

Debra Thompson

From: Rebecca Knight <bknight15@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 7:55 AM
To: Assembly
Subject: Request for followup to AK Delegation re. "Alaska Natives Without Land"

Hello Mayor and Assembly Members,

On Nov. 19, 2021 Senators Murkowski & Sullivan introduced their [latest version](#) of the "Landless" legislation S. 3269, along with [maps](#). The bill was [referred](#) to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (SENR) Committee but as of today no hearing has been scheduled in the SENR, but could happen at any time.

In short, the legislation would privatize 115,200 acres of Tongass public lands for the purposes of forming five new Native corporations, or 23,040 acres each. It is precedent-setting legislation for all of Alaska, not just Southeast.

I request that you please include an action item on the next Assembly meeting agenda to communicate as soon as possible with the Alaska Delegation and SENR regarding the Borough's unresolved concerns about the bill.

On Nov. 18, 2020 the Borough sent Senator Murkowski, as Chair of the SENR Committee at the time, a letter raising many concerns about the proposed legislation. The Borough Assembly also previously sent her a list of questions regarding the impacts of the bill to the Borough. To my knowledge there has been no reply, however a response was received from the bill supporters—Alaska Natives Without Land. Their answers were largely vague and incomplete. I addressed a few examples of their insufficient answers in my [testimony](#) to you on June 7, 2021. Eric Lee also made compelling points to consider just following my testimony.

Unless I misunderstand, many of those concerns and questions remain outstanding. Minor adjustments like removing two Portage Bay Forest Service cabins from inclusion in the current bill are only minor improvements. They were likely included in earlier versions as future trading fodder.

I have previously provided historical testimony on similar versions of the bill by officials from the Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, a letter from the authors of the ISER report to KFSK regarding erroneous reporting, and other information. They are very helpful in understanding the issue from a historical perspective, some as recent as 2015. I can supply those docs again if you wish. They are brief and to the point.

According to the June 10, 2021 Petersburg Pilot, [Assembly, public weigh in on landless legislation](#) :

"An action item to establish a position on the Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act went before the Borough Assembly at their meeting on Monday. The assembly decided to postpone taking a position until the final version of the legislation was presented to the Senate."

I request that the Petersburg Borough Assembly please communicate from an informed position on this "final version," to the Delegation and SENR Committee as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Rebecca (Becky) Knight