

Mayor's Report

Haines Borough
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January 22, 2013

Update on Alaska Class Ferry

Several members of the community, Steve Vick, and I attended the joint meeting of the Senate and House Transportation Committee on this issue. We were able to communicate with Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins (JKT) through email with his staff, Tully McLoughlin. We learned that Commissioner Kemp estimates between \$15-18 million to retrofit a terminal to accommodate the Roll-on/Roll-off vessel design contemplated. He also mentioned the possibility of home-porting a shuttle ferry in Haines, estimating an associated 25 jobs.

Commissioner Kemp did not answer the direct question: does the concept include an open-deck? Instead, Kemp said that he was sure everyone would be "pleasantly surprised." Though the design concept is apparently prepared and on his desk, the Commissioner would not address specifics. He did infer that Coastwise Corporation is somehow involved. This is the marine architectural and engineering group located in Anchorage that designed the Lituya – the open deck ferry that sails between Metlakatla and Ketchikan. If DOT/PF does present an open deck design, I suggest that we urge them to assign that vessel to the Lynn Canal for all of February and March. Given that there are no wave buoys in the Lynn Canal, the best thing to do is to directly "test" the concept with the open deck ferry the state already owns.

Testimony before the Joint House and Senate Transportation Committee hearing January 24, 1 PM

I have put my name on the list to testify this coming Thursday. Representative Wilson's staff assigned to this topic (Brenda Hewitt) told me that I am at the top of the queue. You can be too! The call in number is 1-855-463-5009. Representative Wilson suggests that we try to coordinate so that we are not all saying the same thing.

Although I am appalled by the apparent disregard for the statutes that require MTAB consultation, I am confident that the Committees have this matter well in hand, thus my testimony will focus on the outcome: safe, reliable marine transportation that can serve the demand for ridership demonstrated in the Haines-Skagway-Juneau market. In the three minutes allotted, I plan to focus on the two points below. I will modify the first point if Commissioner Kemp has released the report and it does not include an open-deck design.

1) Commissioner Kemp, while admitting that the design for the smaller vessels is on his desk, absolutely refused to say whether or not the design included an open car deck. I have seen a video taken from the bridge of a ferry coming up Lynn Canal this winter. Waves were breaking over the bow and smashing against the wheelhouse windows. Certainly an open-deck design will be much less expensive, but it will be much less reliable in the heavy seas of the Lynn Canal or even in the seas of Clarence Straits outside of Ketchikan. Such a ferry will be a fair weather vessel much like the Chenga and the Fairweather, the "fast" ferries that cannot reliably sail in the Lynn Canal due to the high seas. This is Alaska. This is the Lynn Canal. In this case, local knowledge has got to be considered. But if that is not credible, perhaps the Committee might consider calling in some AMHS captains to testify to the seas in the Lynn Canal.

Despite the lure of home-porting a vessel in Haines, Haines will not trade that advantage for the disadvantage of an open-deck shuttle ferry that cannot provide the safe, reliable marine transit of Lynn Canal. We remain in support not of the "shuttle" concept, but of the "Day Boat" concept so carefully crafted by so many stakeholders over so many years working with MTAB and DOT/PF. That is the concept that the Alaska Class Ferry was designed to implement; and that is the concept that, if implemented, will serve the statewide Alaska Marine Highway for years to come.

2) The route proposed for the two shuttle ferries is Haines-Skagway for one ferry (10 miles one way) and Haines-Juneau for the other. There are quite a few logistical problems with this plan. For one, just how many times a day will a ferry shuttle between Haines and Skagway? What is the need? The traffic? Seems to me that it will run empty if it runs more than once. Also, if it is planning on revenue from passengers only, it will compete with private ferries that do just that. Second of all, Skagway travelers, bound for Juneau will have to disembark, cars, tractor-trailers, and all, line up and reload on a different vessel. Right now it takes an hour or less for the LeConte, coming from Skagway, to load Haines passengers and head for Juneau. Skagway would like less time in the Haines port, not more; and especially not more complicated time - as would be the case if required to disembark and reload.

Dept. Commissioner Yost made an argument that having everyone from Skagway get off the ferry would save money now devoted to security. Please ask just exactly how much it costs to provide security for any ship when stopping over in a port as compared to a ship that off-loads all passengers in a port. You can compare the security-related costs for the IFA (Ketchikan-Hollis) to the security-related costs for the LeConte on its present run, when it stops in Haines, bound for Juneau from Skagway. The IFA seems to have the same level of security as the LeConte even though the IFA completely off loads in Hollis, and then again in Ketchikan.

Population Determination

In a letter dated January 15, 2013, The Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs, notified the Haines Borough that the population determination for FY14 is 2,620. If we do not concur, we can conduct a recount, and request an adjustment, but that process must be completed by April 1, 2013. Are there any reasons to dispute this number? This is the same number reported in the Comprehensive Plan on page 69 when it was an estimate.

Presentation by Jim Shull, DOT/PF Re Haines Highway Projects

Jim Shull will be presenting the DOT/PF plans for the Haines Highway to the Chilkat Bald Eagle Advisory Council at 10 AM February 21; and again to the Haines Borough Assembly, meeting as a Committee of the Whole in the Haines Borough Public Library on the evening of February 21. The second presentation is hosted by the Assembly as an opportunity both for the Assembly to engage and for the community to engage.

Weekly/Monthly Meetings

- I continue to meet monthly with the Manager and the Public Facilities Director and the School District Administration to stay abreast of major maintenance issues. We met January 16 and will meet again February 19.
- I met with the Senior Center Board of Directors January 15 to develop an understanding of their budget requirements for FY14.
- I meet weekly with the Manager on Thursday at 11:45 and weekly with the Manager and a reporter from the Chilkat Valley News at 4 PM Friday.
- I have established a weekly teleconference with Representative Tomkins at 3 PM Friday, toll free 1-888-461-3732. Representative Tomkins is currently assigned to House Standing Committees: State Affairs, Transportation, and Special Committee: Fisheries. His legislative aides are Nancy Barnes (465-3303; 3306), Tully McLoughlin, and Holly Smith (465-3732).

Representative Tomkins is a sponsor of 3 bills:

HB 17, "An Act providing for a reduction of the principal of postsecondary loans for residents" along with Representative(s) Gara, Drummond, Guttenberg, Holmes, Kawasaki, Kerttula, Tuck, Tarr, Josephson, Gruenberg;

HB 21," An Act relating to the length of a school week (4-day) along with Representatives P.Wilson and T. Wilson; and

HB 35 "An Act creating a low-interest loan program for homeowners who improve or replace their home heating systems; and providing for an effective date." along with Representatives T.Wilson, Thompson, Higgins, Isaacson, Kawasaki. We have received a letter from Representative Tammie Wilson asking for our support for HB 35. I have attached the bill and her letter for your consideration.

- I meet monthly with the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Advisory Council. We met January 10 and will meet again February 21. I was re-elected co-chair.

Legislative Information Office for Haines

There are 23 LIOs in the state, but none in Northern Southeast except for Juneau. I have asked Senator Stedman and Representative Kreiss-Tomkins to help us remedy this fact. Meanwhile, our Library is doing a great job helping us watch and listen to the Legislature. I have attached a description of the services provided by a Legislative Information Office.

Attachments:

- HB 35
- Letter from Rep. T. Wilson
- LIO Information

Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives
Representative Tammie Wilson

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Session
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Juneau, AK 99801
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January 16, 2013

Dear Mayor Scott,

Alaska faces the highest energy costs in the nation, and having the required capital to convert to a more affordable heating system is a challenge for many of our residents.

Attached you will find a copy of House Bill 35, *An Act creating a low-interest loan program for homeowners who improve or replace their home heating systems.*

HB 35 will establish a low interest loan program, providing Alaskans the means to convert their existing inefficient heating system to a more efficient heating method. The loan program, administered by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, will allow for up to a \$15,000 loan at 1% interest over a ten year term. The loan can be used to cover the cost of the heating appliance (i.e. boiler, furnace), labor and necessary materials. This would allow all Alaskans to utilize the loan program based on the available heating options in their community.

I am asking for your support of HB 35 so we can provide all of our constituents the opportunity to heat their homes affordably.

Thank you,

Tammie
Rep. Tammie Wilson
907-465-6642

HOUSE BILL NO. 35

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE TAMMIE WILSON

Introduced: 1/7/13

Referred: Prefiled

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act creating a low-interest loan program for homeowners who improve or replace
2 their home heating systems; and providing for an effective date."

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

4 * **Section 1.** AS 18.56 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Article 6A. Home Heating Improvement Loan Program.**

6 **Sec. 18.56.870. Home heating improvement loan program.** (a) The
7 corporation shall establish a program under which the owner of a home that is eligible
8 under (b) and (c) of this section may apply for a loan to improve or replace a home
9 heating system.

10 (b) To qualify for a loan under the program established in (a) of this section,
11 the homeowner shall obtain an inspection performed by an energy rater approved
12 under regulations adopted by the corporation or by a registered mechanical contractor.
13 The energy rater or contractor shall, under regulations adopted by the corporation,

14 (1) perform an on-site inspection of the home;

1 (2) determine whether improving or replacing the primary heating
2 system of the home would increase the energy efficiency of the home; and

3 (3) provide the homeowner with an estimate of the cost savings and
4 change in energy efficiency of the home as a result of improving or replacing the
5 primary heating system of the home.

6 (c) Under this section, a home is eligible if the corporation determines it is a
7 substantially complete, owner-occupied, single-family dwelling or duplex used as a
8 permanent residence by the loan applicant and is located in the state. A home is not
9 eligible if

10 (1) the home is to be destroyed, abandoned, or converted to another
11 purpose within 12 months after an inspection performed under (b) of this section;

12 (2) the energy source fueling or powering the improved or replaced
13 heating system is not available;

14 (3) a loan for the home was previously received under this program; or

15 (4) more than 25 percent of the gross floor area of the home is devoted
16 to commercial use.

17 (d) A loan made under this program

18 (1) shall have an interest rate of one percent;

19 (2) shall be repaid over a term of 10 years;

20 (3) may not be subject to income limitations;

21 (4) may not exceed, for a home, the lesser of

22 (A) the cost, including materials and labor, of the
23 improvements to or replacement of the heating system that will be used as the
24 primary heating method for the home plus the cost of the inspection required
25 under (b) of this section; or

26 (B) \$15,000.

27 (e) As a condition of the loan, a homeowner who receives a loan under this
28 section shall agree, in writing, to improve or replace the heating system in accordance
29 with applicable building and housing codes and obtain all required permits.

30 (f) The corporation shall use repayments of principal on a loan made under
31 this section for the purposes of providing loans under this section or paying the

1 administrative costs related to providing loans under this section. Interest paid on
2 loans made under this section shall be deposited in the general fund and may be
3 appropriated for the loan program under this section or for any other public purpose.

4 (g) In making loans under this section, the corporation is exempt from the
5 requirements of AS 46.11.050(b).

6 (h) In this section, "building and housing codes" includes a law, ordinance, or
7 governmental regulation concerning fitness for habitation or the construction,
8 maintenance, operation, occupancy, use, or appearance of a premises or dwelling unit.

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

Information about Legislative Information Offices

There are 23 Legislative Information Offices (LIOs) located in various cities and towns around Alaska. The primary purpose of Information and Teleconferencing is to assist communications between Legislators and their constituents and to help citizens obtain the information they need to make informed decisions about the public policy choices confronting the Alaska State Legislature. The offices assist persons wishing to send public opinion messages (POMs) to the Alaska Legislature, provide legislative information to the public in each locale, and facilitate teleconferences.

Live Streaming of committee meetings

Each Legislative committee room is outfitted with cameras to enable live streaming of the meetings to the internet. We only stream during committee meetings or on request for a special event or presentation. These live streams will be tied to our teleconference system and the 'red light'. This means that when the committee is 'at ease' the audio will be cut completely, but the video will still be live, similar to how Gavel to Gavel operates. If the committee goes into executive session both the audio and video will be cut.

When an executive session is indicated by the committee chair, we will communicate with the staff monitoring the streams from our media services room in the Terry Miller Office Building. When verified that both are cut, our staff will inform the Chair and committee staff that the executive session can begin.

Public Opinion Messages (POMs)

POMs are accepted during any regular or special session from Alaskans only. Only those single messages delivered by the signing individual to a Legislative Information Office by phone, fax, email, or hand delivered will be accepted for transmission via electronic mail as a Public Opinion Message. The message must be 50 words or less.

The following materials are generally available in the LIOs:

- Alaska Constitution
 - Bill Process Diagram
 - Directory of State Officials (\$3 + shipping & handling)
 - How to Use Your Legislative Information Office
 - Glossary of Legislative Terms
 - Handbook on Alaska Government
 - House and Senate Journals
 - How to Read a Bill
 - How to Read a Bill History Printout
 - Layman's Guide to the Budget Process
 - Legislative Employee Handbook
 - Legislative Process in Alaska
 - Legislature's Pocket Directory
 - Roster of Members
 - Standards of Conduct for
Legislators and Legislative
Employees
 - Status of Bills and Resolutions
 - Summary of Legislation
 - Title 24
 - Tracking the Legislature
 - Uniform Rules
 - United States Constitution
- Information Available
- Bills, Resolutions, and Slip Laws

- Daily Calendars
- Committee Membership Lists
- Legislators by District List
- Legislative Staff List
- Legislators' Address and Phone Lists
- POM

Legislative Teleconference Network System (LTNS)

The legislature implemented the Legislative Information Office (LIO) and Legislative Teleconference Network (LTN) programs in the late 1970's to confront and resolve the communication challenges of Alaska's geography. In summary, the Legislature wanted to implement a program that would allow lawmakers and citizens from Ketchikan to Barrow to exchange views and information. The LTN and a companion system of LIO's both have the same mandate – help citizens obtain the information they need to make informed decisions about the public policy choices confronting the Alaska State Legislature. The specific mission of the LTN is to allow direct communication between Legislators and citizens about pending legislation or issues that could lead to legislation. LTN managers and LTN users share the responsibility for fulfilling this mission.

In 1978, we staffed 3 LIO's around the state and the LTN managed about 30 teleconferences. Currently, we have 23 LIO's and the LTN manages about 1,100 teleconferences a year. For a list of the LIO's please go to our internet site at <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/>