

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

January 23, 2018

3:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Kevin Meyer, Chair
Senator David Wilson
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator John Coghill
Senator Dennis Egan

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 14
Relating to awarding the Alaska Decoration of Honor to certain members of the military.

- MOVED SCR 14 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SCR 14
SHORT TITLE: DECORATION OF HONOR AWARD
SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) COSTELLO

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|----------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 01/18/18 | (S) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 01/18/18 | (S) | STA |
| 01/23/18 | (S) | STA AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205 |

WITNESS REGISTER

SENATOR MIA COSTELLO
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SCR 14, provided an overview of the resolution.

SORCHA HAZELTON, Staff
Senator Costello

Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided an overview of SCR 14.

BRIAN DUFFY, Director
Division of Administrative Services
Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
Richardson, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SCR 14.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:30:57 PM](#)

CHAIR KEVIN MEYER called the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Wilson, Giessel, Egan, Coghill, and Chair Meyer.

SCR 14-DECORATION OF HONOR AWARD

[3:32:10 PM](#)

CHAIR MEYER announced the consideration of Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 (SCR 14).

[3:32:36 PM](#)

SENATOR MIA COSTELLO, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SCR 14, stated that she would provide additional information on the individuals being honored in the resolution after her aide's introductory remarks.

[3:32:58 PM](#)

SORCHA HAZELTON, Staff, Senator Costello, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, provided an overview of SCR 14 as follows:

Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 awards the Alaska Decoration of Honor to three members of our military; it recognizes those in 2017 that gave the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our state.

Since 2007 the Legislature has honored these sacrifices with the Alaska Decoration of Honor which is presenting a medal to the surviving family and friends; AS 26.05.342 allows this honor to be awarded to the survivors of those members born in Alaska as

well as those stationed in Alaska, it requires a resolution be passed by the Legislature in order to provide this award to the families.

There have been roughly 241 recipients of this honor since statehood, recognizing the important role Alaskans have played and continue to play in our state, national and international security; it is a solemn occasion for a decoration of honor to be necessary and it's always our hope that those who put their lives on the line for Alaskans return home safely.

Through this resolution we offer our condolences to the family and friends of these three servicemen, we honor their service and memorialize their sacrifice by encouraging the passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution 14.

[3:34:19 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO presented the names and background information for the individuals being honored as follows:

The first is Private First Class Hansen B. Kirkpatrick who passed on July 2, 2017. He was a 19-year-old young man from Wasilla. He served as a mortarman in the 1-36 Infantry stationed in Fort Bliss, Texas, and he died in Helmand Province, Afghanistan from wounds sustained during an indirect fire. He was considered a caring, disciplined, and intelligent young soldier, and he leaves a wife, Anastasia.

The next hero that we are honoring is Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jacob M. Sims who died on October 28, 2017. He lived in Oklahoma, Skagway, and Juneau. He passed at 36-years-old as a combat engineer turned UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot. He served for nearly two decades with multiple hours in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He was killed in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan and leaves a wife: Alicia, daughters: Shyanne, Marissa, Harper, and sons: Gavin and Grayson.

The final hero who we are honoring with this concurrent resolution is Staff Sergeant David T. Brabander, who passed on December 11, 2017. He was from Wasilla, 24-years-old. He was a squad leader at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER). He was

deployed in September to Afghanistan and killed when his vehicle overturned in a combat zone. His loved ones say that he loved the outdoors in Alaska.

CHAIR MEYER added that bringing the resolution forward saddened him but affirmed that the state must honor its heroes.

[3:37:04 PM](#)

BRIAN DUFFY, Director, Division of Administrative Services, Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Richardson, Alaska, testified in support of SCR 14 as follows:

We appreciate and echo the sentiments expressed by the resolution's sponsor and appreciate the actions being considered by this committee to honor our fallen members. Many of us having served in uniform, the adjutant general asked that we come forward and just express both our appreciation for your actions and express our condolences to the families on their loss.

SENATOR COGHILL asserted that one of the toughest duties for any leader is to go see the surviving families and present the information, an act that is both an honor and an awakening to the tragic loss. He said the military protocol is the deepest respect but is also a reminder to look soberly at the cost of the men and women who serve our country as well as the families. He summarized that the Alaska Decoration of Honor will be an honor to families but a sad honor as well.

SENATOR EGAN stated that as a veteran himself he wanted to thank Senator Costello for introducing SCR 14.

CHAIR MEYER noted that SCR 14 has a zero fiscal note.

[3:39:46 PM](#)

SENATOR GIESSEL moved to report SCR 14, version 30-LS1224\A from committee with individual recommendations and attached zero fiscal note.

[3:39:58 PM](#)

CHAIR MEYER announced that there being no objection, the motion carried.

[3:40:34 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee,
Chair Meyer adjourned the Senate State Affairs Standing
Committee at 3:40 p.m.