

SCOMM

115:10

CITIZEN SOLDIERS

Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association

P.O. Box 5302, Fort Richardson, AK 99505-5302

Representative Carl Morgan (HB 80)
State Capitol Building, Suite 409
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

February 15, 1999

Dear Representative Morgan:

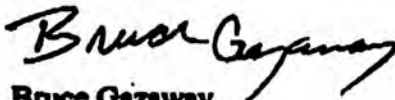
The Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association strongly urges the members of the House Military and Veterans Committee to support House Bill 80. This bill will have an important impact on retention of Guard members with eight or more years of service. Retention of these experienced soldiers is critical to the Guard's growing role in our nation's defense.

House Bill 80, if passed, will also serve as an important symbol of the state Legislature's recognition of the sacrifice Alaska Guard families make for their nation's defense. Each year, Guard members spend 40 to 45 training days away from their families.

Over the last decade, hundreds of Alaska Guard members have volunteered to support peacekeeping operations in such places as Bosnia and Iraq. When these soldiers return home they face unemployment because as volunteers they have no re-employment rights. HB80 will help rectify this situation.

Although benefits such as state veterans preference points are an important retention and recruitment tools, yet what really drives men and women to volunteer for the armed forces is a desire to serve. Anything the legislature does to acknowledge this kind of service will be appreciated by the Enlisted Association, which represents the political interests of the 3,500 enlisted soldiers of the Alaska National Guard.

Sincerely,



Bruce Gazaway
President
Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association

**Testimony in support of Senate Bill 53/House Bill 80:
Acts relating to a state employment preference for
certain members of the Alaska National Guard**

**Bruce Gazaway, President
Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association**

I would like to thank the Chairperson (Sen. Mackie/ Rep. Murkowski) for allowing this time for a discussion of this bill and the primary sponsor (Sen. Kelly/ Rep Morgan) for introducing this beneficial legislation.

Allow me to introduce myself:

- I am the President of the Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association; a group representing the interests of 3,500 enlisted members of the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard and the Alaska Naval Militia.
- I do not, nor does my organization, represent the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.
- I am a Technical Sergeant, a Non-Commissioned Officer, with 18 years of service in the Guard.
- I am a "Traditional" Guardsman, a part-time citizen soldier. I have a career outside of the guard.
- I have been in both the Army and Air Guard and I have belonged to units in Anchorage, Juneau, Sitka, Hoonah and Skagway.
- I am not a paid staff member, nor am I a paid lobbyist, for this Association - since we have neither.

Allow me to explain what we are asking for and what we hope to accomplish with this legislation.

The existing Employment Preference is a Veterans Preference. Members of the military who served during specifically defined periods of combat are authorized five or ten Veterans Preference Points. We seek neither modification of this system nor any participation in it. We honestly believe that those men and women deserve this extra recognition and we have no desire to diminish their reward.

What we propose is something slightly different. Our three Guard Preference Points are to be awarded to serving members with eight years of good service - this is primarily designed to be a retention tool.

We are asking for Guard Preference Points not as a reward for past service, but to encourage further service. This is an incentive to keep our trained technicians and mid-level managers on the job. We believe this is a modest and low-cost to no-cost incentive for master mechanics, shop foremen, loadmasters, pilots, squad leaders, platoon leaders and the other "worker bees" that make the military function smoothly.

Now we would not object if this bill were to be amended to extend this preference to retired guard members. That, however, is not our focus. Our goal is to keep skilled craftsmen and experienced mid-level managers in the Guard.

We feel that this Guard Preference in state hire will work as an incentive for two reasons. The first reason is tangible- those extra three points just might help a guard member stand out in the crowd of applicants. This just might be what allows a young soldier to qualify for his or her first interview. The second reason is intangible- this preference clearly demonstrates that our service is valued by our state.

You may wonder at our preoccupation with retaining people. The fact is that today the entire United States military faces a retention crisis as the most skilled service members are often lured away in mid-career. The Alaska National Guard also shares this retention problem.

I cannot provide you with the official figures for our retention losses; a spokesperson with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will have access to that information. However, based upon my conversations with senior members of the recruiting staff I believe the Army and Air Guard suffer a 10% to 20% dropout rate every year.

I can provide some antidotal evidence. In 1985, as a buck sergeant, I attended a Non-Commissioned Officer Training School at Fort Richardson. Of the twelve people in my squad I am the only one still in service. I was also the oldest member. Those younger could not afford to stay in.

The world, and the U.S. Military, has changed a great deal since 1985. Today, as we speak, there are Alaskan Guard

members training in Germany. In October, in Central America, our Guard members were flying supplies to the victims of Hurricane Mitch. In a matter of months my own unit will fly to Okinawa on a routine training event. The average Guard member can be, and will be, sent anywhere in the world in a matter of hours.

Not only does the Guard now have a global mission, but also we are a more important part of the nations military strength than we were a decade ago. The Guard provides 40% of the nations combat strength.

In recent years members of the Alaska National Guard have often deployed overseas on extended missions. Alaskan Guard members participated in Desert Storm. We were sent to Rwanda and Somalia on Humanitarian Missions. We have sent soldiers and airmen to support peace in Bosnia. We have been back to participate in Operation Desert Watch several times and we will be going back again.

The average Guard member today is more likely to go overseas and is more likely to be deployed for an extended period of time than was the case ten years ago.

Now, of those who go overseas on an extended mission most have to come back and look for work. There are few employers who can afford to let workers go for three to six months. Those individuals who participate in an extended deployment are considered to be volunteers and are not eligible for any of the existing veterans preference programs.

Reasonable people may question the need for this legislation. They may ask if this wouldn't open the door to other groups gaining similar preferences.

I firmly believe that National Guard members constitute a special class. We regularly and voluntarily relinquish the rights and privileges of citizenship in the service of our nation and our state. We are subject to immediate call-up by the President or the Governor. Our situation is unique, shared by no other category of employee.

There are some that may perceive that as unfair to other state employees to allow a Guard Preference in the state hiring process. I disagree. Guard members can be mobilized by both state and federal authorities. Guard members are the only state employees who can be ordered into a combat zone. Guard members are the only state employees who are subject to military discipline.

There are reasonable people who may question the administration of this program. How will the state know if a person has eight years of good service or if they are currently active in the Guard? The simplest solution is to place the burden of proof upon the individual applicant. The applicant should be required to provide a letter from his commander who can verify his service.

Others may question why we would create a program that only effects those who seek state employment. For that

there are two responses. The first is that we simply cannot burden the small businessperson with such a regulation. Secondly the Guard is a unique state asset, so it is fitting that the state government should provide appropriate recognition.

Once again I wish to express my appreciation for this opportunity to be heard. I believe that if this measure is adopted you will have pioneered a low-cost and effective measure for encouraging skilled workers and mid-level managers to stay in the National Guard. In this manner you, as a state legislator, will make a tangible contribution to National Security and the long-term welfare of Alaska.

Thank you.

Once again I wish to express my appreciation for this opportunity to be heard. I believe that if this measure is adopted you will have pioneered a low-cost and effective measure for encouraging skilled workers and mid-level managers to stay in the National Guard. In this manner you, as a state legislator, will make a tangible contribution to National Security and the long-term welfare of Alaska.

Thank you.



ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD OFFICER'S ASSOCIATION

200 West 34th Avenue, Suite 727 Anchorage, Alaska 99503

February 11, 1999

Honorable Carl M. Morgan, Jr.
State Capitol Building, Suite 409
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Morgan,

On behalf of the Alaska National Guard Officer's Association (ANGOA) I am writing today in support of House Bill No. 80, an act relating to a state employment preference for certain members of the Alaska National Guard.

The three point preference recognizes the service that the Alaska National Guard provides to the people of Alaska and the nation. National Guard members are called upon on an increasing frequency to assist in time of state emergency and federal service. This bill will provide an additional incentive for the retention of mid-career service men and women who have received a great deal of training and are critical to the success of the National Guard.

When state employees are also members of the Alaska National Guard, synergistic efficiency results. In time of state emergency, this cross-pollination of skills facilitates interdepartmental coordination and the speed and efficiency of disaster response.

The choice of providing a three point preference is appropriate. It recognizes the contributions of National Guard service without diminishing or placing it on par with the contributions of veterans who served during a time of war and/or were disabled or a prisoner of war.

The Alaska National Guard Officer's Association (ANGOA) represents the leadership of the 4,000 Army and Air Guard men and women in Alaska. If I may be of further assistance please contact me at (907) 694-3874 or by fax at (907) 694-3832.

Sincerely,


Bruce J. Gabriys
President



Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



Alaska Army National Guard



The Alaska Army National Guard continued planning and implementing significant force structure realignments in 1997. Developments at the national level are effecting the future of the Guard. Alaska's soldiers will benefit from many of the decisions made by our Nation's leadership. Among them:

- *validation of our current strength level of 2,223 authorized positions;*
- *continued modernization of our aviation fleet and ground support assets; and,*
- *recognition by both the Alaskan Command and U.S. Army Pacific that the Alaska Army Guard is a relevant force of great importance in the successful accomplishment of their respective various missions.*

The Army Guard's State mission has not changed --- adding value to Alaska as

demonstrated during multiple search and rescue operations and a whole host of other community support operations.

207TH INFANTRY GROUP (SCOUT)

The 207th Infantry Group (Scout) is the primary troop and maneuver unit within the Army Guard. They direct quality training, emergency assistance to State and local officials in times of crisis, and ensure a ready deployable combat force.

As the senior tactical headquarters for the Army Guard's varied battalions, the 207th Group provides a command and control platform for coordinating the Army Guard's State and federal missions. Currently, the Group has three identical Scout Battalions with 320 soldiers assigned to each; a newly reorganized aviation battalion of 446 troops; and a Support Battalion with two Companies in Alaska and two in California.

The missions never slow down. The 207th Infantry Group, and it's soldiers, continue on the leading edge of readiness, training, and operational missions for Alaska and America's Army.



GETTING HIS STAR

Commander 207th Infantry Group, Colonel Stephen Korenik is promoted to Brigadier General in February of '97. He became the first commander of his unit to gain flag rank while in this position. In a short time, General Korenik would assume command of the entire Alaska Army National Guard, replacing retiring General Sig Murphy (at right).

STRENGTH MANAGEMENT

Our Federal mission must be considered in the context of decreasing Department of Defense force structure and budgets. A key tenant of national strategy is the employment of active Army, Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve. Each component competes for a portion of available Defense funds. To receive our share, our soldiers and units must meet the same tough objective readiness criteria as the active Army--- in personnel, training, maintenance and worldwide

deployability.

Alaska's Army Guard met Army readiness standards in FY96. Personnel shortages have slowed since the reorganization began. Comparative statistics, between Federal fiscal years '95 and '96, demonstrate improvement since implementing the zero tolerance drug policy and enforcement of drill attendance. Drug positive urinalysis results are down; reenlistment rates are up and loss rates are down.

Today, the Alaska Army Guard is at 93.5% of authorized strength with 2,055 soldiers assigned (including 464 full-time Federal employees). We continue to recruit quality soldiers from around the State. Guard members are located in 76 communities across the State - more than in any other State. The Alaska Army National Guard also has the highest percentage (34 percent) of native Americans in the nation, per capita.

MILITARY EXERCISES AND DEPLOYMENTS

In addition to the Army Guard's regular Annual Training events, soldiers took part in several overseas and domestic deployments, exercises, and innovative readiness training opportunities. Alaskans provided real-world mission support in Korea, Indonesia, Southern California, Italy, Arkansas, Washington, Hawaii, and Panama to name a few. Guard members train in all kinds of environments and conditions here at home also. Such events help hone our soldier's skills and readiness.

Guard members are striving, on every front, to maintain credibility and viability. They work hard at it. The Alaska Army National Guard is now a contributing member of U.S. Army Pacific which is working initiative to include Scout units into selected USARPAC contingency plans. Our current five year Federal operations deployment window includes training soldiers and units in California, Arkansas, Louisiana, Washington, Oregon, Japan, Indonesia, Russia, Hawaii, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Costa Rica, Korea ---and here at home.

FORCE MODERNIZATION

Alaska Army Guard aviators recently accepted the first of the next group of UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters and the first of a fleet of eight C-23B+ Sherpa fixed wing aircraft. The significance of this upgraded aircraft fleet cannot be overstated. We are far ahead of many other states in the capabilities of our Army Aviation fleet. These modern, high-tech weapons systems, along with the continuing upgrades of ground support vehicles, communications systems, and personal equipment allow us to dramatically improve our support for State

missions while meeting our mission requirements for America's Army.

PAYROLL BENEFITS

The Alaska Army National Guard received Federal payroll, operating and maintenance funding of \$44.35 million in FY95 and \$63.3 million in FY96. Corresponding Alaska Army Guard State budget was respectively \$2.5 million and \$3.2 million for those two years. Therefore, during FY96, the Federal government spent approximately \$25.00 in Alaska for each Alaskan dollar spent on the Alaska Army Guard, a 96 percent share. State dollars primarily go toward maintenance and utilities in State armories.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Alaska Army Guard routinely provides quick, reliable support to Alaska's citizens, groups, communities and our State government. Here are examples of recent "shoppers and shopping lists" requiring soldiers, units, equipment, or preparatory planning. They include: search and rescue, rural medevac, assessing key utility site security, natural disaster preparation, civil disorder preparation, Boy and Girl Scout support, Fish and Game support, Department of Corrections support, homeless veterans through *StandDown*, law enforcement support, JROTC, ROTC and the ChalleNGe Youth Corps Program.

Additionally, the Army Guard is actively involved in preventive measures to protect Alaska's perishable environment - fuel/oil drum recovery from rural Alaska; fuel/oil storage upgrade to double-wall tanks; retrieval of hazardous materials (batteries); and, placement of spill response kits at all Readiness Center sites.

Soldiers served in a State Active Duty status to support operations during FY96: *Arctic Care '96*, where military members provided no-cost medical and/or dental care to rural Alaskan citizens; *Arctic Engineer '96*, where military engineers constructed a new runway in Noorvik; the Juneau Flood; and the Miller's Reach disaster.

EDUCATION

State tuition assistance was paid to 52 guard members in the amount of \$21,000 for reimbursement of educational or vocational expenses. Federal tuition assistance was paid to 65 guardsmen in the amount of \$40,000 for reimbursable education expenses.

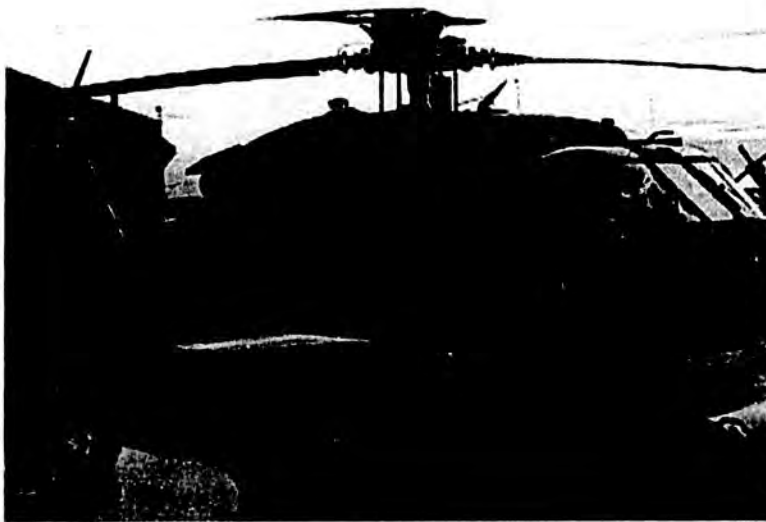
One Army Guard minority officer, an Alaska native, is currently on a

professional development tour. He is attending college full-time, at full pay and allowances, in order to complete baccalaureate degree requirements. Alaska is the only State with this program.

Troublesome in all of the good news is that some rural soldiers, attending Army-required professional development courses, conducted at the Alaska Army Guard's Regional Training Institute (RTI) have demonstrated a greater-than-average tendency to fail mandatory written exams. This is largely due to low reading skill levels. New programs are in development to address the problem.

Army Guard leaders are working with the University of Alaska, the State Department of Education and local schools to address these serious problems. *Soldiers need to arrive at any of their courses better prepared.* The Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES) reading enhancement program - "Read to Lead" - is still being distributed to all units. The State Education Services Officer administers this program. The Defense Language Institute located at Lackland AFB, Texas is providing materials and guidance for developing a resident reading program to be located at Camp Carroll and operated by the soldiers assigned to the RTI.

[click here to view 1997 deployments](#)



This is our Alaska Army National Guard. In the course of restructuring, the Alaska Army Guard will become a stronger, *mission-ready* organization; ready to help at home and meet the challenges of defending the nation's interests.

The Alaska Army Guard is located in 76 communities across the State - more communities than any other state. The Alaska Army Guard has the highest percentage of Native Americans of any military organization.

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Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

ALASKA



Alaska Air National Guard

Keeping the Peace, Keeping the Pledge

Organization & Location



*Colonel Jerry Gilleen interviews with Anchorage TV
crews after assuming command of the Alaska Air
National Guard.*

Nearly 1,900 Alaskans serve as members of the Air National Guard. The Alaska Air Guard is organized with a small Headquarters and the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center at Camp Denali; the 176th Wing, with the 144th Airlift Squadron and the 210th Rescue Squadron, at Kulis ANG Base next to Anchorage International Airport; the 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson Air Force Base; and, the 206th Combat Communications Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base. Each mission is unique. With the exception of the Air Headquarters, each of the operational units is gained by the Pacific Air Forces.

176th WING

Kulis Air National Guard Base, home of the 176th Wing, occupies just over 130 acres of land on the south side of Anchorage International Airport. The area has been the home for the unit since 1954. The Wing's two major flying units, the 144th Airlift Squadron and the 210th Rescue Squadron, operate with diverse airframes.

144th Airlift Squadron

The 144th operates nine medium range C-130 Hercules aircraft capable of flying both passengers and heavy cargo loads anywhere in the world-*and they often do*. Aircrews, of the 144th, have literally flown to the far reaches of the globe this year, performing missions in Panama, Thailand, Japan, Australia and Germany. The unit also participated in OPERATION FULL ACCOUNTING, an effort to bring back remains of Americans from Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia. The 144th Airlift Squadron traces its lineage to 1952. It is the foundation of the Alaska Air Guard.

210th Rescue Squadron

The 210th Rescue Squadron, continues to lead the way in rescuing their fellow Alaskans. They passed by their 310th rescue in 1996. The unit flies two types of aircraft: four HC-130 Hercules, modified for rescue duty with an ability to provide aerial refueling to helicopters and extended loiter time for search and rescue operations; HH-60L Pavehawk helicopters, equipped with hoists, are designed to enable aircrews to perform their missions with singular accuracy – they are the muscle.



While members of the 210th RQS have served in a host of other countries this year, perhaps their greatest work has been accomplished here at home with the rescues of nearly two dozen Alaskans.

168th AIR REFUELING WING

The 168th Air Refueling Wing operates ten KC-135R Strato Tankers from Eielson AFB, about 20 miles south of Fairbanks. Eielson has been home for the Wing since 1986. Approximately 700 Alaskans serve as members of the unit.

The recently re-engined, re-winged KC-135R's provide flying 'gas stations' on a daily basis, across the North Pacific, the deep Arctic and across the world. The 168th plays a significant role as part of the Air Force's tanker fleet providing key aerial mobility and force projection. Active, Guard and Reserve fighter, bomber and support aircraft are literally able to receive fuel in mid-air from 168th tankers.

Air Guard Team - Adding Value to Alaska

You find interesting Alaskans in the Air Guard --- teachers, counselors, carpenters, welders, heavy machine operators, painters, lawyers, dentists, nurses, pilots, police, engineers, cooks, computer operators, clerks and accountants to name but a very few. This well trained, highly motivated work force represents one of Alaska's best human resources. Each year, the Air Guard spends millions of dollars training these excellent young men and women.

The involvement of Air Guard members, in their communities, is central to their connection with their neighbors. The Air Guard supports such diverse events as the Veterans StandDown, the Fur Rondy, the annual Governor's Picnic, Operation Santa Claus, Golden Valley Days, numerous sporting events, community activities and unit sponsored events.

In recent years, Air Guard related construction projects at Kulis, Eielson and Elmendorf have netted local construction companies tens of millions of dollars. Routine contracting and unit support services and items bring more million into local economies in Fairbanks/North Pole and Anchorage.

A Vision for the Alaska Air Guard's Future

Alaska Air Guard leaders continue to look for niches and opportunities to provide service and support within the State of Alaska, for the Pacific Air Forces and the Defense community. The success of the past is not only the foundation for the future, but the framework for moving forward (in tandem with Alaska) across the Pacific Rim.



This is our Alaska Air National Guard. Approximately 1,900 Alaskans serve in the Air Guard. The 176th Wing has 1,150 in the Anchorage area, and the remainder are with the 168th Wing at Eielson AFB near Fairbanks.

The Alaska Air Guard recognizes that Air Force commanders are increasingly regarding us as one of their essential resources. Our ability to rapidly deploy Guard forces from Alaska to anywhere in the Pacific Rim (and throughout the world) is gaining wider awareness and reputation.

[click here to view 1997 deployments](#)

[[Home](#)] [[ANG Major Units](#)] [[Op Santa](#)]



Veteran Preference

Veteran's Preference - Federal and State Jobs

Veterans, as well as their dependent spouses and the dependent mothers of veterans who died under honorable circumstances while on active duty, may be eligible for preference in a federal job. The preference system awards points to eligible veterans and some of their family members, so that if many people are competing for the same job, veterans and some of their family members may appear higher on the list. For more information, contact the Office of Personnel Management. Similar preferences apply to employment in state government. Contact Alaska Department of Personnel for more information.

Detailed Information About Veteran's Preference

Since the time of the Civil War, veterans of the Armed Forces have been given some degree of preference in appointments to Federal jobs. Recognizing that sacrifices are made by those serving in the Armed Forces, Congress enacted laws to prevent veterans seeking Federal employment from being penalized because of the time spent in military service. By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over non-veterans both in Federal hiring practices and in retention during reductions in force.

Preference does not have as its goal the placement of a veteran in every vacant Federal job; this would be incompatible with the merit principle of public employment. Nor does it apply to promotions or other in service actions. However, preference does provide a uniform method by which special consideration is given to qualified veterans seeking Federal employment.

Preference applies in hiring from civil service examinations, for most excepted service jobs, and when agencies make temporary appointments or use direct hire and delegated examining authorities from the US Office of Personnel Management.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PREFERENCE

An honorable or general discharge is necessary.

Military retirees at the rank of major, lieutenant commander, or higher are not eligible for preference unless they are disabled veterans.

Guard and Reserve active duty for training purposes does not qualify for preference.

When applying for Federal jobs, eligible veterans should claim preference on their application or resume.

Applicants claiming 10-point preference must complete form SF-15, Application for 10 Point Veteran Preference.

TYPES OF PREFERENCE:

5-POINT PREFERENCE

Five points are added to the passing examination score of a veteran who served:

During the period December 7, 1941, to July 1, 1955; or

For more than 180 consecutive days, any part of which occurred after January 31, 1955, and before October 15, 1976; or

In a campaign or expedition for which a campaign medal has been authorized, including Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Southwest Asia, Somalia, and Haiti.

Medal holders who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered on active duty on or after October 14, 1982, must have served continuously for 24 months or the full period called or ordered to active duty.

The service requirement does not apply to veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities, or to veterans separated for disability in the line of duty, or for hardship.

10-POINT PREFERENCE

Ten points are added to the passing examination score of:

A veteran who served at any time and who (1) has a present service-connected disability or (2) is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the military or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Individuals who received a Purple Heart qualify as disabled veterans.

An unmarried spouse of certain deceased veterans, a spouse of a veteran unable to work because of a service-connected disability, and a mother of a veteran who died in service or who is permanently and totally disabled.

PREFERENCE IN EXAMINATION

Veterans meeting the criteria for preference and who are found eligible (achieve a score of 70 or higher) either by a written examination or an evaluation of their experience and education are eligible to have 5 or 10 points added to their numerical ratings depending on the nature of their preference. For all other positions, the names of 10-point preference eligibles who have a compensable, service-connected disability of 10 percent or more are placed ahead of the names of all other eligibles on a given register. The names of other 10-point preference eligibles, 5-point preference eligibles, and non-veterans are listed in order of their numerical ratings.

For scientific and professional positions in grade GS-9 or higher, names of all eligibles are listed in order of ratings, augmented by veteran preference, if any.

Entitlement to veterans' preference does not guarantee a job.

FILING APPLICATIONS AFTER EXAMINATIONS HAVE BEEN CLOSED

A 10-point preference eligible may file an application at any time for any position:

For which there is a list of eligibles; For which a list is about to be established; or For which a non-temporary appointment has been made in the preceding three years.

A veteran may file an application for any examination: Which was open while he or she was in the Armed Forces; or Which was announced within 120 days after his or her separation, provided a list of eligibles is still in existence, and the veteran makes application within 120 days of an honorable discharge. A period of hospitalization up to one year immediately following discharge extends this eligibility.

POSITIONS FOR PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES ONLY

Certain examinations are open only to preference eligibles as long as such applicants are available. Among these are custodian, guard, elevator operator and messenger.

Questions? Comments?



[email](#) the site administrator!

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Veteran preference may also occur in reference to "training and employment services." This refers to the prioritization of veterans over other applicants in receiving services from job assistance and education programs. Through a combination of federal and state programs the U.S. Department of Labor oversees the Veterans Employment and Training programs within each state's labor department. These programs provide veteran preference in receiving services such as vocational counseling, case management, advocacy, internships, and job placement assistance. In addition, programs such as those funded under the federal Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) also offer veterans priority in accessing services. A previous legislative research report "Veterans Benefits in Alaska and Other States," includes a description of federal job training and assistance programs available to veterans.⁵

Veterans Preference and Workplace Alaska

"Workplace Alaska" is the new recruitment process used to fill most of the vacant job positions with the State of Alaska.⁶ Previously, people applied to be listed on a position "register" regardless of whether there was an actual vacancy. Once a position was open for hire, the register often contained the names of applicants no longer available or interested in the specific position. In an attempt to improve and streamline both the application and hiring process, Workplace Alaska replaces the previous system of registers.

Elaine Williams, Employee Acquisition Manager of the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel, explained that , effective November 30, all classified service positions with the State of Alaska (salary range eight and above) are processed through Workplace Alaska. According to Ms. Williams, applicants interested in applying for position vacancies with the State of Alaska complete a two-step process:

- 1) Completion of the Applicant Profile form, and
- 2) Completion of the Job Qualification Summary for a specific job vacancy.

Rather than applying to be listed on a "register" as was previously required, applicants submit a general application profile.⁷ The profile includes basic demographic, education, job experience, as well as information regarding veteran preference. For positions within the General Government Unit (GGU), the computer generates a score based on basic qualifications, including adding points for qualifying veterans.⁸ Qualifying veterans receive five extra points for a passing grade (disabled veterans and former prisoners of war receive ten extra points).⁹

⁵ A copy of "Veterans Benefits in Alaska and Other States" (Legislative Research Report 97.052) is included as Attachment D.

⁶ Workplace Alaska applies to all positions included in the General Government Unit, Supervisory Unit, and the Confidential Employee Association. A copy of the Workplace Alaska brochure is included as Attachment E.

⁷ Applicants submitting the profile on-line must do so only once. Applicants submitting hard copy applications must submit a copy each time they apply for a position. Division of Personnel staff then enter the information into the computer. A copy of an Applicant Profile form is included in Attachment F.

⁸ Veterans do not receive a preference when a job vacancy is limited only to current state employees.

⁹ For purposes of hiring, state law defines a veteran as a person with 181 days or more of active service in the armed forces of the United States who has been honorably discharged after having served during specific periods of time or was awarded a campaign badge, expedition medal, the Purple Heart, or an award or decoration for heroism or gallantry in action, or who served 181 days or more in the Alaska Territorial Guard. A copy of "Employment Preference for Veterans and Prisoners of War," AS 39.25.159 is included as Attachment G.

The state advertises position vacancies on-line through the Division of Personnel's home page, through each department's human resources office, over the phone via recruitment messages, and in the Sunday editions of the *Fairbanks Daily News Miner*, *Juneau Empire*, and *Anchorage Daily News*.¹⁰ To apply for a specific position vacancy, in addition to the applicant profile, the applicant also completes a Job Qualification Summary. Applicants answer questions about skills, education, and experience that are specific or relevant to the actual vacancy. In a section referred to as the "cover letter," applicants may also include their unique skills and abilities.

For GGU position vacancies, the computer ranks applicants based on information included in the applicant profiles and job qualification summaries, including veteran preference points for qualifying applicants.¹¹ Because veteran preference questions are included on the applicant profile, the addition of veteran preference points occurs at the same time in the new recruitment system as under the previous systems of registers. The hiring manager receives all application materials including the applicants' ranked scores. After reviewing the application materials, the hiring manager selects the candidates to be interviewed. Based on information from the interviews and the application materials, a manager selects a candidate for hire. Before a manager offers a position to a candidate, the human resource officer within the department reviews the selection process and application materials to ensure compliance with state laws, regulations, and union contracts. If the human resource officer confirms that all procedures and conditions have been met, the hiring manager may then offer the position to the selected candidate.

For confidential and supervisory positions, only applicants who meet specific qualifications are considered for interviews. After receiving all applicant profiles and job qualification summaries, the hiring manager ranks the applicants according to their specific skills and the job requirements, and selects the candidates to be interviewed. Applicants are again scored based on the interviews. If a veteran is selected for an interview, veteran preference points are added to the total score at this time.

Ms. Williams explains that this standard is virtually the same in Workplace Alaska as it was under the register method of recruitment. In both systems, interview selections are based on the applicants' qualifications. Applicants who do not meet minimum qualification standards are not considered for interviews, regardless of their veteran status. As with GGU positions, confidential and supervisory positions require approval from the department human resource officer to ensure compliance with state statute and department regulations. Ms. Williams explains that the review by the human resource officer is also performed in order to minimize errors or abuse of discretion on the part of the hiring manager.

Ms. Williams reports that Beverly Reaume, Director of the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel will be sending a letter to all Alaska veterans explaining Workplace Alaska and how veterans receive preference in the recruitment process.¹² As to the use of the new recruitment process by veterans, Ms. Williams reports that as of October 27, 1998, veterans had submitted 1,743 applications for 540 job vacancies.¹³ Of these vacancies, 380 positions were filled. Veterans were hired for 48 of these positions.

¹⁰ Members of the GGU and Alaska State Employees Association/GGU bargaining units may also receive e-mail notification of Workplace Alaska recruitment notices.

¹¹ The computer can only score items requesting a "yes or no" response and therefore, information in the "cover letter" section is not scored.

¹² A draft copy of this letter (December 23, 1998) is attached as Attachment H.

¹³ This number of applications by veterans may include duplication, as a veteran may have responded to more than one recruitment notice and submitted more than one application.

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

REPRESENTATIVE LISA MURKOWSKI, CHAIR

MEETING AGENDA

February 16, 1999
5 p.m.

BILL TO BE HEARD:

HB 77 – Joint Armed Forces Committee
HB 80 – Employment Preference for Alaska National Guard

I. Call to Order

II.

(A) HB 77 – Joint Armed Services Committee

Potential Witness:

Casey E. Sullivan, Staff Assistant, Representative Lisa Murkowski
Brigadier General Phillip E. Oates
Christopher Nelson, Staff Member, Joint Committee on Military Bases

(B) HB 80 – Employment Preference for Alaska National Guard

Potential Witness:

Representative Carl Morgan, Prime-Sponsor
Brigadier General Phillip E. Oates
– Bruce Gazaway, President, Alaska National Guard Enlisted Assoc.
Bruce Gabrys President, Alaska National Guard Officer's Assoc.

Gabrys

- III. New Business**
- IV. Adjournment**

02/16/99
17:27:25

LEGISLATIVE TELECONFERENCE NETWORK SYSTEM
PARTICIPANT LIST (TESTIFIERS ONLY)

LTN1150
BY:JNU
FOR:ALL

TCN:90173 SCHEDULED FOR:02/16/99 17:00 TO 18:30
PUBLIC HEARING

HOUSE SPECIAL CMTE MILITARY & VETERANS A

LOCATION:ANCHORAGE

HB 80
HB 80

MR
MR

BRUCE
BRUCE

GAZAWAY
GABERS

A.N.G.O.A

TESTIFY
TESTIFY

Alaska State Legislature

SESSION

State Capitol Building, Suite 409
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
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MEMBER

Community & Regional Affairs Committee
Health, Education & Social Services Committee
House Resources Committee
Special Committee on Fisheries

INTERIM

P.O. Box 243
Aniak, Alaska 99557
Phone: 907-675-4413

Representative Carl M. Morgan, Jr. District 36

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Lisa Murkowski
Chair, Special Committee on Military & Veterans Affairs

FROM: Representative Carl M. Morgan, Jr.

RE: HB 80: List of Potential Witnesses

DATE: February 11, 1999

Please accept the following as a potential list of witnesses in support of HB 80.

Commissioner Philip Oats (*via teleconference: 907-428-6003*)
Commissioner of Military & Veterans Affairs
Potential Alternate: BG Stephen D. Korenek (*via teleconference*)

Bruce Gazaway (*via teleconference: 907-258-8111*)
President, Alaska National Guard Enlisted Association

Bruce Gabrys (*via teleconference: 907-258-8111*)
President, Alaska National Guard Officers Association

Alaska State Legislature

SESSION

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INTERIM

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Phone: 907-675-4413



MEMBER

Community & Regional Affairs Committee

Health, Education & Social Services Committee

House Resources Committee

Special Committee on Fisheries

Representative Carl M. Morgan, Jr. District 36

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Lisa Murkowski
Chair, Special Committee on Military & Veterans Affairs

FROM: Representative Carl M. Morgan, Jr.

RE: HB 80: List of Probable Supporters and Opponents

DATE: February 11, 1999

Please accept this as a list of probable supporters and opponents for HB 80.

In support:

Alaska National Guard, State of Alaska
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, State of Alaska
Department of Administration, State of Alaska
Representative Morgan
Representative Foster
Representative Kapsner
Representative Masek
Representative Harris
Representative Mulder
Representative Coghill
Representative Kott
Representative Dyson
Representative Croft
Representative Rokeberg
Representative Phillips
Representative Murkowski

In opposition:

None known

Alaska State Legislature

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MEMBER

Community & Regional Affairs Committee
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**Representative Carl M. Morgan, Jr.
District 36**

Sponsor Statement HB 80

**“An Act relating to a state employment preference for certain
members of the Alaska National Guard”**

This legislation serves as motivation for joining the Alaska National Guard by establishing an enlistment and retention incentive. This bill will initiate a state hiring preference for Alaska National Guard members recognizing their tremendous contributions to our state.

Specifically, the bill will allow three points to be added to the passing grade of a member of the Alaska National Guard when qualified for classified service under the State of Alaska's merit system examination. To qualify for the preference points, Alaska National Guard members must have served in the Alaska National Guard for eight years. A person may use the preference without limitation when being considered for a position for which persons who are not currently state employees are being considered.

Currently, under Statute 39.25.159, the bill considers preference for veterans, disabled veterans and prisoners of war. With the introduction of this new bill, members of the Alaska National Guard will also be included in the hiring preference.