

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

April 25, 2024

1:16 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Stanley Wright, Chair
Representative Ben Carpenter
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Cliff Groh

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Laddie Shaw
Representative Andrew Gray

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION: VIETNAM WAR NATIVE ALLOTMENTS

- HEARD

SENATE BILL NO. 154

"An Act relating to bidder preferences in state procurement."

- MOVED SB 154 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 154

SHORT TITLE: BIDDER PREF MILITARY CAREER SKILLS PROG

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) WIELECHOWSKI

05/17/23	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/23	(S)	L&C
03/04/24	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/04/24	(S)	Heard & Held
03/04/24	(S)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/29/24	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/29/24	(S)	DP: BJROKMAN, DUNBAR
03/29/24	(S)	NR: MERRICK
03/29/24	(S)	FN1: ZERO(ADM)
04/02/24	(S)	RULES TO CALENDAR
04/02/24	(S)	READ THE SECOND TIME
04/02/24	(S)	ADVANCED TO THIRD READING 4/3 CAL

04/03/24 (S) PASSED Y19 N- E1
04/03/24 (S) COSPONSOR(S): KAWASKI, TOBIN, GRAY-
JACKSON, CLAMAN, MYERS
04/03/24 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
04/03/24 (S) VERSION: SB 154
04/05/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/05/24 (H) H(MLV)
04/09/24 (H) MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS AT 1:00 PM
GRUENBERG 120
04/09/24 (H) -- Invited & Public Testimony --
04/09/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --
04/16/24 (H) MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS AT 1:00 PM
GRUENBERG 120
04/16/24 (H) Heard & Held
04/25/24 (H) MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS AT 1:00 PM
GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

VINCE TUTIAKOFF, Mayor
City of Unalaska
Unalaska, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on the Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veterans Land Allotment Program.

NICHOLAI LEKANOFF, representing self
Unalaska, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified on the Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veterans Land Allotment Program.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:16:07 PM](#)

CHAIR STANLEY WRIGHT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 1:16 p.m. Representatives Carpenter, Groh, and Wright were present at the call to order. Representatives Saddler and Rauscher arrived as the meeting was in progress.

PRESENTATION: VIETNAM WAR NATIVE ALLOTMENTS

[1:16:54 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT announced that the first order of business would be the presentation on Vietnam War Native land allotments.

[1:17:15 PM](#)

VINCE TUTIAKOFF, Mayor, City of Unalaska, testified on the Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veterans Land Allotment Program. He shared that he served in the U.S. Navy from 1967 to 1971.

NICHOLAI LEKANOFF, representing self, shared that he served in the U.S. Navy from 1968 to 1971.

MR. TUTIAKOFF stated that he had been unaware that land was being offered to Native veterans, as the program [started in 2019]. He noted that in Unalaska and the Aleutian Islands there is no land available in the program, as it is U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service land or state land with airports. He stated that the Ounalashka Corporation is the village corporation in the area, and it has received over 150,000 acres, and this covers the prime spots for the veteran land application. He stated he has filed six different claims with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but each area was unavailable. He stated that he and Mr. Lukanoff and others have selected land in Bristol Bay, north of Naknek, and they are awaiting confirmation. He stated that of the 11 Native Vietnam veterans in Unalaska, only 4 are left. He stated that he is getting older and would like this process completed. He requested that the state open land in the Aleutian Islands for this purpose.

[1:20:24 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT questioned how long he has been working on this issue.

MR. TUTIAKOFF responded that this is around the fourth year, and he pointed out that the deadline is five years after the original application process started. He expressed the understanding that there were 3,000 Native veterans that filed applications, but only 51 have been certified, with the rest in the process of being surveyed or reviewed by BLM.

CHAIR WRIGHT questioned how long the process has taken for those who have been successful.

MR. TUTIAKOFF stated that the BLM surveys can only be done in the spring and summer, and he estimated that the survey, which is the longest part, should only take three to four months.

[1:22:10 PM](#)

MR. TUTIAKOFF introduced Mr. Lekanoff.

CHAIR WRIGHT offered closing comments and thanked the testifiers.

[1:23:57 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 1:23 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

SB 154-BIDDER PREF MILITARY CAREER SKILLS PROG

[1:30:34 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT announced that the final order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 154, "An Act relating to bidder preferences in state procurement."

[1:31:17 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER moved to report SB 154 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SB 154 was reported out of the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

[1:31:39 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 1:31 p.m. to 1:34 p.m.

[1:34:57 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT invited Representative Rauscher to speak.

[1:35:07 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER gave a tribute to Abby St. Clair, a staff member who would soon be leaving.

[1:38:51 PM](#)

CHAIR WRIGHT made closing comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 1:39 p.m.