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Senator Kevin Meyer Senate District L

SPONSOR STATEMENT **SENATE BILL 73**

Senate Bill 73 allows a property tax exemption on the first \$150,000 of the assessed value on real property owned and occupied as the primary residence and permanent place of abode for those who are at least 60 years old and the widow or widower of a person who was killed while in the military service of the United States.

Currently, by ordinance approved by the voters, municipalities may grant this property tax exemption to the following groups of people:

1. A resident who is 65 years of age or older,
2. A disabled veteran,
3. A resident who is at least 60 years of age and is a widow or widower of a person who was 65 years of age or was a disabled veteran, and
4. A resident under 60 years of age who is a widow or widower of a disabled veteran.

The survivors of those killed while in military duty of the United States face not only grief in the loss of their loved one while they served their country, but often they also face extreme financial difficulties. While we currently allow exemptions for those military veterans who have become disabled and their surviving spouse, we offer no such similar exemption for the survivors of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Under this legislation, municipalities will be able to allow voters to elect whether or not to include this often forgotten group of individuals in the tax code, and help them to remain in their homes and remain in Alaska.

I encourage your support on SB 73.