

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

April 1, 2008

1:02 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Anna Fairclough  
Representative Jay Ramras

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 214(FIN)

"An Act relating to hunting licenses and tags for nonresident members of the military service or the United States Coast Guard and their dependents; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HCS CSSB 214(MLV) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 405

"An Act relating to forgiveness of a percentage of student loans for a member of the armed forces deployed since 2001."

- MOVED CSHB 405(MLV) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 214

SHORT TITLE: HUNTING BY MILITARY, COAST GD., DEPENDENTS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) HUGGINS

01/16/08	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/4/08
01/16/08	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/08	(S)	RES
02/27/08	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/27/08	(S)	Heard & Held
02/27/08	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
03/10/08	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/10/08	(S)	Heard & Held

03/10/08 (S) MINUTE(RES)  
 03/17/08 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205  
 03/17/08 (S) Moved CSSB 214(RES) Out of Committee  
 03/17/08 (S) MINUTE(RES)  
 03/18/08 (S) RES RPT CS 4DP 1NR NEW TITLE  
 03/18/08 (S) DP: HUGGINS, STEVENS, MCGUIRE, GREEN  
 03/18/08 (S) NR: WIELECHOWSKI  
 03/18/08 (S) FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER RES  
 03/24/08 (S) FIN RPT CS 5DP NEW TITLE  
 03/24/08 (S) DP: STEDMAN, ELTON, THOMAS, DYSON,  
 HUGGINS  
 03/24/08 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
 03/24/08 (S) Moved CSSB 214(FIN) Out of Committee  
 03/24/08 (S) MINUTE(FIN)  
 03/25/08 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)  
 03/25/08 (S) VERSION: CSSB 214(FIN)  
 03/26/08 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 03/26/08 (H) MLV, FIN  
 04/01/08 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

**BILL: HB 405**

SHORT TITLE: STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS FOR MILITARY  
 SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) CRAWFORD

02/19/08 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 02/19/08 (H) MLV, HES, FIN  
 03/18/08 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124  
 03/18/08 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
 03/25/08 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124  
 03/25/08 (H) Heard & Held  
 03/25/08 (H) MINUTE(MLV)  
 04/01/08 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JODY SIMPSON, Staff  
 to Senator Charlie Huggins  
 Alaska State Legislature  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Introduced Committee Substitute for SB 214  
 on behalf of Senator Huggins, sponsor.

KRISTIN WRIGHT, Licensing Supervisor  
 Fish & Game Licensing  
 Division of Administrative Services  
 Department of Fish & Game  
 Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered a question during the hearing on SB 214.

CHRIS BIRDSALL, Staff  
to Representative Harry Crawford  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Introduced Committee Substitute for HB 405 on behalf of Representative Crawford, sponsor.

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director  
Postsecondary Education Commission  
Department of Education and Early Development  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered a question during the hearing on HB 405.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

**CHAIR BOB ROSES** called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at [1:02:54 PM](#). Representatives Kawasaki, Dahlstrom, Buch, and Roses were present at the call to order. Representative LeDoux arrived as the meeting was in progress.

[1:03:15 PM](#)

SB 214-HUNTING BY MILITARY, COAST GD., DEPENDENTS

[1:03:17 PM](#)

CHAIR ROSES announced that the first order of business would be CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 214(FIN), "An Act relating to hunting licenses and tags for nonresident members of the military service or the United States Coast Guard and their dependents; and providing for an effective date."

[1:04:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAHLSTROM moved that the committee adopt House Committee Substitute (HCS) for CSSB 214, Version 25-LS1261\0, Kane, 3/27/08, as the working document. There being no objection, Version 0 was before the committee.

[1:04:20 PM](#)

JODY SIMPSON, Staff to Senator Charlie Huggins, Alaska State Legislature, explained that Version 0 of the bill meets the sponsor's goal of providing a benefit to military members and their dependents, as a token of gratitude for their service, by allowing newly stationed personnel hunting and fishing privileges immediately upon report date. The bill benefits active duty military and U. S. Coast Guard members and their dependents by waiving the 12 month residency requirement for fish and game licenses.

[1:05:13 PM](#)

MS. SIMPSON continued to say that 45 states offer resident license rates for active military members without regard to actual residency status. Eight of those states, including Alaska, require personnel to be stationed in the state for a specific length of time. Alaska's period for residency is 12 months and is by far the longest residency requirement to qualify for hunting licenses and tags. Senate Bill 214 waives that residency requirement. The bill will also allow military members stationed in Alaska to apply for special licenses at the residential rate for small game hunting and sport fishing; however, this provision does not extend to big game licenses and tags. Currently, military members are required to purchase big game licenses at the non-resident rate and tags at one-half of the non-resident rate. The bill will allow military members to purchase big game licenses and tags, at the resident rate, without removing the guiding component that requires a newly arrived hunter to be accompanied by a guide when hunting brown bear, sheep, and mountain goat. The tags are required to allow enforcement of this regulation. Ms. Simpson informed the committee that the Alaska Department of Fish & Game is in support of the bill, although the fiscal impact to the ADF&G is \$40,000. Furthermore, the proposed changes do not affect eligibility for Permanent Fund Dividend checks, jury pools, or subsistence opportunities. She noted that the Version 0 addressed the objections of the Alaska Professional Hunters Association to the original bill.

[1:09:39 PM](#)

CHAIR ROSES closed public testimony.

[1:09:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX referred to page 1, line 7, and asked for the meaning of "permanently stationed."

MS. SIMPSON explained that, members of the military have a permanent change of station, even though they temporarily move around.

[1:10:48 PM](#)

CHAIR ROSES added that permanent change of station (PCS) is a military term of art as opposed to temporary term of duty (TDY).

[1:11:05 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX observed that members of the Coast Guard are stationed for three years in a home place of duty.

[1:11:27 PM](#)

MS. SIMPSON expressed her understanding that military members have a home of record, but may be permanently stationed in Alaska for the term of their duty.

[1:11:54 PM](#)

KRISTIN WRIGHT, Licensing Supervisor, Fish & Game Licensing, Division of Administrative Services, Department of Fish & Game, explained that the military are usually permanently stationed in Alaska for three years.

[1:12:25 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAHLSTROM moved to report HCS CSSB 214, Version 25-LS1261\0, Kane, 3/27/08, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HCS CSSB 214(MLV) was reported out of the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

[1:13:20 PM](#)

HB 405-STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS FOR MILITARY

[1:13:42 PM](#)

CHAIR ROSES announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 405, "An Act relating to forgiveness of a percentage of student loans for a member of the armed forces deployed since 2001."

[1:13:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAHLSTROM moved that the committee adopt Committee Substitute (CS) for HB 405, Version 25-LS1483\M, Mischel, 3/29/08, as the working document. There being no objection, Version M was before the committee.

[1:14:15 PM](#)

CHRIS BIRDSALL, Staff to Representative Harry Crawford, Alaska State Legislature, introduced the committee substitute for HB 405. He indicated that the first change was to replace all of the terms "forgiveness", "forgive", or "forgiven" with the terms "repayment", "repayment benefit", or "repaid." Also, on page 1, line 9, the deployment criteria was changed from "Afghanistan or Iraq" to "provide direct or indirect support for the global war on terrorism." He noted that deployment status can be verified by the applicant's orders. Further, there were additions on page 1, line 11, of "if discharged from the armed forces, was discharged in honorable status" and, on line 13, "is in good standing for the repayment of the loan and in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the loan." The next change was on page 2, line 1, that changed the amount to be repaid by the state from "50 percent of the total loan amount, plus interest" to "50 percent of the total unpaid balance of the loan, plus interest." Mr. Birdsall explained that the purpose of this change was to prevent the applicant from receiving a benefit in excess of the remaining balance of the loan. A further addition, on page 2, line 5, was authorization for the Postsecondary Education Commission to adopt the regulations needed to administer the program. The last addition, on page 2, line 7, adds the United States Coast Guard to the named armed forces.

[1:16:31 PM](#)

CHAIR ROSES asked whether these changes would affect the fiscal note attached to the bill.

[1:16:45 PM](#)

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director, Postsecondary Education Commission, Department of Education and Early Development, stated that the method used by the Postsecondary Education Commission to identify the qualifying aggregate balance was broad; therefore, she opined that there would not be a

substantial change to the fiscal note that was attached to the original bill.

1:17:22 PM

CHAIR ROSES observed that the CS satisfied all of the committee's concerns about the original bill.

1:17:34 PM

REPRESENTATIVE DAHLSTROM moved to report CSHB 405, Version 25-LS1483\M, Mischel, 3/29/08, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note. There being no objection, CSHB 405(MLV) was reported out of the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

1:17:57 PM

CHAIR ROSES asked Mr. Birdsall to provide committee substitutes as early as possible. He then expressed his appreciation for the committee's work during this session.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.