

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

March 14, 2023

1:03 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Stanley Wright, Chair
Representative Laddie Shaw
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Cliff Groh
Representative Andrew Gray

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Ben Carpenter

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 25

"An Act relating to eligibility for the permanent fund dividend;
and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 25

SHORT TITLE: PFD ELIGIBILITY UNIFORMED SERVICES

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) STORY

01/19/23	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/23
01/19/23	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/19/23	(H)	STA, MLV, FIN
01/31/23	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
01/31/23	(H)	Heard & Held
01/31/23	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
02/16/23	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/16/23	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/21/23	(H)	STA AT 3:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
02/21/23	(H)	Moved CSHB 25(STA) Out of Committee
02/21/23	(H)	MINUTE(STA)
02/22/23	(H)	STA RPT CS(STA) NEW TITLE 5DP 1NR
02/22/23	(H)	DP: ARMSTRONG, ALLARD, STORY, CARPENTER, SHAW
02/22/23	(H)	NR: C.JOHNSON

03/09/23 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
03/09/23 (H) Heard & Held
03/09/23 (H) MINUTE (MLV)
03/14/23 (H) MLV AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: As prime sponsor, gave an overview of HB 25.

SETH WHITTEN, Staff
Representative Andi Story
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on HB 25 on behalf of Representative Story, prime sponsor.

GENEVIEVE WOJTUSIK, Director
Permanent Fund Division
Department of Revenue
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided information relating to HB 25.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:03:38 PM](#)

CHAIR STANLEY WRIGHT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Representatives Gray, Rauscher, Groh, Shaw and Wright were present at the call to order. Representative Saddler arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 25-PFD ELIGIBILITY UNIFORMED SERVICES

[1:04:24 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 25, "An Act relating to eligibility for the permanent fund dividend; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee was CSHB 25(STA).]

CHAIR WRIGHT advised the committee that there is a revised indeterminate fiscal note.

1:05:00 PM

REPRESENTATIVE ANDI STORY, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, provided an overview of CSHB 25(STA). She said the bill provides absence allowance for members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officers Corps and the Public Health Service Commissioned Officer Corps when applying for the permanent fund dividend (PFD). She said CSHB 25(STA) added merchant marines, as well a section on medical exemptions.

1:06:30 PM

SETH WHITTEN, Staff, Representative Andi Story, Alaska State Legislature, said he had overestimated a figure in a question posed at the last meeting regarding the cost impact the changes would have on individual dividends. Using the 2022 dividend of \$3,284 as an example, he had advised that it would cost \$4 for every 100 additional people added to the dividend. Subsequently, he checked the figure with the Legislative Finance Division, who advised that the actual impact per 100 new applicants would be \$.52 cents rather than \$4.00.

1:07:46 PM

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER queried Representative Story about language on page 4, lines [5-7], of the bill, which read:

Section 3. AS 43.23.011 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(d) An otherwise eligible individual may apply for a current year dividend after March 31 and before October 1 of that year

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked what the genesis was of the language "and before October 1".

REPRESENTATIVE STORY replied that the language is from an amendment she had worked on with Representative Shaw. She shared a hypothetical scenario where a person experiences a medical emergency and is unable to apply for the dividend before March 31.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER relayed his understanding that existing statute already provides that if a parent or guardian does not apply for a PFD on behalf of their child, the child can apply

for retroactive dividends upon turning 18. He said he is unsure how the proposed language in Section 3 melds with existing law.

[1:09:35 PM](#)

MR. WHITTEN responded that the proposed section deals with dependents, in that the language allows the parent or guardian to file on the dependent's behalf in the case of a medical emergency preventing the dependent from filing before March 31.

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REPRESENTATIVE GRAY asked Representative Story about the long-term PFD eligibility for members of public health service. He relayed his understanding that deployment in public health "is a voluntary thing," and said that once a person is hired, they are not forced to relocate. He posed a hypothetical scenario: A person is hired by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in Alaska; there are no FDA jobs in the state but there are positions in Wisconsin, and the person then works out of state for decades. He stressed that his main concern is individuals receiving dividend payments over a long period of time while never stepping foot in Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE STORY offered her understanding that Legislative Legal Services is looking into the matter.

[1:12:19 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER suggested that Ms. Wojtusik from the Permanent Fund Dividend Division might be able to answer Representative Gray's question.

[1:12:39 PM](#)

GENEVIEVE WOJTUSIK, Director, Permanent Fund Division, Department of Revenue, confirmed that Representative Saddler is referring to the five-year rule. In referring to an earlier line of questioning, she noted regulation around retroactive PFDs for 18-20 years of age whose parent or guardian did not file for them: 15 AAC 23.133. She also noted existing regulation on medical conditions as it relates to PFD applications: 15 AAC 23.123. She said she is unsure whether the proposed language is in addition to, or competes with, existing law. She mentioned that the five-year rule falls under AS 43.23.008(d), which read as follows:

(d) After an individual has been absent from the state for more than 180 days in each of the five preceding qualifying years, the department shall presume that the individual is no longer a state resident. The individual may rebut this presumption by providing clear and convincing evidence to the department that

(1) the individual was physically present in the state for at least 30 cumulative days during the past five years; and

(2) the individual is a state resident as defined in AS 43.23.295.

[1:14:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY said she will investigate whether the language conflicts and determine whether any changes need to be made.

[1:15:23 PM](#)

[HB 25 was held over.]

[1:15:47 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.