

SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 122(L&C)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/29/06

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES DAHLSTROM, Berkowitz, Kott, Lynn, Hawker, Gruenberg, Wilson, Elkins, Thomas, Kerttula, Foster, Chenault, Croft, Olson, McGuire, Gara, Ramras, Guttentberg, LeDoux

SENATOR Elton

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act providing for the issuance of complimentary fishing and hunting licenses to**
2 **certain members of the Alaska National Guard returning from active duty deployment;**
3 **relating to tuition relief and academic status protection for members and dependents of**
4 **members of the Alaska National Guard deployed to a combat zone; relating to**
5 **reimbursement of premiums for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance paid by**
6 **members of the Alaska National Guard deployed to a combat zone; and providing for an**
7 **effective date."**

8 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

9 *** Section 1.** AS 16.05.335 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

10 (b) The commissioner shall, at the request of the governor, authorize the
11 issuance, by the department or by agents appointed under AS 16.05.380, of a
12 complimentary one-year license for sport fishing or hunting, or both, to qualified
13 members of the Alaska National Guard. To qualify for a complimentary license under

1 this subsection, a member of the Alaska National Guard must produce to the
 2 department or agent the member's United States Department of Defense certificate of
 3 release or discharge from active duty and the member's deployment orders
 4 demonstrating that the member was called to active duty and deployed for 30 or more
 5 consecutive days in a combat zone, as that term is defined in AS 26.05.263. However,
 6 a member who was so deployed for less than 30 consecutive days due to an injury
 7 related to the member's deployment is qualified for the complimentary license if the
 8 member provides documentation to verify that status. The complimentary license for
 9 sport fishing or hunting, or both, is valid for the license year in which the member
 10 applies or for the subsequent license year. To receive the complimentary license under
 11 this subsection, the member must apply to the commissioner requesting the license and
 12 provide the information required by this subsection within two years after the date the
 13 member returns to the state following deployment. Information pertaining to
 14 complimentary licenses issued under this subsection shall be available to the public.

15 * **Sec. 2.** AS 26.05 is amended by adding new sections to read:

16 **Sec. 26.05.261. Tuition relief.** (a) Upon request by a member of the Alaska
 17 National Guard deployed to a combat zone for not less than 30 days, the University of
 18 Alaska or the Alaska Vocational Technical Center

19 (1) shall grant the member and a dependent of a military member a
 20 military leave of absence from the institution;

21 (2) shall credit any tuition and fees paid that are applicable to an
 22 academic term during a military leave of absence toward tuition and fees due for an
 23 academic term beginning within 12 months following the return of the member from
 24 deployment;

25 (3) may not change the educational status or degree requirements for a
 26 member accepted in a degree program before the date of deployment.

27 (b) In this section, "combat zone" has the meaning given in AS 26.05.263.

28 **Sec. 26.05.263. Payment of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance**
 29 **premiums; establishment of fund.** (a) The Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance
 30 premium fund is established as a separate fund in the state treasury. The fund consists
 31 of appropriations by the legislature to it. Money appropriated to the fund does not

1 lapse. The state shall hold the principal and earnings of the fund for the purpose of
 2 reimbursing eligible members of the Alaska National Guard deployed to a combat
 3 zone for premiums paid under 38 U.S.C. 1965 - 1980 (Servicemembers' Group Life
 4 Insurance Program).

5 (b) The adjutant general may make expenditures from the fund to reimburse
 6 eligible members of the Alaska National Guard deployed to a combat zone for
 7 premiums paid under the program during the period of

8 (1) deployment if the eligible member applies for reimbursement
 9 within two years after returning to the state following deployment;

10 (2) up to one year of convalescence following the return from
 11 deployment; and

12 (3) with the approval of the adjutant general, up to one year of
 13 convalescence in addition to the year under (2) of this subsection.

14 (c) Subject to appropriation, the fund may be used to pay the expenses
 15 incurred by the commissioner of revenue in managing the fund and administrative
 16 expenses incurred by the Department of Revenue in administering this section.

17 (d) Except as provided in (c) of this section, money in the fund is available for
 18 expenditure without further appropriation.

19 (e) Nothing in this section creates a dedicated fund.

20 (f) The Department of Revenue may adopt regulations necessary to carry out
 21 the provisions of this section.

22 (g) In this section,

23 (1) "combat zone" means an area of hostile fire or imminent danger
 24 that entitles a member on duty in that area to special pay;

25 (2) "convalescence" means hospital, outpatient, or rehabilitation
 26 treatment for an injury suffered while deployed to a combat zone;

27 (3) "fund" means the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance premium
 28 fund;

29 (4) "program" means the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance
 30 program established by 38 U.S.C. 1965 - 1980.

31 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to

1 read:

2 APPLICABILITY. The reimbursement of premiums paid by members of the Alaska
3 National Guard deployed to a combat zone under 38 U.S.C. 1965 - 1980 (Servicemembers'
4 Group Life Insurance Program) under AS 26.05.263, enacted in sec. 2 of this Act, applies to
5 premiums due on or after January 1, 2005.

6 * **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
7 read:

8 RETROACTIVITY. AS 26.05.263, enacted by sec. 2 of this Act, is retroactive to
9 January 1, 2005, and applies to authorize reimbursement of premiums paid by eligible Alaska
10 National Guard members after December 31, 2004.

11 * **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).