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# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(11)

Date Referred: February 7, 1990

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 2/27/90

The FINANCE Committee considered:

HB 385

HOUSE BILL NO. 385 VETERANS' BURIAL ALLOWANCE ELIGIBILITY

"An Act relating to eligibility for veterans' burial allowance."

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- be replaced with CS HB 385 (JA)  the same title
- have attached amendment(s)  a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s):  
(Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS:

(Date/Dept)

- fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_
- zero fiscal note \_\_\_\_\_
- zero with analysis \_\_\_\_\_
- fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- zero fn/analysis 2/7/90 / DMVA

**SIGNING DO PASS:**

**SIGNING:**

(Check approp. column)

Do Not Pass  
No Rec  
Amend

<u>[Signature]</u> Hoffman			
<u>[Signature]</u> Larson			
<u>[Signature]</u> Swackhammer			
<u>[Signature]</u> Brown			
<u>[Signature]</u> Koponen			
<u>[Signature]</u> Ulmer			
<u>[Signature]</u> Barnes			
<u>[Signature]</u> Shultz			
<u>[Signature]</u> Phillips			
<u>[Signature]</u> Rieper			
<u>[Signature]</u> Wallis			
<u>[Signature]</u> Larson Chairman's Signature			
<u>[Signature]</u> Hoffman			

**FISCAL NOTE**

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: February 5, 1990  
Title An Act relating to eligibility  
for veterans burial allowance.  
Sponsor: Rep. Hudson  
Requestor: House State Affairs

Agency Affected: DMVA  
BRU: Veterans Affairs  
Components: Death Gratuity

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)**

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>CAPITAL</b>						
<b>REVENUE</b>						

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL						

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS :** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The additional death gratuities paid to survivors of the additional qualified veterans created by this bill are projected to be negligible based on past experience. This negligible increase in death gratuities will be absorbed within the existing budget for this component.

Prepared by Jeff Morrison, Director  
Division: Administrative & Support Services, DMVA

Phone 465-4600  
Date 2/05/90

Approved by for MG John Schaeffer  
Agency: Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

Date 2/05/90

**Distribution (by preparer):**

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)

**Adopted**

Original sponsor(s): REP. HUDSON, Gruenberg

1 IN THE HOUSE BY THE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 385 (State Affairs)  
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION  
5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to eligibility for veterans' death  
7 gratuities."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 \* Section 1. AS 26.10.080(a) is amended to read:

10 (a) The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs shall pay,  
11 upon application, a death gratuity in the amount of \$750 to the sur-  
12 viving spouse of a qualified veteran [WHOSE BURIAL IN THE STATE OCCURS  
13 ON OR AFTER MAY 13, 1984, AND] who was a resident of the state at the  
14 time of death. If the veteran has no surviving spouse, the gratuity  
15 shall be paid to the personal representative of the veteran. A veter-  
16 an is qualified under this subsection if the veteran's burial occurred

17 (1) in the state on or after May 13, 1984; or  
18 (2) elsewhere on or after the effective date of this Act.

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

FRONTIER BUILDING  
SUITE 620  
3601 C STREET  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503 5989  
PHONE (907) 243 0656  
AUTOVON 626-1444  
(907) 249-1565

August 4, 1989

The Honorable Bill Hudson  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, AK 99811-0101

Dear Representative Hudson,

Thank you for your letter of July 7th concerning an amendment to AS 26.10.080, the Death Gratuity Program.

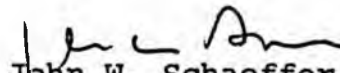
In FY88 we paid 304 claims for a total of \$228,000. In FY89 the number was 360 for an expenditure of \$270,000. According to our records, there has been only one claim last year denied because the survivors planned an out of state ~~burial~~. The statute is pretty clear on that issue and most applicants/survivors appear to know the requirements before submitting their claim. It's hard to predict what sort of fiscal impact your amendment would have, but I anticipate not too great.

The biggest problem with the Death Gratuity Program is that people in rural Alaska are not making claims. According to our recent analysis, out of 304 applications in 1988, only twelve were received from the areas of the North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, Bering Straits, Western Alaska, Bristol Bay and the Aleutian Chain.

We're taking steps in the Division of Veterans Affairs to improve our outreach/information program in hopes of striking a better balance of applicants. I expect the outreach effort will have a noticeable impact.

If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

  
John W. Schaeffer  
Major General  
Alaska National Guard  
The Adjutant General

JWS/hah



# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE BILL HUDSON

P.O. BOX V  
Juneau, Alaska  
99811  
(907)465-3744 or 4991

COMMITTEES:

Transportation  
Resources  
Foreign Trade

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEES

DOT/PF  
C & RA

July 7, 1989

Major General John W. Schaeffer  
The Adjutant General  
Commissioner  
Department of Military and  
Veteran Affairs  
3601 "C" Street, Suite 620  
Anchorage, AK 99503-5989

Dear General Schaeffer:

I am considering an amendment to AS 26.10.080 Death Gratuity and would like your professional opinion prior to filing.

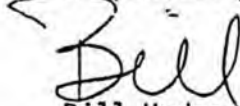
Specifically John, I have been approached by several veterans asking that we eliminate the requirement that burial be in the state for a surviving spouse to receive the \$750 allowance.

This seems reasonable because the original purpose of the allowance was to provide some relief to next of kin and was to honor veterans.

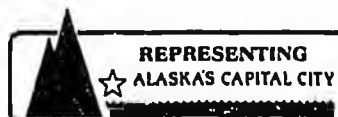
Before I file this change, I would appreciate your analysis of its effect. For example how many claims are paid annually and how many are turned down because the deceased was not buried in Alaska?

Your candid opinion will also be appreciated.

Respectfully,

  
Bill Hudson

BH/klc



# Alaska State Legislature



REPRESENTATIVE BILL HUDSON

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Juneau, Alaska  
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(907)465-3744 or 4991

COMMITTEES:

Transportation  
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FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEES

DOT/PF  
C & RA

February 6, 1990

Representative Lyman Hoffman  
and  
Representative Ron Larson  
Co-Chairmen  
House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Representatives Hoffman and Larson:

CSHB 385, relating to eligibility for veterans' death gratuity allowance was adopted by the House State Affairs Committee on February 6. The bill's next committee of referral is the House Finance Committee.

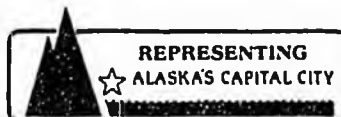
This bill seeks to eliminate the requirement that an Alaskan veteran be physically buried in Alaska. Several veterans have expressed to me the fact that it is becoming harder to find burial space in veterans' plots. Many families have family plots and wish to place their deceased Alaskan veteran in those family plots.

I feel the intent of the State of Alaska's paying a death gratuity in the amount of \$750 is to assist the deceased veteran's family and to honor the deceased for having served in the United States military.

Where an Alaskan veteran is buried really should be up to the family, and not be conditioned upon state policy. The burial of an Alaskan veteran in another state does not diminish the fact that the deceased served in the military or was an Alaska resident at the time of death.

This legislation has a zero fiscal note, and the enclosed letter from John W. Schaeffer, Major General Alaska National Guard, The Adjutant General, points out this legislation will have very little, if any, fiscal impact.

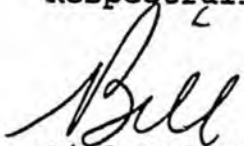
HB 385 has the support of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. A copy of their letter is also enclosed.



Representatives Hoffman and Larson  
February 6, 1990  
Re: HB 385  
Page Two

Your favorable decision to place this bill on the House  
Finance Committee agenda at the earliest possible date will be  
very much appreciated.

Respectfully,

  
Bill Hudson

BH:lh

Enclosures