

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

February 2, 2023

1:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Stanley Wright, Chair
Representative Laddie Shaw
Representative Ben Carpenter
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Cliff Groh

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Andrew Gray

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION(S): DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE KEY QUALITY OF LIFE
ISSUES FOR STATE POLICY

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

TAMMIE PERREAULT, Northwest Regional Liaison
Defense State Liaison Office
U.S. Department of Defense
Seattle, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: For the Department of Defense Key Quality
of Life Issues for State Policy presentation, gave a PowerPoint,
titled "Key Military Quality of Life Issues for State Policy."

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:00:17 PM](#)

CHAIR STANLEY WRIGHT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Representatives Shaw, Carpenter, Groh, and Wright were present at the call to order. Representative Rauscher arrived as the meeting was in progress.

**PRESENTATION(S): DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE KEY QUALITY OF LIFE
ISSUES FOR STATE POLICY**

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CHAIR WRIGHT announced that the only order of business would be the Department of Defense Key Quality of Life Issues for State Policy presentation.

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TAMMIE PERREAULT, Northwest Regional Liaison, Defense State Liaison Office, U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), for the Department of Defense Key Quality of Life Issues for State Policy presentation, began a PowerPoint [hard copy included in the committee packet] on slide 4 and stated the importance of policies that help military members and their families. She acknowledged that the Federal Government needs the help of states to accomplish those policy directives. She said that taking care of military members and their families is paramount to retention and mission readiness.

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MS. PERRAULT continued to slide 5 and highlighted the areas in which she believes Alaska is already doing well in supporting military members and their families, including the Purple Star Program. The State of Alaska has also enacted legislation that allows for strong coordination between the military and state agencies in cases of child abuse or neglect. She added that Alaska is a national leader in allowing the Air Force to have oversight over facilities that provide childcare to children of military families.

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MS. PERRAULT skipped to slide 9 and emphasized the importance of states updating their definition of the military to include the recently created Space Force, ensuring that its members receive the same benefits as members of other branches.

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MS. PERRAULT said that occupational licensure is an area that has improved and could use continued improvement. She thanked the committee for the legislature's passing of Senate Bill 21 [during the Thirty-Second Alaska State Legislature], which streamlined the process for military families with an occupational license in another state to receive one to work in Alaska. She stated that it is difficult for a member of the military and their spouse to support each other when the spouse is unable to obtain an occupational license needed to work in the field of their choosing. She added that 34 percent of military spouses work in an occupation that requires them to have some sort of occupational licensure.

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MS. PERRAULT returned to slides 6 through 8 and advised that while the state of Alaska is a member of 28 different interstate compacts, none of them are related to military spouse occupational licensure. She stated that it is a high priority for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to encourage states to enter interstate compacts for occupational licenses, as it removes barriers for military spouses to find a job in the field of their choosing. She gave examples of some of the occupations included in the previously mentioned compacts, adding that interstate licensure compact legislation is currently pending in Alaska for nurses, occupational therapists, and audio and speech language pathologists.

MS. PERRAULT continued to slide 10 and stated that Alaska has previously passed progressive anti-discrimination laws and urged the committee to consider revising the anti-discrimination statutes to include members of the military.

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REPRESENTATIVE SHAW asked if DoD would accept members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Public Health Service under the state definition of the uniformed services.

MS. PERRAULT answered that DoD would support any improvements the state would like to make in expanding the definition of armed services to include uniformed services, but the expectation applies primarily to the Space Force.

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REPRESENTATIVE GROH asked which occupational licenses would be the most important on which to take legislative action.

MS. PERREAULT answered that nursing and physical therapy occupational licensure compacts are the top licensure compacts that the DoD hopes to see passed in Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE GROH asked about the relationship between funding education and military family quality of life.

MS. PERREAULT answered that she defers to the states on how to appropriate funding for education for students, including those of military families. She acknowledged that the federal funding given for this purpose does not completely cover the cost of education for a child of a military family. She added that DoD does believe that education is a significant part of quality of life for military families.

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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 1:22 p.m.