

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

May 2, 2001
3:12 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Beverly Masek
Representative Lisa Murkowski

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 27
Relating to an Alaska National Guard Armory in Juneau.

- MOVED SJR 27 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS ACTION

BILL: SJR 27

SHORT TITLE:NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY IN JUNEAU

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) ELTON

| Jrn-Date | Jrn-Page | | Action |
|----------|----------|-----|---|
| 04/11/01 | 1069 | (S) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 04/11/01 | 1069 | (S) | STA |
| 04/26/01 | | (S) | STA AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 211 |
| 04/26/01 | | (S) | Moved Out of Committee MINUTE(STA) |
| 04/27/01 | 1301 | (S) | STA RPT 2DP 2NR |
| 04/27/01 | 1301 | (S) | NR: THERRIAULT, PEARCE; |
| 04/27/01 | 1301 | (S) | DP: PHILLIPS, DAVIS |
| 04/27/01 | 1301 | (S) | FN1: ZERO(S.STA) |
| 04/28/01 | 1329 | (S) | RULES TO CALENDAR 4/28/01 |
| 04/28/01 | 1335 | (S) | READ THE SECOND TIME |
| 04/28/01 | 1335 | (S) | ADVANCED TO THIRD READING UNAN CONSENT |

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|----------|------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 04/28/01 | 1336 | (S) | READ THE THIRD TIME SJR 27 |
| 04/28/01 | 1336 | (S) | PASSED Y19 N1 |
| 04/28/01 | 1336 | (S) | DONLEY NOTICE OF RECONSIDERATION |
| 04/28/01 | | (S) | RLS AT 2:00 PM FAHRENKAMP 203 |
| 04/30/01 | 1381 | (S) | RECONSIDERATION NOT TAKEN UP |
| 04/30/01 | 1382 | (S) | TRANSMITTED TO (H) |
| 04/30/01 | 1382 | (S) | VERSION: SJR 27 |
| 05/01/01 | 1423 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 05/01/01 | 1423 | (H) | MLV |
| 05/01/01 | 1423 | (H) | REFERRED TO MLV |
| 05/01/01 | 1471 | (H) | CROSS SPONSOR(S): HUDSON |
| 05/02/01 | | (H) | MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 102 |

WITNESS REGISTER

JESSE KIEHL, Staff
to Senator Kim Elton
Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building, Room 115
Juneau, Alaska 99801

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SJR 27 on behalf of the sponsor and answered questions.

MAC METCALFE
624 6th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SJR 27 and answered questions.

CAROL CARROLL, Director
Administrative Services Division
Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA)
400 Willoughby, Suite 500
Juneau, Alaska 99811

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SJR 27 and answered questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 01-12, SIDE A
Number 0001

CHAIR MIKE CHENAULT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

Members present at the call to order were Representatives Chenault, Green, Kott, Cissna, and Hayes.

SJR 27 - NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY IN JUNEAU

CHAIR CHENAULT announced that the committee would hear SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 27, Relating to an Alaska National Guard Armory in Juneau.

Number 0094

JESSE KIEHL, Staff to Senator Kim Elton, Alaska State Legislature, introduced SJR 27 on behalf of Senator Elton, prime sponsor. He explained that the Juneau armory needs to move because it sits on land owned by the Mental Health Land Trust, which has plans to redevelop it for other purposes. The resolution therefore expresses to the federal government the legislature's support for a new armory. He noted that the federal government will soon begin ranking armory projects, a process that he believes should be completed by late June.

Number 0208

MAC METCALFE came forward to testify as a private citizen. A National Guard member and sergeant since 1988, he told members it is critical for every region in the state to have a strong National Guard presence, simply for emergency services. Both Bethel and Nome have battalion headquarters, as does Juneau, which requires a full-time staff of about 15 people in order to coordinate in times of emergency. Furthermore, there are armories in nearly every community in Southeast Alaska and in many villages; an emergency would require headquarters staff in order to coordinate with emergency services in Anchorage. Without an armory in Juneau, the headquarters could be moved elsewhere, which would not be good for the whole region. He noted that the leases will be up in two or three years for the Subport and the armory in Juneau.

Number 0364

CAROL CARROLL, Director, Administrative Services Division, Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA), came forward and urged the committee's positive consideration of SJR 27.

Number 0419

MS. CARROLL responded to a question from Representative Kott regarding a \$1.7 million [total] appropriation to the DMVA. She said several years ago a [\$1.6 million] legislative appropriation was received to replace the armory; she indicated the DMVA had looked at a site and dealt with the City and Borough of Juneau to get a site near the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Money was spent on looking at the design and doing site analysis from that appropriation. Within the last year or so, however, [the DMVA] has been working with the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) to look at a joint-use facility near Auke [Bay], which perhaps the National Guard Bureau will view more favorably because it looks at joint-use facilities more favorably than single-use facilities now.

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT asked where the location would be if the federal appropriation were made in the next four to six months. He also asked whether the project is far enough along that there is a good plan and whether the existing infrastructure at UAS would be used.

MS. CARROLL responded that she believes the effort now is toward working with the UAS plot. There is a design that is "pretty much complete" for a facility that can be situated there, involving joint use of the armory-gymnasium. She emphasized the belief that joint use would place the project higher on the federal government's priority list. In response to a question by Representative Green, she said the \$1.6 million is a general fund amount, some of which has been spent. If the federal government provided money, the remainder of the \$1.6 million would be used for the facility and wouldn't revert to the state. The problem is that [the DMVA] has received authority from the legislature to receive the federal money, but has not yet received any of that money.

Number 0691

MS. CARROLL, in further response to Representative Green, explained that armories cost different amounts of money. Sometimes there is a 75/25 percent match, depending on whether it is a joint-use facility. The mix of funding depends on what the square footage is used for. Sometimes it is 100 percent general funds, and sometimes it is 100 percentage federal money.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked whether its being a joint-use facility would help or hinder regarding the state's contribution in the mix.

MS. CARROLL answered that there will be two entities coming back to the legislature and requesting additional funds: the university, asking for money for the facility, and the state, asking for the additional amount needed to complete the facility. She deferred to Mr. Kiehl for details.

Number 0799

MR. KIEHL reported that the university regents have put this joint facility on their request list as one of their priorities. The university anticipates spending approximately \$5.3 million on its share of the facility. According to the current design and the federal formula for sharing different pieces for different purposes, Mr. Kiehl said "we" are anticipating that the federal government will pay approximately \$5.3 million as well. Under the current design, the state match for the non-university armory portion will be approximately \$3.1 million, of which \$1.7 million [total] has been appropriated.

MR. KIEHL emphasized that the joint-use facility appears today to be the most cost-efficient way to meet the missions of both the National Guard and UAS. Both organizations believe that it will effectively meet their needs and will be significantly less expensive than two facilities. However, should a joint-use facility not meet the needs of both entities or make sense to the legislature, it won't happen that way. Mr. Kiehl concluded by pointing out that SJR 27 doesn't make an appropriation or bind the state. The legislature will have control, when the time comes, should the federal government approve funding for a Juneau armory.

Number 0937

CHAIR CHENAULT asked whether the estimate for the project is \$13.7 million to \$14 million for the total project, including federal funds.

MR. KIEHL said that is in the correct ballpark.

CHAIR CHENAULT asked whether there would be an estimated 35-to-40 percent match from the federal government. He suggested it would be \$8.4 million in state funds [for the university portion plus the armory portion] versus \$5.3 million in federal money.

MR. KIEHL said it would be approximately 30-some percent for the state. He specified that the federal government, to his

understanding, won't share in the costs associated with strictly the university's use, such as a hypothetical racquetball court, for example. He apologized for not having the design with him.

Number 1056

MR. KIEHL, in response to a question from Representative Cissna, explained that most parts of the building would be used jointly, to his understanding. A large, open space is needed for both a university recreation facility (for the gymnasium) and an armory (for mustering and training). In addition, both need locker rooms and showers. However, the university doesn't need offices for the guard headquarters company, for example, and therefore wouldn't share in the costs or use of those.

MR. KIEHL noted that the guard and the university would have to work out whether guard members would have access to strictly recreational facilities, as they work out their joint-use arrangement. The biggest concern would be that in the event of some national disaster or a civil or military emergency in Southeast Alaska, the university would lose its recreational facility for a while; however, the university is fully aware of that and agrees it is a good tradeoff.

MR. KIEHL reiterated that if, early on, this joint facility doesn't meet the needs of both entities and make sense to the legislature, there will be separate facilities planned instead. This resolution simply expresses the legislature's support for a new armory in Juneau, which is a definite need.

Number 1246

REPRESENTATIVE CISSNA commented that there might be benefits from having guard members on campus; for example, guard members may want to take classes and students may want to become members of the guard.

Number 1354

MR. METCALFE, in response to a question by Representative Kott, reported that he has talked to the people who designed the armory that is being presented in Washington, D.C. The university has asked that the gymnasium area of the new armory be expanded; the university would pay for that expansion, including having it enlarged to be a college-sized court, adding bleachers, and adding an indoor track around the gym. Right now, the university has no gymnasium. He pointed out that the

current armory is a gymnasium surrounded by lockers, with a vault that serves as an armory and a few offices. The armory by the university would be similar, with expanded office space [for the guard] and an expanded court [for the university].

Number 1480

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT asked whether this is what the university will be coming to the legislature to request funding for.

MR. KIEHL responded that as he understands it, a portion of the earlier appropriation made by the legislature for planning and design of a guard armory has been expended. A design was done for an armory strictly for the guard. He said the guard has spent a little more of that money, and the university has spent some money from its existing funds to adapt that design. Mr. Kiehl said he had neither design with him.

Number 1542

REPRESENTATIVE CISSNA asked Mr. Metcalfe whether there would be any downside to having the armory portion be larger, or any downside for the university in terms of mobilization by the guard in an emergency.

MR. METCALFE said no. He added that Representative Cissna's earlier point regarding the association between the guard and the students was a good one. Many students don't know the economic benefits of being a guard member. For example, a person who joins the guard receives \$9,000 worth of GI [Government Issue] benefits; a person who already has existing student loans receives \$10,000 towards paying off those loans; and a "GI bill kicker" can provide another \$4,000 or \$5,000. That is all federal money. Regarding mobilization, he said he sees no disadvantage, and having a bigger hall would be an advantage in any kind of emergency.

REPRESENTATIVE CISSNA asked whether the facility will be approximately the same distance to the airport [as from the current armory downtown].

MR. KIEHL explained that the new armory site isn't right on the main campus. The plan is to put it closer to Auke Bay, right past Horton's on the hill; there would be immediate access from the main highway. He said he doesn't see that as a problem.

Number 1695

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked how the funding mix for the approximately \$14 million will be figured.

MR. METCALFE said he knows that the university and the guard have worked together closely on the plan; however, he doesn't know that they have worked out the exact time that the university would have access to the gym. He noted that on training weekends for the guard, for example, the university wouldn't have access.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN expressed concern about supporting the resolution and then having to provide state funds, which might dampen legislators' enthusiasm.

MR. METCALFE stated his understanding that prior to the university's involvement, there would have been a 75/25 federal/state split. He recalled testimony that the university has offered to put \$5-plus million into the project to expand the gymnasium.

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT pointed out that university funds still come from the state.

Number 1859

MR. KIEHL emphasized that two designs have been done [one for an armory and one for a joint-use facility], and the legislature will have the opportunity to evaluate, in depth, the benefits and costs to the state of both. He apologized that nobody from the university was present that day, but offered to discuss Representative Green's concerns with the university and with other representatives of the guard.

MR. KIEHL informed members that in the past, the Juneau armory project hadn't ranked high enough on the National Guard Bureau's list to be funded either through a regular appropriation or through a special appropriation by U.S. Senator Stevens. Due to recent changes in the National Guard Bureau's ranking process and criteria, however, it is believed that the Juneau armory project will rise to that point. Without that, no new federal share for the Juneau armory would be possible. Mr. Kiehl voiced confidence that SJR 27 will help in the bureau's ranking process.

Number 2053

MR. METCALFE emphasized that the guard must be out of the current armory in about three years. He noted that there are two headquarters companies in Juneau: the battalion headquarters company and the Alpha Company headquarters. He asked where those people would go, and what would happen then.

Number 2084

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked whether the City and Borough of Juneau would be willing to put at least as much money [as the value of the building being vacated] into the new armory, should it be located on university property.

MR. METCALFE replied that the city already has put up property, a site at 7 mile. Typically, for an armory project, a city will offer property and the state will offer to match the federal funding. However, the university owns the property at Auke Bay [being considered for a joint-use facility], which is favored by the National Guard, to his understanding, and by himself. As to Representative Green's specific question, Mr. Metcalfe said he didn't know.

Number 2173

CHAIR CHENAULT closed public testimony.

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT said he isn't troubled with SJR 27. The need is there. He reported that he has been to the Juneau armory, which is in bad shape, and there is a definite time for the guard to be out of that building, since the Mental Health Land Trust will evict the guard in three years. He suggested there is a need for a fairly aggressive schedule in order to complete a facility in the existing timeframe.

Number 2210

REPRESENTATIVE KOTT made a motion to move SJR 27 out of committee with individual recommendations and the attached zero fiscal note. There being no objection, SJR 27 was moved out of the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.