



Representative Chris Tuck

House Minority Leader

Alaska State Legislature

District 23 - Representing Dimond Estates, Foxridge, Taku,
Campbell, Northwood and Windemere

Sponsor Statement House Bill 6 Employment Preference for Veterans & Spouses

House Bill 6 removes barriers to employment for veterans and their spouses. According to a 2012 survey of veterans from all eras, 64% of respondents said they had a difficult transition from military service to civilian life, attributed largely to employment challenges.

As of June 2014, nearly 600,000 veterans were unemployed. The jobless rate for post-9/11 veterans was 6.4%, with young male veterans experiencing a jobless rate of more than 12%. During 2013, Alaska saw over 2,000 military personnel separate from service and return home and the Department of Defense has stated they expect this number to rise in coming years.

Many states are making great strides to improve veteran employment by removing professional licensing barriers and crediting military education and experience. However, employment ultimately depends on employers providing workforce opportunities.

Although forty states and the District of Columbia award preference to veterans who are being considered for hire to a public position, private employers are prohibited from establishing comparable business hiring policies.

House Bill 6 would allow an optional veteran hiring preference for private employers by taking advantage of an option available under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To date, twelve states have adopted similar legislation and is supported by the United States Department of Defense.

It's time Alaska takes action by joining these other states in passing House Bill 6 to help our veterans and our small businesses.