



Fairbanks North Star Borough

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Representative Will Stapp
Alaska State House of Representatives
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99807

April 24, 2023
Submitted via email

Dear Representative Stapp,

Thank you for sponsoring HB155, "An Act establishing the Alaska Military Affairs Commission; and relating to the duties and powers of the Alaska Military Affairs Commission." The FNSB Assembly has identified the creation of a legislatively authorized Military Affairs Commission as a legislative priority for 2023.

Global and US national security issues are increasingly becoming more focused on the Arctic. With this additional focus, Alaska's importance as a strategic location is only becoming more prominent. It wasn't long ago that Alaska was fighting to keep its military bases from being closed. Now, Alaska is experiencing significant growth in military presence. While much of the attention has been focused on the Interior, there are opportunities, risks, and concerns statewide.

Currently, there lacks a statewide coordinated effort regarding military policy. The establishment of this Commission builds upon the goals of the Alaska Defense Forum to increase statewide collaboration and communication regarding the defense industry and military-related issues throughout the state. Locally, FNSB has found success in this approach through the work of the Tiger Team.

While Alaska is strategically located to meet the needs of US national security, there are challenges and opportunities to be addressed. First, Department of Defense leadership is increasingly concerned about the quality of life of service members and their families. Issues such as the quality of education and the availability of spousal employment are now being used in basing determinations. Other issues, such as available infrastructure, utilities, and housing, are also of concern.

With the establishment of an Alaska Military Affairs Commission, the state can be better prepared and positioned to support not only the installation and their missions, but the service members and their families as they integrate into our community.

Sincerely,


Bryce Ward | Apr 24, 2023 12:42 AKDT

Bryce J. Ward
Mayor

