

HB

362



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Beverly Masek

Chair, Military & Veterans Affairs

Vice Chair, Transportation

Vice Chair, Resources

Legislative Council

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SPONSOR STATEMENT – HOUSE BILL 362

Regarding the Use of Military Lounges in State Owned & Controlled Airports

House Bill 362 amends A.S. 02.15.090(a) by adding language to allow the State of Alaska to provide space within its airports for use as military lounges free of rental charges, if those lounges are operated by non-profit agencies.

Even though only token rent is now being collected, this arrangement skirts on the periphery of FAA regulations. The Anchorage International Airport Director is doing a balancing act by dividing the square footage cost for the lounge between the other airport tenants. The Federal Aviation Administration frowns upon these arrangements and without codifying the "no rent" provision, the potential exists for this arrangement to change should the FAA decide to push the issue.

For many years, the Anchorage Armed Services YMCA have operated the Military Courtesy Lounge on Concourse B at the Anchorage International Airport. This operation is conducted at no expense to the State. More than 23,000 travelers took advantage of the lounge's services in 1996. A squadron booster club provides volunteers to staff the lounge.

Given that thousands of military personnel travel to and from Alaska each year, and that the total economic contribution to the State from military activities exceeds \$2.7 billion, it is the best interest of the State to protect the continued operation of rent free courtesy lounges in our state airports.

Passage of HB 362 will provide airport directors with the statutory justification to continue the "no rent" arrangements, which have served us so well in the past.



ANCHORAGE
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Honorary
Life Member
Robert B. Atwood
Alvin H. Feelywood

February 2, 1998

Representative Beverly Masck
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Masck,

For more years than anyone knows, the Armed Services YMCA has been quietly and competently serving the traveling military through the Military Courtesy Lounge located on Concourse B at Anchorage International Airport. A safe and secure place has been dedicated to the Armed Forces, at no expense to the State or to the Military. Reaching over 22,000 visitors in 1997, squadron booster clubs provide volunteers to staff this lounge 365 days a year, meeting the needs of domestic and international traveling military members and their families. Alaska continues to be of strategic importance in the training of our military and defense of the nation. The military has always been there for us, we should not shirk our duties to them.

The existing statute does not allow the Armed Services YMCA to provide these services without a rental charge. So that we may continue to meet the needs of the traveling military in Alaska, the Armed Services YMCA supports House Bill No. 362, "An Act relating to the use of space for military lounges in state-owned or state-controlled airports" with the amended changes to Section 1. AS 02.15.090(a).

This change will allow us to continue our work and at the same time, authorize the Anchorage International Airport to offer the space rent free.

Please contact us if the "Y" can offer any assistance.

Serving Those Who Serve America

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Morgan".

Tom Morgan
Executive Director

ja/tm

We're in the MILITARY PEOPLE Business