



Chapter 904 - Anchorage, Alaska **“An Agenda of Service”**

January 19, 2013

Senator Bill Wielechowski

Senator:

One year ago today, we requested movement on what was then SB150 dealing with this same issue.

As you and other members of the state legislature heard last year during your very successful town hall meeting, many members of the service, upon separation and becoming veterans basically lose any consideration for the real value of the training they have received in service and the work they have done in a number of vocations for years in the most challenging of environments – combat.

This just doesn't make much sense. We must find a way for the state through its licensing programs and for the University of Alaska to recognize the value of both these veterans' training and service.

Your bill, SB 150 from last year should have jump started this process, and hundreds of veterans in Alaska are still waiting for this. But let me also point out that I sent each of 48 other State Council Presidents of VVA SB150, and based on questions to me while in DC recently, there is a great deal of interest in this idea. I'll canvas these veteran leaders and see just how many have bills in process or passed to date and forward same info to you.

Let me make it clear that this is NOT to suggest that our new veterans may not need additional training to meet licensing or other civilian standards for such in each state. But it is to strongly suggest that this experience and training should be seriously considered as having some value, by the state et al.

It is critical in this time of military downsizing and international redeployments, that we make every effort in Alaska, with the highest per capita number of veterans, to welcome, enable and embrace these men and women who have walked in hell for us.

It is an honor,

Ric Davidge

President, VVA 904

National Chairman, VVA Government Affairs Committee