnsfs@uaf.edu]

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 7:54 PM

To: bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu

Subject: In support of rollerskiing

373 Droz Drive
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
16 February 2004

Dear Honorable Senators,

This letter is written in support of SB 327 allowing roller skiers to legally use public roadways as bicycles currently do. Like many Nordic skiers both recreational and competitive, I was attracted to Fairbanks because of the well-groomed crosscountry ski trails and long on-snow season for pursuing our passion. I've been rollerskiing on Fairbanks roadways since 1987 and in those many years, State troopers have never stopped me as I've rollerskied on the Parks Highway, Sheep Creek, Murphy Dome, Rosie Creek, or Goldstream Roads. Although recently most of my rollerskiing has either been done alone or with one or two others, I have previously participated in roller ski clinics and training groups. Like most rollerskiers, I am considerate of vehicular traffic and move as far right as feasible and doublepole rather than skate when being passed by vehicles, bicycles, or other rollerskiers.

Currently, I'm in my tenth season coaching a Masters (over 40 year old) Men's ski training group. We meet weekly from November through April and the skiers are Fairbanks area residents ranging from University faculty and administrators to a local bar tender. Usually 12 to 15 of these skiers complete the annual Sonot Kkaazoot 50 km ski race in late March with several others doing the shorter 20 km version. While many of this group, myself included, used to be runners in the "dryland" season, rollerskiing allows us to participate in non-impact activity that has similar physical demands to Nordic skiing. Like the younger and more elite skiers who are striving to make University and Olympic teams, rollerskiing is an important activity for Masters skiers during our 6 months without snow. Masters skiers contribute not only to our local economy but also volunteer countless hours to the infrastructure that makes Fairbanks attractive to national and international Nordic skiers for training in the fall, and to national race organizing committees as a fantastic venue for events like the 2003 Junior Olympics held at the Birch Hill Recreation Area. The future of Nordic skiing in Fairbanks and the state of Alaska would definitely be brighter if local athletes of all ages could pursue their sport legally on roadways available to bicycles.

Thank you for your support in helping the greater Alaskan ski community.

Warm regards,

FW: In support of rollerskiing

Susan Sugai, Ph.D.

Associate Director, Alaska Sea Grant College Program

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Fairbanks, AK 99775-5040

(907) 474-6840; fax (907) 474-6285

<http://www.uaf.edu/seagrant/staff/sugai.html>

<http://www.arctic.gov/ssugai.htm>

Subject: FW: Senate Bill 327

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 2004 11:00:46 -0900

From: "bill mcdonnell" <bill.mcdonnell@uaf.edu>

To: "Brian Hove" <Brian_Hove@legis.state.ak.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: Bert Boyer [mailto:ffbhb@uaf.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2004 10:35 AM

To: Senator_Ralph_Seekins@legis.state.ak.us

Subject: Senate Bill 327

Dear Senator Seekins,

I want to personally thank you for introducing Senate Bill 327.

I have been roller skiing in Fairbanks for the last 6-8 years and have found it to be an extremely healthful and enjoyable way to stay fit in the summer. I have had one bad experience with an angry motorist in the summer of 2002, and interestingly, when I called the troopers, they supported my right to roller ski on the road. Thus, I was surprised to see the article in the News Miner last fall that indicated it was illegal.

It is clearly time to introduce a bill to make roller skiing legal in Alaska and I applaud your efforts.

Many thanks!

Bert

Bert Boyer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Molecular Biology
Institute of Arctic Biology
Center for Alaska Native Health Research
311 Irving I Bldg.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775
Phone - 907-474-7733
Fax - 907-474-6967 or -5700
bert.boyer@uaf.edu
http://www.iab.uaf.edu/~bert_boyer
<http://www.alaska.edu/canhr/>