

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

February 6, 2001
3:37 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Mike Chenault, Chair
Representative Lisa Murkowski
Representative Joe Green
Representative Pete Kott
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Joe Hayes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Beverly Masek

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 72

"An Act relating to an assistant adjutant general for national missile defense in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs."

- MOVED HB 72 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS ACTION

BILL: HB 72

SHORT TITLE:ASST. ADJUTANT GEN. FOR MISSILE DEFENSE

SPONSOR(S): RLS BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
01/17/01	0113	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/17/01	0113	(H)	MLV, STA, FIN
01/17/01	0114	(H)	FN 1: (MVA)
01/17/01	0114	(H)	GOVERNOR'S TRANSMITTAL LETTER
02/06/01		(H)	MLV AT 3:30 PM CAPITOL 120

WITNESS REGISTER

MG PHILLIP OATES, Adjutant General/Commissioner
Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs
P.O. Box 5800

Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505-0800

POSITION STATEMENT: Explained the need for HB 72 and answered questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 01-1, SIDE A
Number 0001

CHAIR MIKE CHENAULT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. Representatives Chenault, Green, Kott, Cissna, and Hayes were present at the call to order. Representative Murkowski arrived as the meeting was in progress. Representative Masek was excused.

HB 72 - ASST. ADJUTANT GEN. FOR MISSILE DEFENSE

Number 0259

CHAIR CHENAULT announced that the committee would hear HOUSE BILL NO. 72, "An Act relating to an assistant adjutant general for national missile defense in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs."

Number 0329

MG PHILLIP OATES, Adjutant General/Commissioner, Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, testified via teleconference. He began by describing that the main purpose of HB 72 is to send a strong message to the President of the United States that Alaska is ready to assume the significant responsibility of manning, fielding, and operating the national missile defense system. Alaska would be the first state in the Union to have an Assistant Adjutant General for National Missile Defense (AAG for NMD). It would also allow Alaska to participate with the National Missile Defense Joint Program Office (NMDJPO) in building, constructing, and fielding the system.

GENERAL OATES referred to the state position established last year to leverage opportunities that may come to the state, either directly from national missile defense activities in Alaska or from the technology, research, and educational opportunities that those activities may bring. That state position has to be cognizant of the military program but is not directly involved in the military program; this cognizance is

necessary in order to fully allow the state to leverage any opportunities that come from the military program's development.

GENERAL OATES explained that in contrast, the position of the AAG for NMD is a National Guard position; the person will begin as a traditional National Guardsman, serving routinely one weekend a month and two weeks a year on annual training. As background, the federal Department of Defense (DOD) controls the number of officers - with one exception, that of Assistant Adjutant General (AAG) - that are established in the National Guard. Those AAG positions are established through states and through state statute, and then paid for and fielded by the National Guard Bureau. As an example, some states have more than an AAG for army and for air, such as an AAG for training.

Number 0472

GENERAL OATES explained that the position outlined in HB 72 needs the stature of a general officer because of the significant weight of assuming this mission. The Alaska National Guard will be first in the nation to man and provide for the forces for national missile defense activities. That individual will need to work closely with the United States Army Space Command and Space and Missile Defense Command to ensure that the right type of unit is built, and that the right type of personnel policies are established.

Number 0600

GENERAL OATES pointed out that the general officer position needs to partner with other states that will be engaged in the national missile defense effort. Those states include Colorado, which will be the higher brigade headquarters; New Mexico, where area defense/artillery training takes place; Alabama, where development of the system takes place; and California, a state already involved in space [programs]. The stature of the general officer's position is not only needed, but can be achieved at no cost to the state by establishing it through state statute and asking the National Guard Bureau to man the position.

GENERAL OATES expanded on the benefit of creating this position. He said it would open up an opportunity for the state to work closely with the NMDJPO, and to allow this individual to be their commander or director of the site activation command here in Alaska. The NMDJPO has been informed that Alaska is establishing this position. Furthermore, General Nance has

expressed interest in allowing the person [filling the position] to be in charge of all the federal activities, including building, constructing, and fielding this program here. He said NMDJPO supports this because they do not have a general officer position; a restricted number of general officers in the DOD could be dedicated to this program.

GENERAL OATES offered that General Nance felt a general officer was needed to lead this program and the site activation command. There will be approximately 30 to 40 senior civilians and full colonels developing the different aspects of this program. The individual would work with the state issues of permitting and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to coordinate efforts so that an operational system can be running by 2005 or 2006.

Number 0749

GENERAL OATES specified that the individual filling this general officer position would be an Alaskan National Guardsman selected by recommendation of the Adjutant General in consultation with the National Guard Bureau and the NMDJPO. If not already a general officer of the National Guard, after being approved by the governor, he or she would need to come before the legislature for confirmation.

GENERAL OATES explained that the type of individual sought is one who fully meets the requirements for promotion and federal recognition as a general officer; is a member of the Alaska National Guard; is a graduate of the war college; and has experience as a chief of staff of a general office level of command, or a program manager at the current equivalent level. Additional desirable qualifications include joint assignment experience, working with all services at the lieutenant colonel or colonel level; command as colonel; a graduate degree from an accredited university; prior experience with national missile defense activities; employment experience with the State of Alaska; and experience as a spokesperson or supervisor of public affairs activities. It is a significant individual they seek because the position has very significant responsibilities. This position is important to Alaska because it would ensure that the ground units and unit structure are built to succeed.

GENERAL OATES explained that initially they would establish just the traditional guard position, which does not require any federal receipts. Submitted as a part of HB 72, however, is language for legislative appropriation of federal money needed for the position if and when it is established as also a

director of the site activation command. These would be federal receipts only; no additional state funding would be required, either currently or later. The \$200,000 per year would cover the pay and allowances at a brigadier general level, and would also pay the retirement costs for the state.

GENERAL OATES told members, in conclusion, that HB 72 is an indication to the President that Alaska is open for national missile defense business, to the DOD that Alaska has a serious commitment to this, and that Alaska is postured for success in this very important mission area.

Number 1007

GENERAL OATES, in response to questions from Representative Murkowski, explained the need for this position to be in statute. In order for the position to be authorized by the National Guard Bureau, it must be in statute. The language specifying that the position be authorized for the duration of development and deployment was crafted so that the position would extend past just the development. He felt, with concurrence of the military and General Schwartz, that because of the significance of the position's responsibility, it should be maintained for as long as this system is deployed in Alaska.

GENERAL OATES said another important point is that as a new mission set for the National Guard as a whole, they can lead the way in which the DOD and the National Guard perform these missions. There is also a connection between this mission of national missile defense and two other missions: the regional air operations center for Alaska's (indisc.) region; and the manning of Clear [Air Station] for space surveillance, and the security of that installation. Since all of those missions are interconnected, or leading the way, he feels the establishment of a general officer position is the right way to go.

GENERAL OATES confirmed for Representative Murkowski that until federal monies are appropriated, nothing would happen with this position. The money will only be required if and when the individual's duties are expanded according to the memorandum of understanding developed with the NMDJPO. The President has not yet made the decision to begin the deployment and fielding of national missile defenses. Nevertheless, General Oates felt it was important to push ahead with this issue because should the Presidential decision come this summer, they could act on it quickly.

Number 1211

REPRESENTATIVE MURKOWSKI referred to Section 1, lines 7-9, and asked if this language had the approval of General Schwartz.

GENERAL OATES responded that it did meet with General Schwartz's approval; they had coordinated on this language. A further point was that neither he nor the National Guard work for General Schwartz. Instead, they work for the state and for the governor. The only exception would be when they are "federalized."

GENERAL OATES noted that this mission set is different in that they are forced providers, but they are forced providers to the United States Army Space Command who, in turn, report to the United States Space Command. This chain of command is similar to that of Clear [Air Station]. Because the military members involved in this project would be full-time, General Schwartz would be very active in giving advice, counsel, and guidance, but they would not be working for him. General Oates assured Representative Murkowski that General Schwartz has had input in every step.

Number 1320

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT commented that based on General Oates' testimony and the fact that it would not cost the state, he felt it to be a worthwhile endeavor and was in favor of getting it to the governor as soon as possible.

Number 1351

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT made a motion to move HB 72 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 72 was moved out of the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

Number 1527

GENERAL OATES responded to a question by Representative Kott, saying that currently they do not have a specific individual in mind for this position. [HB 72 was moved out of committee.]

ADJOURNMENT

Number 1572

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.