



Representative Andi Story

Alaska State Legislature

House District 3

Mendenhall Valley

Haines
Klukwan
Gustavus
Skagway

Member
House Education

Member
House State Affairs

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Sponsor Statement

House Bill 25

“An Act relating to eligibility for the permanent fund dividend; and providing for an effective date.”

The uniformed services of the United States consist of the armed services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Commissioned Officer Corps, and the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service (USPHS). Members of the uniformed services are all treated similarly in pay, benefits, and rank. NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and USPHS Commissioned Corps are eligible for Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits, can be members of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), and can enroll in higher learning institutions using the GI Bill. Officers of the armed services salute higher-ranking members of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and USPHS Commissioned Corpsmen, as they would salute a higher-ranking member of their own, or any other branch of the armed services.

Currently there are 16 subsections of statute that allow Alaskans to maintain eligibility for the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) if they are absent from the state for different reasons. Reasons like post-secondary education, serving in the Peace Corps, and participating on a U.S. Olympic Team. Remaining eligible for the PFD while serving our country has been a long-time policy of Alaska. However, these two groups of the uniformed services of the United States are not permitted allowable absences for purposes of PFD eligibility. House Bill 25 would extend these allowable absences for members of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and USPHS Commissioned Corps as they serve our country.

HB 25 does not change other eligibility requirements for the PFD. It allows Alaskans serving their country in the NOAA Commissioned Officers Corps and U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps to remain eligible for the PFD if their duties require absences that are allowable for Alaskans in the other uniformed services groups.