

Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission

Initial Report to the Alaska Legislature

House and Senate
Judiciary Committees

April 5, 2006



Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission

Presentation Summary

- History
- Commission Membership
- Process
- Recommendation Highlights
- Recommendations Impacting State Law
- Commission's Future
- Question and Answer

Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission

History

- Created by Congress in 2004 (PL-108-199)
- Charged with studying 4 broad areas:
 1. Law Enforcement
 2. Judicial Services
 3. Alcohol Importation and Interdiction
 4. Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

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Commission Membership

- Appointed by U.S. Attorney General (Department of Justice)
- Federal and State Co-Chairs
U.S. Attorney and Alaska Attorney General

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Federal Co-Chair (U.S. Attorney): Deborah Smith
(Tim Burgess also served in this position)

State Co-Chair (Attorney General): David Márquez
(Gregg Renkes & Edgar Blatchford also served in this position)

Commissioner of Public Safety: Bill Tandeske

Alaska Municipal League: Bruce Botelho
(preferably a rural member)

An Organized Borough: Empty Seat
(Roswell "Ross" Schaeffer served in this position)

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Alaska Federation of Natives:
(Ethan Schutt served in Buddy's seat)

H. Buddy Brown

Tribal Representative:

Wilson Justin

Non-Profit Native Corp:
(that operates a VPSO program)

Loretta Bullard

Alaska Native Justice Center:

Gail Schubert

Non-Voting Federal Court Rep.:

James Torgerson

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Staff

- Alaska Native Justice Center - logistical support
- Various experts on a contract basis
- Special Assistant - technical support

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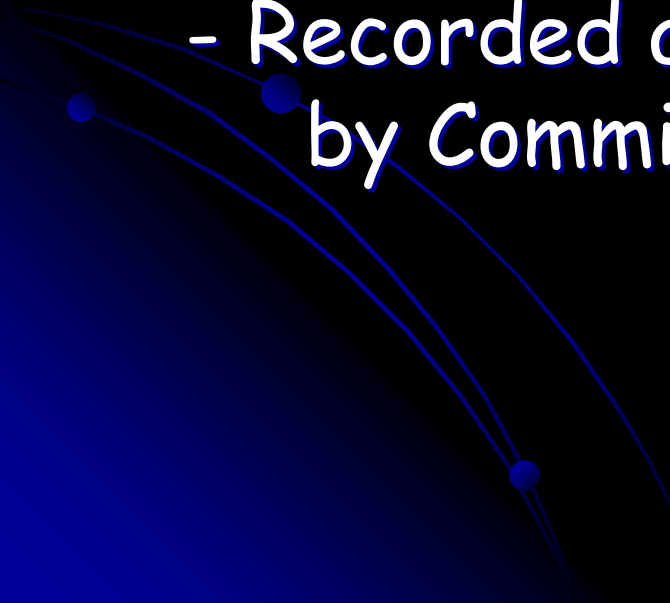
Process

- Commission Meetings
October 2004 - Present
- Working Groups
January - April 2005
- Public Hearings
January - June 2005
- Finalization of Initial Report and
Recommendations

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- Working Groups - (50 members total)
 - Formed by topic area
 - Chaired by Commission members
 - 8 - 15 members
 - Charged with presenting options
 - Met January - April 2005
 - weekly by teleconference
 - face to face meetings

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- Public Hearings
 - Held mostly in Rural Locations
 - Partnered with meetings of prominent organizations
 - Recorded and transcribed for review by Commissioners
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- AFN Convention - Invited Testimony
- Alaska Municipal League - Invited Testimony
- Alaska Inter-Tribal Council Convention - Invited Testimony
- Sitka - Public Testimony
- Juneau - Public Testimony
- Anchorage - Public Testimony
- Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference - Invited Testimony
- Bristol Bay Native Association, Dillingham - Public Testimony

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- Kawerak, Inc. - Public Testimony
- Native Village of Kotzebue - Public Testimony
- North Slope/NW Arctic Borough (Barrow) - Public Testimony
- Tanana Chiefs Conference - Fairbanks Invited Testimony
- Assoc. of Village Council Presidents - Bethel
- Mt. Sanford Tribal Consortium
- Organized Village of Kake

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Recommendation Highlights

- Working Groups created over 100 options
- Commission adopted and organized options
- 9 general categories as follows:

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Recommendations

- Engage in More Partnering and Collaboration
- Make Systemic Changes to Improve Rural Law Enforcement
- Enlarge the Use of Community-based Solutions
- Broaden the Use of Prevention Approaches
- Broaden the Use of Therapeutic Approaches
- Increase Employment of Rural Residents in Law Enforcement and Judicial Services
- Build Additional Capacity
- Increase Access to Judicial Services
- Expand the Use of New Technologies

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*Engage in More Partnering
and Collaboration*

- Develop more effective communication and coordination, including cross training, among and between all governments and service agencies and organizations
- Develop agreements to better coordinate law enforcement and judicial services in rural AK

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Make Systemic Changes to Improve Rural Law Enforcement

- Development of uniform statewide tiered system of certification and training
- Expansion of police and public safety training
- Further work for cooperation in alcohol interdiction

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State Efforts to Improve Rural Law Enforcement

- New Troopers and Prosecutors
- Rural Prosecution Team
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams
- Cold Case Prosecutor
- Village Safety Aides

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State Efforts to Address Alcohol Importation and Interdiction

- Postal Service cross designation authority
- Governor's Omnibus Crime Bill - SB 170 (2004)
- Significant Bootlegging Prosecutions

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Enlarge the Use of Community-based Solutions

- DJJ delegate authority to tribes in certain juvenile matters
- Expand funding for local prevention, intervention programs for DV and child abuse
- Develop community-based, restorative justice re-entry programs
- DOC seek alternatives to out-of-state prisons
- Explore alcohol distribution centers

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Broaden the Use of Prevention Approaches

- Insufficient prevention in rural Alaska
- Expand culturally appropriate programs
- Engage youth and adults in healthy activities
- Information in schools - early grades
 - DV, child abuse
 - Teaching respect-based values (Elders)
 - Interpersonal relationships
 - Alcohol/substance abuse

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Broaden the Use of Therapeutic Approaches

- Alcohol/drug abuse
 - Local, family-oriented and culturally based substance abuse treatment programs
 - Long term residential care in hubs - women/children
 - Network of aftercare services in village
- Therapeutic courts
- Foster care
 - Group homes for youth not eligible for foster care
 - Change regulations to allow close relatives to receive compensation for foster care

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Increase Employment of Rural Residents in Law Enforcement and Judicial Services

- Overrepresentation of Alaska Natives in correctional systems
- Focused recruiting effort to employ Alaska Natives in systems
- Train and use VPSOs as Probation Officers

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Build Additional Capacity

- Lack of infrastructure to support rural Alaska public safety
 - Improve housing
 - Increase intra-community transportation
 - Provide adequate law enforcement offices and holding facilities
 - Improve equipment
 - Implement "sub-hub" concept
 - State-wide data base and reporting requirements to monitor investigations

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Increase Access to Judicial Services

- Enhanced funding to increase rural Alaskans' access to civil legal assistance
- Restore federal funding opportunities for tribal courts located within the boundaries of municipalities
- Increase use of tribal courts and video-conferencing capability
- Training and technical assistance for state & tribal judges

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Expand the Use of New Technologies

- Increase access to telecommunications
- Allow law enforcement to use telehealth system in rural Alaska
- Create system of regional 911 dispatch centers
- Open eligibility to Homeland Security programs and funding
- DOC explore electronic monitoring
- ABC Board develop statewide database

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Additional Recommendations Impacting State Law

- Most recommendations have at least minor fiscal impacts
 - State and Federal funding should be sought
- Change definition of alcohol manufacture and expand forfeiture provisions
 - SB 210/HB 373
- Ban written order sales to dry towns
- Ban shipping plastic by air
- Change regulatory definition of a village from 1000 individuals to 1500 individuals

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Commission Future

- Request to Congress to extend life of the Commission
- Expand representation on Commission
 - State of Alaska, Commissioner of Health and Social Services
 - Representative of Alaska Native Health Care providers
 - Non-Voting State Court representative appointed by the Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court

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Commission Future

- Continue dialogue with stakeholders
- Monitor development and implementation of recommendations
- Conduct additional research
- Evaluate the impact of new and expanded activities into the future

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Commission Future

- Objectives to ensure implementation of Commission recommendations:
 - Advocate at State and Federal levels
 - Educate and obtain buy-in from stakeholders and public
 - Advocate for expansion of innovative prevention, early intervention and treatment programs
 - Increase interest in recruitment, training and hiring of qualified Alaska Natives in the law enforcement and justice fields
 - Further define the role of the Commission

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Questions and Answers

