

May 3, 2022

*Re: letter of support for HB120*

Members of the House Resource Committee,

I am an Alaska Native Combat Veteran and Purple Heart recipient of the Vietnam Conflict. I joined the Army in 1968 and served until 1970, serving in Vietnam from March 1969 through April 1970, receiving an Honorable Discharge under medical conditions at Ft. Wainwright, Alaska, on July 8, 1970.

On my first tour I received shrapnel in my left eye and spent my 19<sup>th</sup> birthday in the hospital in Vietnam. Before the end of my first tour, I volunteered for second tour in Vietnam. During my second tour, my right leg got messed up and I ended up spending my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday in the hospital in Vietnam. Shortly after, I received orders to be sent back to the States for a medical discharge.

In 1971, the Alaska Native Land Claims Act passed, creating the 13 Corporations. The Natives of Alaska were given 100 shares of stock to the corporation they were assigned to, plus 160-acre land allotment. The Alaska Natives that were serving at that time were signed up as at large members and received 100 shares of their corporation but not their 160-acre land allotment.

The Native Vietnam Veterans in the 1980s started to realize the mistake that was made, and started to organize to seek support, and help to petition the government to correct the mistake that was made, and to help them apply for their 160-acre land allotment that was never received.

The first Alaska Vietnam Veterans Land Allotment, I believe was passed in 1998, the government gave a short time of service in Vietnam for our Veterans to be eligible to apply, which excluded a lot of our Veterans who served, also there was a lot of restrictions, rules, and regulations to the Bill that a lot of our Veterans gave up.

The second Alaska Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment was passed about three years ago by President Trump to correct some of the mistakes that were made, making those who were left out to be eligible to file for their land allotment, including adding heirs of our deceased Veterans.

Shortly after President Biden was elected, he withdrew a lot of land for selection and closed most land selections to a small area, making it impossible for our Veterans to make selection of lands that they born and grew up in utilizing their land in a traditional way.

After WWII, the Veterans of our Nation were discharged and came back home, many coming to Alaska. After arriving in Alaska, they filed for a 160-acre homestead land allotment without prior proof of usage of land and very few restrictions, rules, and regulations.

The Alaska Native Veterans served with good faith to protect our land, our people, and our way of life when so many other men of this Nation ran away to different countries.

As the President of both the Alaska Native Veterans Association and the Alaska Native Veterans Council, I am requesting the Members of the House Resource Committee to support and pass HB 120 to honor the Alaska Warriors who proudly served our Nation with Honor and Pride.

At your service,  
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