

HB

93

SPONSOR STATEMENT

CSHB 93 (CRA)

An Act Relating to the Village Public Safety Officers Program
Representative Richard Foster

This bill would place the Village Public Safety Officer Program into the Alaska Statutes.

The sparsely inhabited communities in rural Alaska face challenges to public safety for individuals threatened with losses to life and property. Every community in the state requires public safety services. The VPSO program, created in 1980, addresses those critical public safety issues in rural Alaskan communities such as reducing loss of life due to fires, drownings, missing persons, and first provider of emergency medical assistance. The VPSO is the trained individual in the community to provide an immediate response to law enforcement issues. The VPSO, as an extension of the Alaska State Troopers, handles serious law enforcement matters until trooper assistance comes upon the scene. The first rung on a public safety career path for interested rural residents is through becoming a trained Village Public Safety Officer.

The VPSO's are the vital partners to the mission of the Department of Public Safety effort in rural Alaska. This bill will formally institute the VPSO program in Alaska statutes, and formalize the program in the Department of Public Safety. This action will enable the department, through regulations, to establish criteria for entry and participation of interested individuals, implement training standards, and provide uniform administrative parameters for the statewide program. Finally, passage of this bill will instill pride within the ranks of those VPSO's now in the frontline public safety efforts in rural Alaska.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1993 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO: CSHB 93

Revision _____ Dept. Affected: Public Safety
 Title: "An Act relating to the village
public safety officers program." BRU: Alaska State Troopers
 Component: Detachments
 Sponsor: Representative Foster
 Requestor: Representative Foster COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 799

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)

OPERATING	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

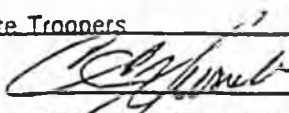
POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year (FY 93) impact: \$ _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

No significant fiscal impact upon the Alaska State Troopers is anticipated.

Prepared By: Francis C. Allan Phone: 269-5691
 Division: Alaska State Troopers Date: 3/3/93
 Approved by Commissioner:  Date: 3/4/93
 Agency: Richard J. Burton, Dept. of Public Safety

PREPARER TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

For further

STATE TROOPERS
ZERO FISCAL NOTE

ce

RECEIVED MAR 05 1993

BILL NO: CSHB 93

DATE: March 3, 1993

TITLE: "An Act relating to the village public safety officers program"

CONTACT: C.E. Swackhammer
Deputy Commissioner
465-4322

POSITION PAPER - Department of Public Safety

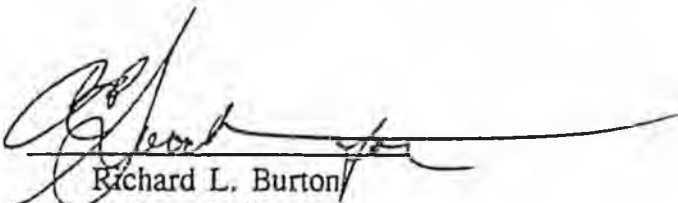
CSHB 93 amends AS 18.65 Police Protection by adding the Village Public Safety Officer Program to the Department of Public Safety's mandated programs, to aid in meeting the Department's responsibility to provide basic public safety services and law enforcement services to Alaska's rural communities. The bill provides the Commissioner with the authority to provide grants to nonprofit regional corporations for village public safety officers.

The Commissioner may adopt regulations related to VPSOs and training requirements for officers and criteria for community participation in this public safety program.

This bill will formalize the Village Public Safety Officer Program as an official responsibility of the Department of Public Safety. The program has informally been associated with the Alaska State Troopers for over twelve years. The passage of the bill is the first step to the orderly progression of this program from a pilot grant endeavor to a career. The results of this bill will be the advancement of qualified persons, skilled in meeting the first responder requirements of delivering public safety in rural villages, to the level of a profession. The ability to regulate the course of the program and its future, define how communities participate, and address the structure of the program will provide management tools to ensure sound efficient use of state resources.

The flexibility of being able to provide grants to nonprofit regional corporations for these services provides the Department the opportunity to continue to encourage village and regional participation in identifying public safety needs and priorities at their level, as well as allowing for the Department to assess the most cost effective approaches to delivering public safety and law enforcement services to rural communities.

The Department of Public Safety does not believe the passage of this bill will have a fiscal impact on the Department. Since this is the foundation step for formalizing and addressing future public safety and law enforcement needs in rural Alaska, this bill requires only that this program be considered as part of the overall mission of the Department.


Richard L. Burton
Commissioner

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES, INC.

1992 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 92 - 57

TITLE: SUPPORTING VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS

WHEREAS: community based public safety programs are required to maintain public safety in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS: in 1981, the State Department of Public Safety started the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program, a community based public safety program, to address law enforcement, fire protection and search and rescue needs in rural Alaska's remote village; and

WHEREAS: since its inception, the VPSO program has dramatically improved public safety in rural Alaskan villages;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that delegates to the 1992 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., endorses continuation and strengthening of the Village Public Safety Office Program and calls upon the Legislature to establish the VPSO program in state statute.

SUBMITTED BY: Bristol Bay Native Association

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: Do Pass

CONVENTION ACTION: Do Pass



SUPPORTING TESTIMONY

mark

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.
Executive Board of Directors

Resolution 93-03

Village Public Safety Officers Program

Whereas, Senator Al Adams of the Alaska Eighteenth Legislature -First Session has introduced Senate Bill Number 15, and

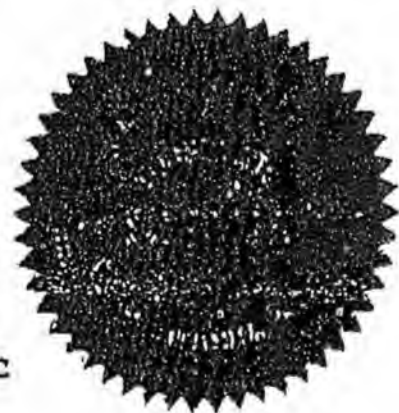
Whereas, Senate Bill Number 15 addresses essential aspects of the Village Public Safety Officers (VPSO) Program, including training and compensation, and

Whereas, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. (TCC) employees VPSO's for the benefit of member villages,

Now Therefore be it Resolved that TCC supports Senate Bill Number 15 and urges the Alaska Legislature to pass this bill into law.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc, Executive Board of Directors on January 14, 1993 at Fairbanks, Alaska and that a quorum was duly established.



Jonathan Solomon, Sr.
Jonathan Solomon, Sr.
Secretary/Treasurer

NORTH AND NORTHWEST ALASKA MAYORS' CONFERENCE
KOTZEBUE, ALASKA
FEBRUARY 18 & 19, 1993

RESOLUTION NO. 93-37

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER (VPSO) PROGRAM TO BE INCLUDED IN THE ALASKA STATUTES. REFERENCE SENATE BILL NO. 15 & HOUSE BILL NO. 93.

WHEREAS: the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program has been of vital importance in rural Alaska for twelve (12) years and VPSO's provide a difficult and critical service to safeguard the lives and property of all residents in their communities; and

WHEREAS: in addition to law enforcement, VPSO's provide a broad range of public safety services, including emergency medical services, fire protection and prevention, water safety, and search and rescue; and

WHEREAS: VPSO's are expected to be on call 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year with no trained relief, and are often personally confronted with life threatening situations while being grossly underpaid; and

WHEREAS: the North and Northwest Alaska Mayors support the Village Public Safety Officer Program in rural Alaska, recognizing the VPSO Program as the first, immediate, and often only public safety service available in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS: the North and Northwest Alaska Mayors recommend that the State of Alaska formalize the VPSO Program by Alaska Statutory recognition to assure the future of service. Presently, the VPSO Program exists as a budgetary line item in the Department of Public Safety's annual budget. Statutory authority would legitimize and put VPSO Program standards and procedures into the Alaska Administrative Code, thus providing a mechanism for annual legislative review; and

WHEREAS: the North and Northwest Alaska Mayors also support a significant FY94 budget increase for the VPSO Program. Especially in the areas of training, equipment, and salaries; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CONFERENCE: that the Mayors of North and Northwest Alaska urge the Alaska State Legislature to pass Senate Bill No. 15 and House Bill No. 93; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE NORTH AND NORTHWEST ALASKA MAYORS' CONFERENCE THAT: we urge Governor Walter J. Hickel and the Alaska State Legislature to educate themselves on the current plight of the VPSO Program and to work with the VPSO Nonprofit Corporation managers and the Department of Public Safety to obtain a needs based Legislative Supplement which will address

Ward

City Council
City of Atka
P. O. Box 47070
Atka, Alaska 99547-0070

Senator Al Adams
P. O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

February 3, 1993

Dear Senator:

We are writing to endorse support for Senate Bill 15.

We thank you for introducing this bill for several reasons. We consider transfer of the VPSO program to the state statutes a wise move. In addition to being under the review of the state legislature, we think that the VPSO program would maintain higher integrity and consistency.

Thank you.

Signed,

Michael Singaroff
Mayor

Atka City Council

Traditional Eagle Village Council
PO Box 19
Eagle Alaska 99738

Attn. Senator Georgiana Lincoln, Representative Eileen Nicholas
We the members of Eagle Village Council support the VPSO Program
100% and we also support Senate Bill #15 to put VPSO's into the
Alaska State Statutes.

Thank You for your time and we will be anxiously awaiting this
outcome of Senate Bill #15.

Sincerely; Eagle Village Council

Council Members,
Matthew Malcolm, Chief
Echai Beck 2nd Chief
Cliver Lyman, Council Member
Rebecca Malcolm, Council Member
Norman David, Council Member
Bartha Ulvi, Council Member

Matthew Malcolm
Echai Beck
Cliver Lyman
Rebecca Malcolm
Norman David
Bartha Ulvi

St. George Office:

P.O. Box 929
St. George, Alaska 99591-0929
Tel: (907) 859-2263
Fax: (907) 859-2212



Anchorage Office:

4000 Old Seward Hwy., Suite 301
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Tel: 561-2124
Fax: (907) 561-4674

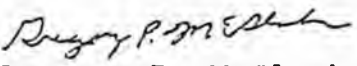
Senator Al Adams
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Adams,

The V.P.S.O. Program has been an essential part of the booming, but orderly growth, of the "outback" rural communities of Alaska. Time and time again the rural radio stations of Nome, Dillingham and St. Paul Island, broadcast on their news hour how VPSO's have intervened with otherwise lawless towns of our State's far flung communities. In some cases giving up their lives for their committment to law and order.

At St. George a Harbor was built to enhance a stable economy for our community, along with this harbor we get processors who house three hundred fifty respectfully, each. With two floating processor's who dwarf our community of one hundred eighty people and no law enforcement personnel except for one VPSO. We have begun to realize in this community how valuable this position can be. These processors are "dry" companys which means no alcohol consumption is allowed among their workers, however at times some individuals have obtained alcohol and tend to consume until they are in a state of mind which is a danger to themselves, other processors, property and the St. George Community members. Most of these workers are on 30, 60, and 90 day contracts with these seafood processors. When the contract is up these individuals first thoughts are of obtaining alcohol for the soul purpose of getting inebriated in the shortest time possible and when that happens to many individuals all at one time we have a problem. The crab season of 1992 here in the Bering Sea attested to the above problems that only a VPSO can handle safely and correctly. We don't expect the crab season of 1993 to be any different. One finally comment is that the VPSO's in Alaska are the Eyes and Ears of the State Troopers. Thank You for your time.

Sincerely ;


Gregory P. McGlashan
Harbormaster
City Councilman

Allakaket Village Council

P.O. BOX 30 ALLAKAKET, ALASKA 99720
(907) 968-2241

mail

February 4, 1993

Tanana Chiefs Conference
122 First Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We strongly support the Villages Public Safety Officer positions for the rural areas. Mainly because the villages are located in remote areas where the State Troopers cannot respond to calls fast enough to prevent violence or crimes from happening.

Since we have had a Village Public Safety Officer located in our village, we have seen a decrease in suicides, domestic violence, and public disturbances.

I strongly recommend that Tanana Chiefs Conference continue to secure funding for this much needed service to the rural villages.

Sincerely,

Sally M. Sam

Sally M. Sam
City Administrator



CITY OF MC GRATH

P. O. BOX 30 McGRATH, ALASKA 99627
PHONE (907) 824-3423
FAX (907) 824-3533
January 29, 1993

Ms. Daisy Stevens
VPSO Coordinator
Tanana Chiefs Conference
122 First Ave.
Fairbanks, Ak. 99701

Dear Ms. Stevens,

The City of McGrath would like to express their support of the VPSO program as an essential service to rural areas. We are in favor of Senate bill 15, which would make the program permanently funded. We hope the bill will pass and the program will be funded enough to raise the pay for these dedicated, underpaid people. If we can do anything to help in this matter, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,

Glen A. Hanway
Glen A. Hanway
Mayor

cc: Senator Lincoln

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENTS
ARE
POOR
ORIGINAL
COPIES

cc: Greg Hope
files

Beaver Tribal Council
Deputy Tribal Chief

Gene Pika

Ministry

- For these reasons we feel that the V.P.S.D. program should be a permanent position, and because of the cuts in the State Trooper positions, etc.
1. He assists the CHA with emergencies.
 2. He teaches fire prevention, snowmachines safety, gun safety, boat safety, to our children at the school.
 3. He checks our fire alarms, fire extinguishers and make sure all equipment is in working order.
 4. Enforces curfew, organized a search party for over 400 residents via snowmachines on boat.

The Village of Beaver would like to suffer tremendously if the V.P.S.D. program is cut, because of the following reasons:

Boat Party;

Fire Department of V.P.S.D. program

Daley Stevens,
V.P.S.D. Coordinator
Tanana Chiefs Conference
122 First Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701

January 29, 1971

BEAVER TRIBAL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 24029
BEAVER, AK 99704
(907) 528-6128
FAX 528-6812

F A X T R A N S M I T T A L M E M O

TO: Sen. Al Adams
DEPT: CRA Committee FAX #: 465-3242
FROM: C Wheeler PHONE: 443-5533
CO: _____ FAX #: _____
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January 17, 1998

The Honorable Al Adams
Senate
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1102

Senator Adams:

I support S.B. 815, statutory recognition of the V.P.S.U. program which is years long overdue.

Those who have served and presently make that commitment to public service risk their lives; relinquish (in relationships); seldom receive recognition for a job well-done (on a daily basis); and serve for 'token' compensation. Their duties and responsibilities are paramount with personal sacrifice on a 24-hour basis. Most generally, they are the first on-the-scene as local police officer; coordinator/leader for search and rescue operations; emergency medical technician; and as well as liason to the State Troopers, who respond and are on the scene hours if not days later.

Formalizing the V.P.S.U. program would bring a much greater professional atmosphere, provide greater retention of personnel, a continuous on-going training program, and should provide for a reasonable pay schedule.

Rural law enforcement and public safety services are as important in villages as in urban communities and the value of human life must not be diminished because some choose to live in rural Alaska. They deserve better.

Thank you for your sincere consideration

Sincerely,
C. Wheeler

L.C. Wheeler
POB 1209
Nome, Alaska 99762-1209