



# REPRESENTATIVE BILL THOMAS

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## Sectional

### HB 334

### *“An Act establishing child custody, modification, and visitation standards for a military parent; and amending Rule 99, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure.”*

**Section 1:** AS 25.20 adds a new section:

**Sec. 25.20.095. Custody and visitation proceedings involving a military parent.**

(a) Military service cannot be a factor in granting or denying a petition for custody or visitation.

(b) – (e) Upon receiving deployment orders a military parent shall receive an expedited hearing and the parent can delegate visitation rights to a family member if doing so is within a child’s best interests. Any petition for custody or visitation will be given the same protections as afforded under the SCRA. Additionally, rights or protections regarding custody or visitation can only be waived writing

(f) A court order entered under this section must require

(1) a child be made reasonably available during periods of leave

(2) the facilitation of written and electronic contact between the deployed parent and the child, preferably electronic contact with a video image

(3) the deployed parent provide timely leave information

(g) Factors in determining a child’s best interests. Cross reference to AS 25.24.150(c) and AS 25.24.150(g)

(h) Definition of “deployment,” “family member,” and “military service”

**Section 2:** AS 25.20.110 is amended by adding new subsection to read:

(d) Except as provided in (e) – (h) military service cannot be a factor in finding a change of circumstances on a motion to modify child custody or visitation

(e) A court may provide for a temporary modification of a custody or visitation order to make reasonable accommodation for a deployment. The temporary order must include provisions for

(1) custody or visitation during periods of leave if doing so is within the child’s best interests.

(2) termination of the temporary order within 10 days of notification of the deployed parent’s ability to resume custody if doing so is within the child’s best interests. The non-deployed parent shall bear the burden of proof.

(3) a hearing if a child of a deployed parent moved out of state and the non-deployed parent files a motion that alleges that resumption of the permanent custody order will result in immediate danger of irreparable harm to the child or that the presumption under AS 25.24.150(g) exists

(4) delegation of the deployed parent's visitation rights to a family member if doing so is within the child's best interests.

(5) immediate notification from the non-deployed parent of a change of address or contact information.

(f) A court shall expedite a hearing to modify custody or visitation on a motion made by a parent who is subject to deployment.

(g) Factors in determining a child's best interests. Cross reference to AS 25.24.150(c) and AS 25.24.150(g)

(h) Definition of "deployment," "family member," and "military service." Cross reference to AS 25.20.095

**Section 3:** AS 25.24.150 is amended by adding new subsection to read:

(l) Except as provided in AS 25.20.095 and 25.20.110 military service cannot be a factor in determining the best interest of the child under (c) of this section.

**Section 4:** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

(a) Authorization for Telephonic, Video, or Internet Participation.

The court shall allow video or Internet testimony if the hearing or deposition involves the custody or visitation of a child of a parent who is deployed, as that term is defined in AS 25.20.095, at the request of the deployed parent.