

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER

Chairman, Chugiak-Eagle River Delegation

SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Bill 345

***“An Act relating to regulations adopted by the Department of Administration
waiving the commercial motor vehicle driving skills test for certain drivers***

with military commercial motor vehicle experience.”

HB 345 allows the state of Alaska to waive the commercial driver’s license road skills test for Alaska military personnel who earned their driving experience operating commercial-grade vehicles in the armed services.

The modern U.S. military is a highly mobile force, depending on skilled drivers operating a wide range of vehicles, under often harsh conditions. Impending budget cuts and troop reductions mean thousands of Alaska service members, including active duty, Guard and Reserve, will soon be hanging up their uniforms to seek civilian jobs.

In Alaska, where many trades and occupations involve transportation of goods and people across challenging landscapes, a commercial driver’s license (CDL) is a valuable credential that can offer a significant boost to those seeking to enter the civilian work force, whether in tourism, commercial fishing, construction, oil field services or other industries.

HB 345 seeks to help returning Alaska military personnel find good jobs, and to help Alaska businesses find qualified and credentialed employees, by acknowledging that many military drivers already possess the skills they need to be safe, productive civilian drivers.

HB 345 directs the Department of Administration to adopt regulations in accordance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration guidelines, allowing the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles to waive the road test in accordance with federal law.

To be eligible for a waiver, a driver must have spent the last two years or more driving the kind of equipment he expects to use in a civilian job, must have worked in the past 90 days as a military driver and must meet federal exemption requirements outlined in CFR 383.77. He/she also cannot have ever had any license suspended or revoked, had more than one minor traffic violation, been convicted of any driving offense involving drugs or alcohol, or been convicted for any serious traffic violation involving an accident.

Alaskans who honed their driving skills while in service to our nation deserve to have that experience validated and honored in the civilian world. HB 345 is an important tool to help them get the credentials they need to land good civilian jobs, and to help Alaska employers hire skilled and motivated employees.