



Public Safety Employees Association, Inc.
"Representing Alaska's Finest"
A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 803



Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Chair, House State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Re: Support for North Star Medal legislation

Dear Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins:

I am writing you on behalf of PSEA/AFSCME's 800 state and municipal police employee members working throughout Alaska. Our membership includes Alaska State Troopers, Anchorage and Fairbanks Airport Police Officers and Firefighters, Alaska Court Service Officers, Alaska Deputy Fire Marshalls, and Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau, Fairbanks, Soldotna, Dillingham and Unalaska police department employees. Many of our members are also trained search and rescue professionals.

In the last four years alone, PSEA tragically lost four members in acts of valor and heroism. In March 2013, Alaska State Trooper Tage Toll died in helicopter accident rescuing a stranded Alaskan. In May of 2014, Alaska State Trooper Scott Johnson and Trooper Gabe Rich were murdered protecting the people of Tanana, Alaska. In October of 2016, responding to a citizen call for help, Fairbanks Police Department Sgt. Alan Brandt was ambushed, shot multiple times and eventually died due to his injuries. Prior to 2013, we lost many other members in similar situations. These are only the most recent losses. Over time, Alaska has lost too many heroes.

The North Star Medal you propose will recognize the bravery and valor of our lost heroes. Troopers Toll, Johnson, Rich, and Officer Brandt share one important fact in common: they all ran towards danger to help and protect Alaskans. Other Alaskan peace officers, firefighters, EMTs and Search and Rescue professionals do the same every day. Their acts of bravery and valor in the service of their fellow citizens deserve recognition and honor. This award is a lasting way for Alaska to show that honor to the surviving spouse, survivors, co-workers and the citizens helped by Alaska's fallen heroes.

Thank you very much for proposing this legislation. We hope that the Alaska State Legislature passes this bill quickly. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Jake Metcalfe
Executive Director
PSEA/AFSCME Local 803