

HB

137

**Special Committee on Military & Veteran Affairs
Representative Mike Chenault, Chair**



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MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Therriault, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

From: Representative Mike Chenault

Date: April 18, 2001

Subject: Request for hearing – HB 137 “An Act relating to records of veterans of the armed forces; and providing for an effective date.”

Please schedule HB 137 for a hearing in the Senate State Affairs Committee at your earliest convenience.

HB 137 eliminates the requirement that recording offices of the Department of Natural Resources provide the Bureau of Vital Statistics copies of separation papers submitted by veterans of the armed forces.

I have attached a copy of the sponsor statement, which was given to the House Special Committee for Military & Veterans Affairs by the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. A copy of the original bill is included for your reference.

Please contact Leona Oberts, MLV Committee aide, at 2811 if you need any additional information.

[Representative Mike Chenault@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Representative_Mike_Chenault@legis.state.ak.us) • www.akrepublicans.org/Chenault.htm

Representative Mike Chenault

Table of Contents



- I. Fiscal Note
- II. HB 137- "An Act relating to records of the armed forces; and providing For an effective date.
- III. Sponsor Statement
- IV. Support Documents
- V. Witness list
- VI. Miscellaneous

FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA
2001 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: HB137
 () Publish Date: _____
 Dept. Affected: Natural Resources
 BRU: Information/Resource Mg
 Component: Recorder's Office
 Component Number: #802

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____
 Title: An Act relating to records of veterans of
the armed forces.
 Sponsor: Sp Cmte on Military & Veterans Affairs
 Requester: (H) MLV

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
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 EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2001) cost: none
 Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY2002 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*
 AS 26.10.070 currently requires DNR's recording offices to periodically provide copies of recorded veteran discharge papers to the Vital Statistics office in the Department of Health and Social Services. It also requires Vital Statistics to maintain separate records of such information in its files. This statute essentially charges two separate government agencies with maintaining the same records – an unnecessary and duplicative waste of government resources.
 Recording offices have been performing this function for decades in compliance with the existing statute.
 continued on page 2

Prepared by: Sharon Young, State Recorder Phone 269-8882
 Division: Support Services Date/Time 27-Feb-01
 Approved by: Pat Pourchot Date 27-Feb-01
 Agency: Natural Resources

For distribution information, call the Governor's Legislative Office

ANALYSIS: (continued)

The state's thirty-four recording districts manually monitor this information and send copies of all veteran

The state's thirty-four recording districts manually monitor this information and send copies of all veteran separation papers, with a manually prepared report, to vital statistics on a monthly basis. There is no easy means to extract all veteran separation papers from the recording system records. Reports must be requested under each branch of military service to locate and identify each recorded DD214 document. Then copies have to be manually produced from library film records and a typed report is then prepared. As the records base becomes larger and larger, DNR recording staff are spending more and more time each month in tracking and reporting this information. In the Anchorage office alone, this amounts to between four and six hours a month. Statewide, the report preparation and processing time is estimated at more than 200 hours per year (at an approximate cost of \$5.0). While this is not a huge block of time, it does represent valuable work time that will be devoted to other component priorities such as indexing and mailback functions which frequently fall into backlog status.

At the present time, the Vital Statistics office merely stores the document copies and the reports for use in the event a veteran ever requests the information from their office. The state's recording system is the official repository for all recorded documents, including military separation papers which are recorded at no charge pursuant to another provision of this same statute. This proposal would eliminate both the requirement for recorders to submit copies to Vital Statistics and the requirement for Vital Statistics to maintain separate records of such information. This proposal is in line with meeting the Governor's objectives to balance the budget by streamlining government processes. Elimination of unnecessary and redundant processes frees up valuable staff time in both agencies to meet other established objectives.

Fiscal impact of this proposal can only be measured in terms of improving available staff time in the recording section to work toward meeting other statutory mandates, such as daily recordation and indexing of incoming documents. Staff time involved in the manual tracking and preparation of reports and copies for Vital Statistics varies by office, but as noted above is estimated at more than 200 hours per year statewide.

SPONSOR STATEMENT
HB 137 "AN ACT RELATING TO RECORDS OF VETERANS OF
THE ARMED FORCES"
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS
AFFAIRS

This bill will eliminate the requirement that recording offices of the Department of Natural Resources periodically provide the bureau of vital statistics in the Department of Health and Social Services copies of separation papers submitted to the various recording offices by veterans of the armed forces. It will also eliminate the requirement that the bureau of vital statistics maintain a record of veterans' separation papers compiled from copies of reports received from the recording offices and information submitted to the bureau by veterans.

The requirement for two state agencies to retain the same records is duplicative and unnecessary. The state's recording systems is the official depository of all recorded documents. Although the two agencies above are legally required to retain the separation papers, the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs also stores these documents as a courtesy.

Veterans' separation papers are recorded free of cost to the veteran. Copies of the document when requested are also free. Recordation is voluntary and benefits the veteran.

This bill emphasizes that there need be only one repository for these official papers and eliminates duplicative government processes.

Prepared at the request of the
Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs

Sec. 26.10.070. Record of veterans of the armed forces of the United States.

(a) A veteran may record without fee the veteran's armed forces report of separation at a recorder's office of the Department of Natural Resources. Each recorder's office shall periodically submit to the bureau of vital statistics copies of the reports of separation that it records.

(b) The bureau of vital statistics shall keep a record from copies of reports received under (a) of this section and from information voluntarily submitted to the bureau by veterans of all persons who are bona fide residents of Alaska and who actively served in the Alaska Territorial Guard, Alaska National Guard, organized reserve units, United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard since April 6, 1917. The record shall contain the name, age and place of residence at the time of entering service, place and date of commission, enlistment, or induction, branch of service, record of service, and the date, place, and nature of discharge.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR HB 137

This bill eliminates the requirement for the Bureau of Vital Statistics to maintain a record of veterans' separation papers.

At present, veterans' separation papers are recorded in three different state departments. (Dept. of Natural Resources, Bureau of Vital Statistics, and as a courtesy, the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs) The requirement to keep these records in multiple state agencies is unnecessary and wastes government dollars.

This bill makes government more efficient.

HB 137

List of Witnesses

Carol Carroll, Director Department of Natural Resources (Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs)

Sharon Young, State Recorder, Department of Natural Resources

Representative from Department of Vital Statistics