

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

February 7, 2008

1:07 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Bob Roses, Chair
Representative Nancy Dahlstrom
Representative Anna Fairclough
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
Representative Jay Ramras
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch
Representative Scott Kawasaki

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 326

"An Act authorizing the governor to delegate to the adjutant general the authority to order the organized militia into active state service and authorizing the payment of Alaska National Guard called into active state service to fight wildfires at rates of pay established for certain emergency fire-fighting personnel; and providing for an effective date."

-MOVED CSHB 326(MLV) OUT OF COMMITTEE

ANNUAL UPDATE & DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATION

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 326

SHORT TITLE: NAT'L GUARD: COMMAND/ACTIVE SERVICE/PAY

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/17/08	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/17/08	(H)	MLV, FIN
02/07/08	(H)	MLV AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

MAJOR GENERAL CRAIG CAMPBELL, Adjutant General/Commissioner
Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA)
Fort Richardson, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced HB 326 on behalf of the
Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs.

TOM IRWIN, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 326.

LYNN WILCOCK, Fire Program Manager
Director's Office
Division of Forestry
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 326.

ROBERT GOODMAN, President
Alaska Territorial Guard Organization
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the Alaska National Guard
Update.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CHAIR BOB ROSES called the House Special Committee on Military
and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at [1:07:23 PM](#).
Representatives LeDoux, Kawasaki, Fairclough, and Roses were
present at the call to order. Representatives Buch, Dahlstrom,
and Ramras arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 326-NAT'L GUARD: COMMAND/ACTIVE SERVICE/PAY

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CHAIR ROSES announced that the first order of business would be
HOUSE BILL NO. 326, "An Act authorizing the governor to delegate
to the adjutant general the authority to order the organized
militia into active state service and authorizing the payment of
Alaska National Guard called into active state service to fight
wildfires at rates of pay established for certain emergency
fire-fighting personnel; and providing for an effective date."

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MAJOR GENERAL CRAIG CAMPBELL, Adjutant General/Commissioner, Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA), introduced HB 326 on behalf of the DMVA. He informed the committee that the administration, the DMVA, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) support the bill and called the committee's attention to page 2, lines 12, 13, and 14, that read:

The governor may delegate authority to order the organized militia or any part of it, into active state service under this section to the adjutant general.

MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL explained that the intent of this part of the bill is to change the law for fighting fires because fires happen so rapidly. The travel schedules of the governor and the adjutant general can hamper activation of the Alaska National Guard [(Guard)] because that normally requires authorization from the governor. In this specific case, when the adjutant general is notified by the commissioner of the DNR that the Guard is needed for fire protection, the governor agrees to allow activation by the adjutant general. Major General Craig continued to say that changes on lines 19 through 23 will adjust the pay of Guard members who are activated for firefighting services from the state active duty rate to firefighter pay. It was determined that Guard members who were activated for firefighter duties were being paid about one-third of the pay of the other emergency firefighters. The commissioner of the DNR and Major General Craig agreed that Guard firefighters should be paid the same rate of pay as firefighters from other states or the private sector. He concluded by saying that this bill is supported by the governor.

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TOM IRWIN, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, stated that he strongly supported the bill. During a time of serious fires, help is needed immediately; when the equipment is available, the Guard is always there to help. He explained that Guard members are Alaskans who respond to the emergency and must leave their jobs and families to go to the fire line. For this, he said, they are not paid an appropriate and fair wage. This bill will allow Guard firefighters to be paid what private and outside firefighters are paid, and he encouraged the committee to give the bill strong consideration.

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CHAIR ROSES asked whether this arrangement would use the Guard to replace private individuals, or companies that are under contract, to fight fires.

COMMISSIONER IRWIN responded that the bill will not affect private firefighters. The Guard is used for extra protection.

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CHAIR ROSES confirmed that the Guard is called in after all other resources have been expended.

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COMMISSIONER IRWIN deferred the question to Lynn Wilcock. He emphasized that the intent is not to replace private service.

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LYNN WILCOCK, Fire Program Manager, Director's Office, Division of Forestry, DNR, informed the committee that, in an emergency, DNR must certify to the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) that all private sector and civilian resources are exhausted prior to requesting use of the Guard. He added that the Guard is most valuable at the time private resources in Alaska are exhausted, and out of state resources are being mobilized, but have not arrived. He added that the Guard is always valuable and the Division of Forestry supports the bill.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH referred to a document titled DNR Comments on 773-08-0016, second paragraph, reading:

...as well as the fact that the Division of Forestry can only use them, referring to outside or the National Guard, after we have used all available civilian assets.

REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH then said, "... according to this memo that there's a regulation in place that we would have to go there before implementing the National Guard." She then returned to the bill and observed that the interpretation being discussed allows, in the case of fire situations only, the adjutant general to activate the Guard. However, under Sec. 26.05.070, she pointed out that the governor may order organized

militia into active state service for any reason. Representative Fairclough said that her interpretation of the change brought by this bill is, the authority to activate the Guard is delegated to the adjutant general no matter what the condition of the emergency. These are two totally different sections and one will allow payment of firefighter pay rates; however, she disagreed that the change in lines 12 through 14 are specific to calling out the Guard to fight wildfires. She said that this change will delegate the governor's authority in its entirety, and the adjutant general can call the Guard in, without the governor, for any emergency in the state.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL said that he agreed with Representative Fairclough.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH compared her interpretation to the first bullet point in the sectional analysis that says the authority is specific to wildfires; she stated that the bullet point is inaccurate and needs to be clarified.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL confirmed that the intent is for the bill to change the authority for wildfires, as stated by the sectional analysis. He said that he has not asked the governor to delegate authority over all Guard activations.

REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH re-stated her interpretation.

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CHAIR ROSES noted that, if the committee adopts a conceptual amendment, the legal department will have to deal with the problem before the bill moves on.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL indicated that he would not oppose a change to the bill that will restrict the authorization to fighting fires.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH said that she will offer an amendment; however, she expressed her understanding that, in the case of a dire emergency, the governor may want a secondary line of defense to respond to natural emergencies. She then moved to adopt a conceptual amendment as follows:

That the adjutant general powers specific to delegation of authority be limited to activating troops of the Alaska National Guard to firefighting only.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL said that he had no objection.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH opined that the Conceptual Amendment is inaccurate because the whole issue is that the bill does not require, except under the provision about firefighter pay, for DNR to be consulted. The amendment would have to be expanded to include the caveat that DNR is required to agree to the activation.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL re-stated that the first part of the bill indicates the governor's concurrence with the adjutant general's authority to activate the Guard; the DNR does not activate the Guard. The second portion is about the payment of firefighting wages. He asked Representative Fairclough for a further explanation of her statement.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH expressed her understanding of the statement in the sectional analysis of Sec. 1 and remarked:

... it says, 'the Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard to activate the troops to fight wild fires' not to pay them, but to fight it, ' will when asked by the Department of Natural Resources.' So, he's, he's the one who is the kicker.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL concurred that DNR must request activation of the troops. The initiation of the request is the first step to the adjutant general's activation of the troops and the subsequent payment of firefighter pay, not state active duty pay.

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CHAIR ROSES observed that the committee will not amend the sectional analysis and that the bill does not have the DNR requirement.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH said that, the caveat in the sectional analysis has both instances tied together with the DNR.

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CHAIR ROSES surmised that when the bill moves to finance, the sectional analysis can be corrected. Furthermore, there was no objection to the Conceptual Amendment.

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REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked whether, in the case of a wildfire happening when the governor was out of town, the authority is given in advance.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL responded that, if HB 326 is passed, DMVA will ask for a Letter of Delegation that will be on file for the governor's term of office.

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REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked whether Major General Campbell wants the authority to activate the Guard in the case of other matters, such as a riot.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL answered no. He explained that military authority is deferred to the civilian leadership in most instances; all control of the response is a civilian decision. Secondly, the executive power of the governor should be to have

the ability to determine at what level to respond to an emergency, with the exception of wildfires. He opined that civil disobedience builds up over time, unlike a wildfire. Evaluations show that a wildfire is the only valid exception to the governor's control over the activation of the Guard.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH asked whether Guard firefighters, when fighting a long lasting fire, receive compensation for medical benefits from their civilian jobs that may be jeopardized by their Guard obligation.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL assured the committee that firefighter wages include workman's compensation at an appropriate level. However, this may not be equal to a Guard member's civilian employment medical coverage.

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REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCLOUGH observed that it is a choice to be a member of the Guard.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL confirmed that Guard members have joined the state militia with responsibility to the state first and the federal government when asked. This is the primary mission for the Guard's existence.

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CHAIR ROSES closed testimony.

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REPRESENTATIVE DAHLSTROM moved to report HB 326, Version A, with attached Conceptual Amendment, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no opposition, CSHB 326(MLV) was reported from the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

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The committee took an at-ease from 1:33 p.m. to 1:34 p.m.

Annual Update & Departmental Presentation

1:35:05 PM

MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL informed the committee that the Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA) and the Palin Administration have a new strategic plan that is included with member's copies of the 2007 annual report. The strategic plan is the benchmark that reflects budget requests and, with the DMVA website, provides transparency of last year's functions of the department. For further information about the DMVA's activities, he provided copies of Warrior Magazine, and pointed out that it is published at no cost to the state. Major General Campbell thanked the committee for the past legislative action that contributed to the repeal of a federal law usurping the governors' control over state militias nationwide. A crisis was averted by action from the governors and state legislatures. However, he warned that there is a new recommendation from the U. S. North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD), Northern Command, that will need to be addressed in the future.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL stated that the Army Guard and the Air Guard have had two extremely busy years. Last year, the Army Guard had the largest number of soldiers from Alaska, deployed in combat, since World War Two and most are home safe after serving exceptionally well. There were 575 soldiers in Kuwait and Iraq; a significant number were Native Alaskans from rural Alaska. There were 150 members serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan, and during the change of control from U. S. forces to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces, the Taliban accelerated fighting in the areas outside of Kandahar. However, U. S. Army and Canadian forces, with significant leadership from the Alaska Army National Guard, prevailed. Most are now home, except for those imbedded in Afghanistan and in Iraq, who are performing training missions with the Mongolian observers. In addition, there are 185 soldiers stationed near Baghdad. He opined that the "surge" [in military presence] has helped to protect these soldiers from death and serious injury. Major General Campbell continued to explain that the Guard is changing to a battlefield surveillance brigade: a re-organization of 3,000 soldiers, some of whom will have to be schooled and re-trained next year for new responsibilities. The Army will test the new brigade in about 15 months for a certification to serve. He stressed that certification is important to ensure that Guard

members learn the life skills needed to benefit their state and villages.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL turned to the subject of missile defense at Fort Greeley. This is an entire Guard operation of 250 soldiers, and the new commander is doing an exceptional job. In the matter of recruiting and retention, he said that the Alaska Guard is 98 percent manned; in fact, numbers are up to about 2,000 soldiers and Native recruiting is up after a 15 year decline. With the new organization, duties overseas, training, and high quality leadership, the state has seen an increased interest in joining the Guard. He continued to report that aviators and Black Hawk helicopters are going back to Kosovo for their second rotation; in addition, fixed wing aircraft are serving in Iraq. In Kosovo, there is a lot of tension in the streets, and the presence of Guard support helps to ensure that negotiations between the warring factions will continue. Operation Jump Start is a nationwide Guard operation to strengthen the security along the border of the four states that share a border with Mexico; this operation is scheduled to continue for the rest of this year. Finally, Major General Campbell reported that Alaska is the last state where the Army provides emergency helicopter support to civilians through the Military Assistance and Search Team (MAST); this program will end on the first of July, 2008, and alternatives need to be found for rescue services in the Interior.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS asked for the timeframe of the loss of the MAST program in Fairbanks.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL stated that he is talking with Interior representatives about the options to provide support for the Interior. The first of July, 2008, is the date for termination of the service; within that time it must be determined whether the state has sufficient capabilities or will contract with the Army for emergency services.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS observed that there is a safety issue for the citizens of Fairbanks and the Interior due to its extreme weather and distances between population centers.

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REPRESENTATIVE BUCH recalled that, in 2002, the U.S. Coast Guard assumed a great deal of military homeland security responsibilities.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL explained that the Guard and Coast Guard have agreed that, with the exception of the coastal area south of Anchorage to the Aleutian Islands, that is covered by the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard takes responsibility for rescue over water and the Guard over land, including Prince William Sound. In a dire emergency, the National Guard and the Coast Guard are seamless in response over the state. He observed that the Coast Guard has many new homeland security responsibilities for ports and shorelines. Major General Campbell told the committee that the Air Guard has a new commander, Brigadier General Deborah McManus. Air Guard members that are currently deployed for perimeter security missions in Kurdistan and Afghanistan, security communications in Iraq, counter-drug missions in Ecuador, and air refueling duties in Guam and the western Pacific Ocean. In Alaska, the C-17 is the aircraft of the future; its missions are operated jointly with Air Force and Guard crews. Still on duty are C-130's, helicopters, and air tankers. Major General Campbell offered a status report on the Air Guard transfer from Kulis Air National Guard Base to Elmendorf Air Force Base. Last year infrastructure work was begun at Elmendorf; this year the road will be completed and realignment and vertical construction will begin. In 2010, Kulis will begin the transfer and the base will be closed by September of 2011. The U. S. Department of Defense, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Transportation are looking at uses for some of the land and the buildings. He opined that this is a very successful transition without the need for state money at this time.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL continued to say that the Air Control Squadron at Elmendorf has been converted to Air Guard, adding 125 new jobs; furthermore, at Clear Air Force Station, the space surveillance mission at Anderson/Healy has also been converted

to Air Guard. He concluded by saying that the Air Guard is changing: getting new equipment; going to new locations; and stepping into traditional active duty missions.

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REPRESENTATIVE BUCH asked for a description of the transition at Clear Air Force Base.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL explained that the Air Guard did not take over facilities or infrastructure; those remain the responsibility of the Department of Defense. The Air Guard provides the security and operator force only. Moreover, employees, such as the civilian firefighters, maintenance contract employees, and others, remain under the DOD management. Major General Campbell turned to the subject of Emergency Management and informed the committee that John Madden is the director of the Division of Homeland Security/Emergency Management, two divisions that have been consolidated to keep costs down. Even though there has been an increase in the number of disasters, this consolidation is keeping the number of staff and costs down. The merged staff is doing an exceptional job; in fact, disaster case management files are now being closed in three years, not seven. Major General Campbell acknowledged that, in the coming years, there may be a need to add staff, but his department is staffed sufficiently at this time. He also acknowledged that help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) serves to keep costs down and his budget contained. The federal agency shares responsibilities with the state and has been a big help to Alaska when disasters hit. There is a FEMA office in Anchorage and disaster assessors from the Alaska office, or the Region 10 headquarters in Seattle, are on site whenever necessary.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL explained that northern ice is not forming as fast, or as early, and is melting earlier than in the past; this is causing coastal erosion with more flooding and the destruction of riverbanks in northwestern Alaska. He opined that later freezing leads to faster melting, ice jams, and flooding. He noted that the Kenai River flood last year was caused by the quick break-up of ice and rapid melting. He asked the committee to anticipate that requests for assistance will be changing, also. Major General Campbell addressed the subject of

Homeland Security and said that the Guard is still operating under Administration Order 203; this order designated five individuals from other departments to work with the DMVA and build vulnerability assessment teams to improve security across the state. This is a successful administrative order and has provided valuable information; in fact, assessments are now being provided to the private sector. He stressed that 80 percent of homeland security grants go to projects in local communities, not to the state. In addition, Alaska is getting less money because the focus is more on urban areas and high threat areas such as nuclear power plants. Furthermore, total funds for homeland security grants to Alaska are down from \$19 million per year to about \$7 million per year. Although the formula for money is biased to urban areas, he opined that this is a successful program for Alaska, and sufficient funds are provided for security of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL informed the committee that, last year, the Alaska Land Mobile Radio Program was transferred from the DMVA to the Department of Administration. This is part of an integrated emergency communication system that is the responsibility of the DOA. Looking at the aspects of emergency communications in Alaska, including the ALERTNET system, tsunami systems, and the emergency communications arena, indicates that emergency responders in Alaska are well connected. Additionally, flying is getting safer with the implementation of aviation safety programs that complement the Federal Aviation Administration's Capstone Safety Program (Capstone). The Guard aviation safety program is in the process of mapping Alaska's terrain and, when complete, will allow pilots to simulate their flights on computers. The two programs working together will provide a safer environment for pilots in the future.

MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL then spoke of the success of the Alaska Military Youth Academy; it is one of the finest in the country. The academy graduates about 250 young adults and monitoring their progress after graduation has proven that about 95 percent continue to be successful citizens. Funding for the academy comes from the federal government and the state education foundation funding formula. He stated that the educational foundation formula is an appropriate source of funding for the academy because it is an educational facility where former drop-outs complete their high school degrees, General Education Development (GED) tests, and vocational training.

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CHAIR ROSES observed that, as the base student allocation was increased, the multiplier factor for the academy budget became over inflated. He opined that there will be adjustments to determine the appropriate multiplier; however, he said he has not heard that the academy will be taken out of the education funding or that the base student allocation will be adjusted.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL responded that, last year, the academy lost about \$1 million in its operating budget and \$1 million was moved into the capital budget. This resulted in less recruitment, advertising, and fewer incoming students, but not in a loss of the quality of the product. He expressed his concern that the future expansion to a second academy will be put on hold with this budget; federal money can not be used for new construction. There is the possibility of expansion at Fort Wainwright Army Post or at Eielson Air Force Base when space becomes available. Present funding is right for the existing facility in Anchorage, he concluded.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL stated that there has been an expansion of the U. S. Department of Defense elementary school STARBASE program from Anchorage into Fairbanks. This program uses science, space, and aviation to increase students' interest in math and science. For one week, students fly the simulator, build rockets, and participate in other activities. Turning to global issues, Major General Campbell referred to the Guard's partnership with Mongolia. The basis of this four year old program is for the Guard to establish contacts, assist with the Mongolian military, and to represent the United States to this developing democracy. Mongolians have been to Alaska to study the mining industry, emergency management, and government programs. The hope is for further business, government, and educational contacts in the future, such as Sister City exchanges.

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CHAIR ROSES recalled an individual's successful experience in Mongolia.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL related his positive experience with the U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia and re-stated that Mongolia still has soldiers accompanying the Guard in Iraq. He then spoke of the successful Adjutant General's Conference that was held in Anchorage; it generated \$5 million for the community. The expenses for the conference were pre-funded and Major General Campbell said that he has balanced the books from that event. Further events this year included Operation Santa Claus; this privately-funded program, going on now for 52 years, brings gifts and holiday cheer to villages. Finally, he stated that the Veteran's Administration is expanding at Elmendorf Air Force Base and will begin outreach services for returning veterans that live in rural areas. There will be a request from the veteran's organizations for \$30,000 in additional funding for travel to rural Alaska, and for cost adjustments for the services provided.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS observed that a letter from the committee was submitted today in support for the additional travel funds.

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MAJOR GENERAL CAMPBELL explained that the Guard has also been very active processing discharge certificates for the Alaska Territorial Guard. From 2004 to 2007, about 171 discharges were processed, and received, for veterans of the territorial guard that are now recognized as members of the military. At the governor's request, the program has been accelerated, and due to an increase of \$50,000 in the budget, there have been 424 discharges processed in 2008. There are over 6,000 contacts to be made and extra efforts are being made by the federal and tribal governments to connect with Alaska Natives in rural areas. A variety of offices are assisting to keep the applications in circulation. Those who served in the Alaska Territorial Guard will now receive veterans' retirement and medical benefits; however, after approval of the application, there is a processing time of three to nine months before the veteran, or surviving spouse, will receive benefits.

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ROBERT GOODMAN, President, Alaska Territorial Guard Organization, expressed his appreciation of the DMVA and its policies; however, he opined that its treatment of the Alaska

Territorial Guard veterans has been miserable. He observed that the first discharge was presented on the eighteenth of October, 2004, and Guard representatives travelled to 30 villages to begin processing the discharges. Mr. Goodman said that, as of July of 2007, not one discharge or request had been obtained because processing the discharges was not a priority with Major General Campbell. Now that more resources have been directed to the effort, more discharges are being processed, but benefits are still not being paid. He pointed out that twenty-seven people are entitled to back pay and some have been waiting for two and one-half years due to the department's incompetence. All of those waiting to be paid range in age from 76 to 91 years. In addition, 53 percent of the surviving spouses are from Nome and Kotzebue and qualify for low income benefits. Furthermore, Mr. Goodman stated that there is \$130,000 due from the state that can be paid at any time.

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CHAIR ROSES expressed his appreciation for Mr. Goodman's testimony.

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MR. GOODMAN opined that there is not a written plan for the issuance of the discharges. He said that he felt Major General Campbell should be held accountable for the senior veterans who are not being taken of.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS thanked the Major General for the Guard's help at the Tanana Valley fair and for his assistance with legislation to advocate for youth. He recognized the Major General's enthusiasm and optimism for youth and the standing military. He remarked:

"You ... give ... the various disciplines of the Guard purpose, ... you are able to articulate those missions and that purpose, in a way that removes it from all stereotypes. ... you provide purpose, and honor, and focus ... and articulate better than I have ever heard how important the function of the Guard in its various manifestations are to the state of Alaska ..."

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CHAIR ROSES recalled his visit to Fort Greely and the high level of competence he saw. The members there do have serious concerns regarding the lack of access to medical care. The services need to be provided and the private sector and the military sector need to work together to provide for military families. Chair Roses then said:

I know that this issue of the territorial guard is one that has caused some anxiety for a lot of people. And I certainly hope that you are moving forward with a plan, and that if you do have a strategy that you have in writing, I certainly would love to see it, and if not, I would certainly hope that you could put something together; because I know your desire to make sure that these guys get what they're entitled to is just as strong as other people's. And, unfortunately, we haven't always moved in the same direction at the same time and had everybody on the same page, but I hope from this point forward, we can

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.