

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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Rep. Nancy Dahlstrom:

I offer this letter as my official statement of support for House Bill 360, "An act relating to the provision of information regarding a student by a school district to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Alaska Challenge Youth Academy."

The Alaska Challenge Youth Academy, what we call the Alaska Military Youth Academy, is a last stop for teens to reset their life and get back on the track to be a productive member of our communities. Our school provides a military-style training and discipline environment to high school dropouts who voluntarily attend the 22-week residential course. The AMYA offers students the opportunity to: receive 7 high school credits that will allow the student to go back into the public school system, a General Education Diploma, and multiple job training certifications that, combined with internships, allow for quick job placement after the residential phase of the program.

Because the AMYA is a completely voluntary program, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs must advertise to reach candidates for this program. By supporting HB 360, the legislature will allow the AMYA to send a recruitment brochure to each high school dropout showing one alternative that will help the teen get back on track to complete their high school education. We can narrow our focus by simply having the school districts send the AMYA the names and contact information of known dropouts.

Our goal is to help high school dropouts finish their basic education requirements and become positive members of our great state. Every school is designed to help students achieve the most out of life, let's allow our traditional high schools to work with the AMYA to help every student, especially the ones who have dropped out, achieve success.

Sincerely,



Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus
Commissioner