



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

**Department of Military and
Veterans Affairs**

Alaska Military Youth Academy

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March 22, 2013

Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subj: Senate Bill 84

Senator Giessel:

In 1994, the Alaska National Guard Youth Corps (renamed the Alaska Military Youth Academy in 1999) was founded as a pilot program with the aim to help reclaim the lives of at-risk youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline to succeed as adults. The program's quasi-military structure has matured into one of the most successful programs of its type in the United States. The national program and other state programs regularly look to Alaska for suggestions on best practices and successful integration of process and techniques.

Previous state support has been outstanding and integral to the ability of the Academy to lead the way in developing a superior product that addresses individual, familial and community issues in a way which provides a focused, values-based training and education environment for those individuals who have volunteered to enter and finish a tough but rewarding environment. The Academy has now graduated almost 4,000 cadets who have received certification and/or been redirected successfully to high school, college, the military or a productive work environment.

We support formal establishment and operation of the program as a mature component of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. As a staff, we at the Academy are also very appreciative of the continued support by both the Department of Education and Early Development and school districts across the State for providing contact information for young Alaskans. This helps us ensure awareness of this valuable program and we look forward to continuing teamwork in this area. As we teach our graduates, there are always challenges ahead and we believe that this program has greater vistas ahead to support the great citizenry of a great state. On behalf of the entire staff at AMYA, we offer both our thanks and full support for Senate Bill 84.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Clyde T. Burton".

Clyde T. Burton
Director