

# Representative David Nelson

## *Alaska State Legislature*

### **In Juneau**

Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801  
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### **In Anchorage**

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*House District 18 - Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Muldoon, & Government Hill*

## **House Joint Resolution 20**

*Encouraging the United States Congress to establish hiring goals for apprentices and veteran apprentices*

### **Version A**

April 7, 2025

## **Sponsor Statement**

House Joint Resolution 20 urges the United States Congress to establish hiring goals for apprentices and veteran apprentices for U.S. Department of Defense construction projects. United States veterans and their families face immeasurable risks and sacrifices during their service to our country.

Members of our armed forces are put through the most rigorous training in the world. This ensures that all individuals that pass through it come out well-educated, highly trained, and strongly motivated. They learn discipline and a number of skills which make them highly valuable in the workforce.

In 2024, 65% of the unemployed veterans were age 18-54, meaning that the majority of unemployed veterans are in their prime working age. Veterans face many challenges when transitioning back into civilian life. Some of these challenges can be made easier by requiring hiring goals for certain Department of Defense projects. HJR 20 would encourage the U.S. Congress to establish a goal for the hiring of veterans who participate in qualified apprenticeship or postsecondary programs. This goal should be no less than 10 percent of the total workforce employed in the performance of the project.

Department of Defense construction projects offer a prime opportunity for veterans to further their careers while providing the DOD with qualified, mature, and motivated employees. It is our duty to take care of those who stood ready to defend this country.

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE NELSON

Introduced: 4/14/25

Referred: House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs, Labor and Commerce

**A RESOLUTION**

1   **Encouraging the United States Congress to establish hiring goals for apprentices and**  
2   **veteran apprentices.**

3   **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4       **WHEREAS** Americans have a special obligation to those who served in the armed  
5    forces of the United States and risked their lives to defend our nation's freedom and honor;  
6    and

7       **WHEREAS** thousands of men and women have served in the armed forces of the  
8    United States to protect and preserve the freedom that the citizens of the United States enjoy;  
9    and

10       **WHEREAS** veterans have graduated from the world's largest system of specialized  
11    professional and technical training schools, operated by the United States Department of  
12    Defense; and

13       **WHEREAS** veterans of active duty military service are one of the nation's most  
14    important sources of well-educated, highly trained, and strongly motivated employees; and

15       **WHEREAS** veterans trained by the armed forces of the United States offer employers  
16    a more mature and responsible employee compared to employees with no military

1 experience; and

2 **WHEREAS** veterans returning home face challenges, including in education and  
3 employment, that may prevent them from successfully transitioning from military to civilian  
4 life; and

5 **WHEREAS** veterans transition training programs have successfully reduced  
6 incidences of veteran suicide; and

7 **WHEREAS** unemployment rates for both male and female veterans increased in early  
8 2025; the unemployment rate for male veterans is four percent, and the unemployment rate  
9 for female veterans is 4.5 percent; and

10 **WHEREAS** among the unemployed veterans in 2024, 60 percent were ages 25 to 54,  
11 35 percent were age 55 and over, and five percent were ages 18 to 24; and

12 **WHEREAS** the state has the highest rate of veterans in the nation, with nearly 14  
13 percent of adult Alaskans having served in the military; and

14 **WHEREAS** the 2025 draft federal appropriations report for the United States  
15 Department of Defense indicates that \$18,000,000,000 will be spent on military construction  
16 that will require thousands of workers; and

17 **WHEREAS** military construction jobs offer a prime opportunity for veterans,  
18 including veterans in apprenticeship and postsecondary programs, to further their careers; and

19 **WHEREAS** military service is one of the most demanding professions in the world,  
20 and military training produces highly motivated individuals who set high goals for  
21 themselves;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully encourages the  
23 United States Congress to introduce and pass legislation requiring each offeror for a domestic  
24 United States Department of Defense construction project to establish a goal that not less than  
25 10 percent of the total workforce employed in the performance of the project are participants  
26 in qualified apprenticeship or postsecondary programs; and be it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully encourages  
28 the United States Congress to introduce and pass legislation requiring each contractor and  
29 subcontractor for a domestic United States Department of Defense construction project that  
30 employs apprentices or postsecondary students in a particular classification to ensure that not  
31 less than 10 percent of the apprentices or postsecondary students are veterans of the armed

1 forces of the United States.

2       **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President  
3 of the United States; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice President of the United States and  
4 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of  
5 Representatives; the Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of  
6 Representatives; the Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the  
7 Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Douglas  
8 Collins, United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the  
9 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S.  
10 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the  
11 119th United States Congress.

# Fiscal Note

State of Alaska  
2025 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HJR 20  
Fiscal Note Number:  
() Publish Date:

Identifier: HJR20-LEG-SESS-05-07-2025  
Title: HIRING OF APPRENTICES/VETERANS  
Sponsor: NELSON  
Requester: (H) MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
Department:  
Appropriation:  
Allocation:  
OMB Component Number: 0

## Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2026 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2026 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
			FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>							
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
<b>Total Operating</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

## Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>						

## Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

## Change in Revenues

None							
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>						

**Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2025) cost:** 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

**Estimated CAPITAL (FY2026) cost:** 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

**Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account?** No

*(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)*

## ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No

If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

## Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

NOT APPLICABLE, INITIAL VERSION. ONE PAGE, ZERO NOTE.
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Prepared By:

Sante Lesh, Deputy Executive Director

Phone: (907)465-4824

Division:

Legislative Affairs Agency

Date: 05/07/2025 11:59 AM

Approved By:

Jessica Geary, Executive Director

Date: 05/07/2025

Agency:

Legislative Affairs Agency



April 16, 2025

Representative David Nelson  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

**Re: Support for Alaska House Joint Resolution 20**

Dear Representative Nelson,

On behalf of Alaska Works Partnership (AWP), I am writing to express our full support for House Joint Resolution 20, which respectfully encourages the United States Congress to establish hiring goals for apprentices and veteran apprentices on Department of Defense (DOD) construction projects.

As a nonprofit workforce development organization founded in 1996, AWP has spent nearly three decades preparing Alaskans for skilled careers in construction. Our programs - including Alaska's Helmets to Hardhats - are designed to connect veterans, transitioning service members, and active-duty spouses with meaningful employment and apprenticeship pathways. With offices and training centers in Anchorage, Wasilla, and Fairbanks, we work statewide to equip participants with practical trade skills and connect them to apprenticeship and employment opportunities.

Alaska is proud to have the highest percentage of veterans per capita in the nation. Yet many of our veterans face persistent barriers to employment and struggle to transition from military to civilian careers. House Joint Resolution 20 directly addresses these issues by promoting veteran inclusion in DOD construction projects, ensuring that at least 10% of workers in apprenticeship or postsecondary training programs are veterans.

This resolution also speaks to an urgent statewide concern: Alaska is losing its working-age population due to outmigration and demographic shifts. As younger

residents and transitioning service members leave the state in search of better opportunities, Alaska's construction industry faces a critical workforce shortage. By creating secure and well-paying career paths tied to federal projects, HJR 20 will help retain this vital population – particularly veterans - who might otherwise relocate. Ensuring that these skilled individuals stay and thrive in Alaska strengthens our communities and boosts our economic resilience.

HJR 20 aligns perfectly with AWP's mission to increase local hires and develop a homegrown, skilled workforce. It also reinforces our vision for a future in which every Alaskan - especially those who have served - can access quality jobs that sustain families and support strong communities.

We urge the Alaska Legislature to pass HJR 20 and send a clear message to Congress: supporting our veterans means investing in their post-service careers through apprenticeships, workforce training, and access to federally funded projects.

Thank you for your continued advocacy and leadership in promoting meaningful opportunities for Alaska's veterans.

Sincerely,



Alexis Cowell  
Executive Director  
Alaska Works Partnership  
907-569-4722  
alexisc@alaskaworks.org



Mike Kufchak  
IBEW Local 11  
Director of Veterans Affairs  
297 N. Marengo Ave, Pasadena Ca. 91101

18 Apr 2025

To: Alaska State Representative Mr. David Nelson.  
From: Sergeant Major (Retired) Mike Kufchak, Director of Veterans Affairs  
(International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 11).  
Subject: Support of House Joint Resolution 20.

Representative Nelson, I am pledging my support of House Joint Resolution Number 20 (HJR No. 20) regarding the initiative to incorporate language into the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for calendar year 2025. Whereas, Veterans have an increased opportunity for access into apprenticeships regarding Department of Defense (DOD) Projects as well as Contractors following State Labor Laws that would induce Apprentice usage.

An established relationship between Contractors and approved Transitioning Programs can fulfill the need for a skilled trained workforce for government projects. As you're aware, Our Veterans, inclusive to their families, sacrifice above and beyond with constant deployments, separation, and relocation. Their spirit to serve Nation before themselves, is not measurable by any standard.

Upon completion of a veteran's service, be it 4 years, or a career within our Armed Forces. They have proven advanced citizenship. They should at minimum be rewarded with the opportunity to re-join the workforce with a Career that provides the support a Family needs in terms of Financial and Health Care Support. Of which can be an Academic College or Skilled Trade (Apprenticeship). But ultimately, it's the work garnished by Contractors on those DOD Installations that veterans are acclimated and familiar with regarding language, and culture.

Bottom Line Up Front is that Contractors working in the Trades should be abiding by State Labor Law especially on DOD Projects and should be pulling their Labor from Apprenticeships that support Veterans with Careers.

Respectfully Submitted

  
M. Kufchak  
Sergeant Major (USMC-Ret)