

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

Sponsor Statement: CS for SB 33(STA)

An Act relating to the disposition of remains of a member of the armed services if the member dies while in a duty status

The intent of the CS for Senate Bill 33(STA) is to ensure that active duty service members who make the ultimate sacrifice are properly honored by ensuring that their remains are disposed of by the person of their choosing.

The Department of Defense requires active duty service members, reservists and guard members to complete a Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93) annually or prior to deployment. The Coast Guard follows the same procedures, but uses a different form, the Designation of Beneficiaries and Record of Emergency Data (CG-2020D). These forms identify the person authorized to direct disposition of a service member's remains in the event that service member is killed in the line of duty.

Senate Bill 33 will place the state in alignment with armed services procedures, so that the person designated to handle disposition of remains is not called into question. Without compliance with these procedures, the handling of the remains may be delayed, and the service member's wishes not honored.

Around twenty states have laws which comport with armed services rules on disposition. At least four other states, including Alaska, are pursuing laws to comport.

The CS for Senate Bill 33(STA) is supported by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

Please join me in supporting this legislation to ensure the wishes of our service members are upheld and our fallen soldiers receive the proper burial they deserve.