

Chapter 904 - Anchorage, Alaska "An Agenda of Service"

January 19, 2012

Senator Bill Weilechowski
Chairman
Senate State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Legislature

Senator:

As you know we were very much involved in the development of a veteran jobs package in Washington, DC that was finally approved by the Congress and signed by the President. An important component of this package was a tax incentive for American businesses to hire veterans, with some additional incentives for disabled veterans. The incentives start at \$2,400 in the federal package.

Like so many Alaskans we have heard time and again about how imposing our state incorporation taxes are. So, in an effort to encourage Alaskan businesses to also hire veterans we were very pleased with your interest in an additional incentive, right here in Alaska to hire veterans.

We strongly support SB 136, and would suggest that the tax credit be at \$2,600. This would allow a combined tax credit (federal/state) of \$5,000 per veteran hired at a minimum of 32 hours a week and retained for most of a year.

With the provision of SB 136, we have shared with bill with 48 other VVA State Council Presidents, and I can report that a number of them have asked their legislators to seriously consider doing the same.

With passage of this bill, Alaska will continue to be viewed nationally as a very veteran friendly state.

I wanted to again thank you for the Town Hall Meeting you and your colleagues held in east Anchorage last year. It was without question one of the best to date and I think those Members of the legislature who attended got something substantive out of it. Certainly SB 136 was one of those ideas presented at that meeting.

It is an honor,

Ric Davidge
Ric Davidge

President, VVA 904

Also: National Chairman, VVA Govt Affairs Cmte
Former National Chairman, VVA Economic Opportunities Cmte

VETS HELPING VETS

2808 E. TUDOR ROAD, SUITE 3
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, 99507
907-433-0011

"Making a difference one person at a time"

Date: 22 January 2012

Subject: Support Letter for SB136 Income Tax Credit for Employing Veterans

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of many Alaska Veterans and the Vets Helping Vets organization of Anchorage, Alaska, I am writing this letter of support for the Income Tax Credit for Employing Veterans bill.

My name is Calista Anderson; I am the President of the Vets Helping Vets organization located here in Anchorage at 2808 E. Tudor Rd., and a proud military (US Army) wife of 17 years. My husband along with many other spouses, sons, daughters and mothers and fathers have made many sacrifices and will continue to do so today and in the future for all the freedoms we enjoy in our way of life today. Many of these are now business owners. Too many have given the ultimate sacrifice! In saying this, every state in America should have such a bill as this put in to motion, but especially here in Alaska with the enormous amount of unemployment we have right here in our own community. Now and always in the future every business should receive a tax credit for hiring veterans, as we will always have veterans in our country. The reason we have the ability to open a business anytime or any place we choose is because of these veterans that ensured we are free, not living under a dictatorship as many countries today are forced to do so. Offering this bill will encourage business owners to hire more veterans, giving them a chance to improve their lives and the chance to get back on their feet, a hand UP, not a hand OUT. Many of our veterans have fallen thru the cracks to many times for too long, providing this tax credit bill to businesses in our state will be a great incentive to reach out to many more veterans and to decrease the percentage rate of unemployed and homeless veterans in Alaska, therefore, giving veterans an opportunity to improve their quality of life as well as for their families. By hiring our veterans and allowing them to learn new trades opens many doors for them and their families to begin a normal way of life, the dream they had when they entered the military to defend our freedoms, the AMERICAN DREAM. Not only will it give business owners a tax credit but in many ways for many people it will give a sense of pride and self-worth that needs to be restored today and for the business owners that tax break that many of them deserve as well. Passing such a bill as this can only benefit our local business

owners and our nation's heroes that deserve that second chance. Employing our veterans and getting them off the streets should always be a priority in our state and across our nation, as "homeless" and "veteran" should never come together in the same sentence. Veterans voluntarily gave up so much of their "normal" way of life to protect ours; allowing business owners to employ them with a tax credit will provide a sense of normalcy and appreciation back to our veterans and some businesses across our great state.

When making your decision to pass this law, please remember that all of our veterans (that are many of our business owners today), gave some, however, some gave ALL.

In addition, we are fully supportive also of the Military Training Credit bill as well. This is very important for our military; training is very important and is the very thing that provides our military with the knowledge to continue to keep our country free.

Sincerely,

Calista Anderson

US Army wife and President of Vets Helping Vets of Anchorage, Alaska



April 3, 2012

Kurt Olson, Chair
House Labor and Commerce Committee
Capitol Building, Room 24
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Kurt Olson@legis.state.ak.us

RE: SB 136 Tax Credit for hiring Alaska Veterans

Dear Chairman Olson,

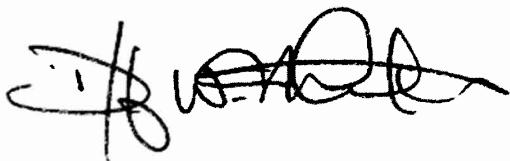
I am writing to you to ask that SB 136 be provided a public hearing and swift passage prior to end of the current legislative session. I am an OIF/Alaska National Guard veteran with just under 30 years of service. I started my service as a Private and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. As a former commander, it pains me to see fellow veterans struggle to obtain good employment to feed their families and transition to civilian employment. I read that you are an Air Force Vietnam era veteran so you can appreciate first-hand what I am talking about.

Alaska has a high per capita of veterans, but we also have a high percentage of unemployed veterans. Some of our rural villages have extremely high percentage of veterans along with high unemployment. SB 136 is not a silver bullet to fix Alaska vet unemployment, but it is a good and important tool to raise the visibility for Alaskan employers to consider hiring Alaska vets. Many businesses already support the hiring of veterans and this bill helps bolster employers to do the right thing to provide an extra hand to veterans returning from overseas and settling in with civilian life.

It would be good that employers that enter this program receive an administrative or Departmental certificate of appreciation for participating in this well intentioned hire a vet legislation.

I appreciate that you and your committee are swamped with bills to heard and passed on during the waning days of this legislative session. I appreciate your consideration in allowing this bill to be heard and passed along for a floor vote to send a positive message for returning veterans by encouraging Alaska employers to partner in alleviating our high unemployment rate of returning veterans.

Sincerely,



Duff Mitchell, LTC retired
3274 Pioneer Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801

April 10th, 2012

The Honorable Kurt Olson, Chair, House Labor and Commerce Committee
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 24
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Olson:

I am writing to strongly encourage your support for the passage of SB 136, the Income Tax Credit for Employing a Veteran.

I am retired Alaskan who worked as a civilian for the Department of Defense for over 30 years, working side by side with many fine soldiers and airmen, helping them to develop skills and master training that they would be able to use when they left the service and entered the workforce.

Alaska's businesses and population could benefit greatly from a tax credit such as this. Many of my friends and family members served in the military, and I value the discipline that these fine young people gain as they serve their country. The unemployment rates for veterans are shamefully high, and as a state with a significant veteran population, it is incumbent upon us to take care of those who have worked so hard to take care of us.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Alaska, and in closing, I urge you to support passage of this important bill.

Sincerely,



William B. Clucas

Cc: Representative Bob Miller
 Representative Dan Saddler
 Representative Mike Chenault
 Representative Lindsey Holmes
 Representative Craig Johnson
 Representative Steve Thompson

Kendra Kloster

From: Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2012 11:59 AM
To: Kendra Kloster
Subject: FW: SB136

From: D [mailto:dermottusmc@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, April 03, 2012 7:33 PM

To: Sen. Bill Wielechowski

Subject: SB136

Senator Bill Wielechowski
State Capitol, Rm. 101
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SB 136 Support

Dear Senator Wielechowski,

I am writing in support of SB 136 which provides a state Income Tax Credit for employing eligible veterans. As an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and member of the Southeast Alaska Native Veterans, I appreciate your introduction and diligence in introducing legislation designed to help our returning Alaska veterans.

It is not always an easy transition from military to civilian life. Veterans in some communities have a hard time finding work. This bill will help incentivize employers to take a second look at veterans. This bill is one small, but important step in helping our veterans find good and steady work while transitioning to civilian work life.

Thank you for your efforts and I ask that the House Labor and Commerce Committee pass this bill from its committee and allow this legislation to proceed for a full vote.

Dermott Howard.
US Marine /US Army National Guard Retired
Douglas, AK 99824

Kendra Kloster

From: Dixie D. Banner <akdaisyd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2012 10:58 PM
To: Kendra Kloster
Subject: Re: Military & Veteran Legislation for Next Week

Kendra,

In response to this proposed bill, offering a tax credit to employers, would generate both jobs and greatly enhance the economy for

AK. I am speaking as a Vet who is currently working for the Federal Government. An organization that is currently cutting jobs and an organization that has not seen growth in a number of years. Also, the opportunity for career enhancement is non-existent. In fact they propose a wage freeze until 2015. This one reason, I would like for the State of AK to take an initiative to spur growth in the private sector for working for the gov offers a minimum wage or less and a bleak retirement.

In speaking of the private sector this bill will benefit many veterans who are unemployed or underemployed, as well as, allow

veterans to utilize their training and skills that they have achieved while serving. In fact most new veterans (young ones) are far more

educated than 10 years ago. In addition, this bill will be an initiative for the Oil and Gas Industry who may consider hiring Veterans vs.

individuals who are from the Lower 48.

While looking into the future, will foster the ability to live and work in AK, for there are many young military members who will be looking for

work as the DOD is implementing cost cutting measures, in order to achieve a balanced budget. This scenario will play out within the next

two to five years, since the writing is on the wall; i.e. many active duty will be involuntarily discharged, separated or be asked to

retire, in order to create a streamlined military that is strong/effective/and small in numbers.

Now that the war is so called over in Iraq, and they plan to decommission a number of Brigades, the question is what is our nation going to do when our sons and daughters are required to return home to being a new life and required to re-enter the Civ Work force? Having worked with the new and seasoned military members whom have served for a few years, tend to forget what Civ Life has to offer and there are many culture differences in the work place; The young ones tend to forget what it is like to be a Civ and recognize the worth of the older and experienced Veterans who work shoulder to shoulder in order to accomplish the mission.

Bottom line if AK desires to maintain its future and ability to function as a state, it must create an insensitive that will offer an open system

that will provide the ability for its Veterans to work and live in AK, as well as, have the ability to live the American dream (Have a career, family, home and live their life comfortably over time). If this initiative is overlooked then we will see our kids and grand kids migrating to the lower 48. All this is left will be those who are living from pay check to pay check and those who require state assistance. On a personal note, I did not go to school and serve my country in order to live in poverty and live in fear of not being able to retire.

When speaking of initiating the Hero's Act 2011, this program will be beneficial to all who is involved. It allows veterans to complete a transformation of their military careers into the Civ Sector with limited limitations. Most veterans now days are married and have children. The thought of returning to school, in order to find employment or better themselves is often impossible. This is due to the fact, funds are not available after being discharged. Furthermore, most young GI have spousal units who are young themselves and have small children in tow. Only one can return to school at a given time. Secondly, in most cases, the idea of daycare is not an option.

If an individual can access a professional position or allowed to reenter their profession (trade), with limited requirement, it is a win win situation for both the State and the Veteran, otherwise the family will be required to seek state assistance, which can be challenging at times, since support often equates to control and after being in the military for years, this can create animosity. The Hero's Act will offer skilled professionals who will be able to enter the work force with out the need of extensive training requirement which for an employer, training is major cost and can determine one's long term ability to survive in a volital economy, esp now days. Lastly, the idea and the ability to find employment shortly after being discharge is a moral booster for the fact a Veteran is able to survive and make a living for themselves and their and family, (Work equates to self worth and pride, as well as, securing the ability to maintain emotional and financial security). The idea of being financially disposed and the idea of having to live with family, in order to survive is not pleasant.

If you have any questions, please send a reply. It has been a long cold January and I am ready for spring...I have many irons in the fire; however, I am like many Alaskans who are praying and waiting for the legislators to pave the way, which will build a better economy than what we have experienced in the last few years.

PS I hope I am not late but I have been busy at work, as well as, at home. It actually warmed up today and it felt good.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

V/R

Dixie Banner

April 9, 2012

The Honorable Kurt Olson
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 24
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Olson:

The Veteran Employment Tax Credit, SB 136, needs to be heard and passed.

I grew up in North Pole, I live in North Pole, and own a business in Fairbanks. The military and veterans have been, and remain, a significant part of my life, as friends, family, neighbors, and customers. My father served for over 20 years in the US Air Force, I moved to Alaska when he was stationed here, and it is my home.

I currently have a small enterprise, but am seeking to expand and hire new employees, as my family will be expanding by one in the fall, and I am especially motivated to make sure that people I hire have many of the qualities veterans possess – responsible, ambitious, dependable.

I work with many community organizations to improve the quality of life for people in the Interior. I believe that this bill would be one way that we can help address the veteran unemployment numbers and encourage small businesses. Your support for hearing and passage of this bill would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Sheri L. Olesen
Owner, Chartreuse

Cc: Representative Mike Chenault
 Representative Lindsey Holmes
 Representative Craig Johnson
 Representative Bob Miller
 Representative Dan Saddler
 Representative Steve Thompson

April 9, 2012

The Honorable Kurt Olson
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 24
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Olson:

Please pass SB 136, the Income Tax Credit for Employing a Veteran.

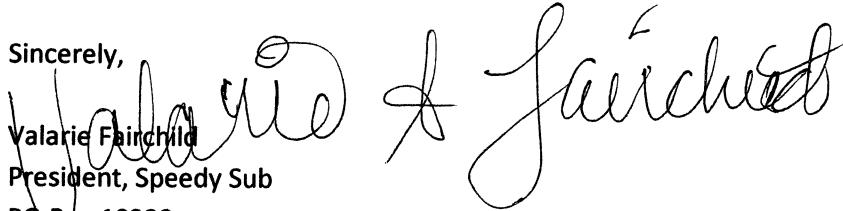
I am a small business owner in Fairbanks. I have lived here for most of my life, raised my children, and worked hard to make this community the best I can. A significant part of our community are our veterans.

As an employer I appreciate the hard work and commitment that service in the military instills in our young people. As a business owner who recently expanded her facilities, I have a narrow profit margin and a bill such as this would help us to stay in business while having skilled employees.

Those who currently serve, as well as many veterans, are a large part of my customer base. If we, as Alaskans, are able to do what we can to help them transition into the workforce while also supporting the business community, it is a win for us all.

Sincerely,

Valarie Fairchild
President, Speedy Sub
PO Box 10333
Fairbanks, AK 99710



Cc: Representative Mike Chenault
 Representative Lindsey Holmes
 Representative Craig Johnson
 Representative Bob Miller
 Representative Dan Saddler
 Representative Steve Thompson