

HB

45

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 5/7/07

FURTHER: Finance

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: _____

State Affairs Committee considered CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 45(MLV)

HB 45 STATE VETERANS' CEMETERY & FUND

"An Act authorizing the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to establish and maintain Alaska veterans' cemeteries; and establishing the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund in the general fund."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:
 Same Title
 New Title

HOUSE BILL:
 Same Title
 Technical Title Change
 New Title w/ SCR # _____

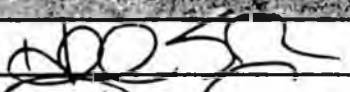
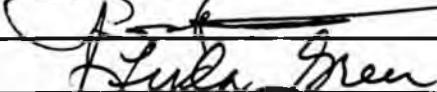
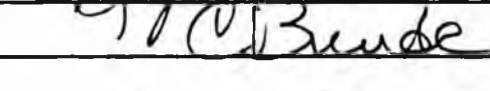
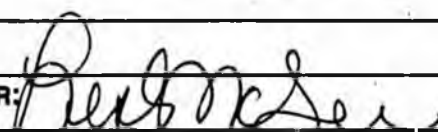
NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
MVA			✓		
ADMN				✓	
ADMN				✓	

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	French	✓			
	Green	✓			
	Bunde	✓			
CHAIR: 	McBure	✓			

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Sponsor

Statement

SESSION
Alaska State Capitol, Room 418
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-4457 Office
(907) 465-3519 Fax
(800) 928-4557 Toll Free

INTERIM:
1292 Sadler Way, Suite 304
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Office (907) 456-8172
Fax (907) 456-2490

Representative David Guttenberg

House Bill 45 - State Veterans' Cemetery

All Alaska veterans deserve access to a military cemetery that honors their service and recognizes their sacrifices while serving our country, usually under challenging conditions, and frequently in harm's way.

On a per capita basis, Alaska has more residents in active military service or who are veterans than all but one other state. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a total of 9,469 veterans reside in the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

The VA's long-term goal is to provide an operational veterans' cemetery within 75 miles of 90 percent of the veterans in the country. The nearest veterans' cemetery to Fairbanks is Fort Richardson National Cemetery, located 350 miles away in Anchorage. By the VA's own estimation, a facility in Fairbanks would greatly increase the number of veterans served by a veterans' cemetery.

Interior Alaska's veterans deserve a cemetery located in the Interior of the state. A state veterans' cemetery in the Interior would better serve the needs of veterans and their families, and provide a final resting place that is centrally located, honorable, and well maintained. An Interior veterans' cemetery will help families avoid the pain of burying a loved one far from home.

HB 45 seeks to establish a state cemetery similar to the Fort Richardson and Sitka National Cemeteries. It will provide a place in the Interior for soldiers to be laid to rest with full military funeral honors, including uniformed pallbearers, rifle team, and ceremonial folding and presentation of the United States flag.

HB 45 authorizes the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to establish and maintain a state veterans' cemetery with funds from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, State Cemetery Grants Program. Through this program, the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs may be awarded up to 100% of allowable costs for design, construction, and operating equipment for an approved project. To date, the VA has awarded 152 grants totaling more than \$264 million to establish, expand, or improve 65 veterans' cemeteries in 35 states, Guam and Northern Mariana Islands. There are now 65 operational cemeteries and four more under construction.

I urge you to support this legislation.

Representative.David.Guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us
<http://guttenberg.akdemocrats.org>

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

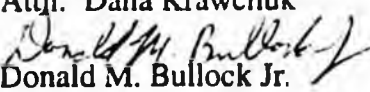
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

April 11, 2007

SUBJECT: Sectional summary of CSHB 45(MLV)
(Work Order No. 25-LS0230\C)

TO: Representative David Guttenberg
Attn: Dana Krawchuk

FROM: 
Donald M. Bullock Jr.
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

Section 1. Allows the legislature to appropriate a portion of the money received for special request plates commemorating Alaska veterans to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund created in sec. 3 of the bill.

Section 2. Adds gifts, donations, and grants received by the Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs for veterans' cemeteries to the list of program receipts in AS 37.05.146(c) that are accounted for separately; appropriations from these program receipts are not made from the unrestricted general fund.

Section 3. Creates the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund in the general fund; the fund is not exempt from the requirements of AS 37.07 (Executive Budget Act) and money in the fund is not dedicated for a specific purpose. Provides that the legislature may appropriate amounts from the fund to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs for the construction, operation, and maintenance of veterans' cemeteries established under sec. 4 of the bill. Appropriations to the veterans' cemetery fund do not lapse under AS 37.25.010, and the unexpended and unobligated balance of an appropriation from the fund lapses back into the fund.

Section 4. Authorizes the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to establish and maintain Alaska veterans' cemeteries in the state. Allows the department to accept gifts, donations, and grants for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the cemeteries; land received by the department is owned by the state. Requires the department to consult

Representative David Guttenberg

April 11, 2007

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with the Alaska Veterans' Advisory Council when adopting regulations for determining eligibility for burial in a state veterans' cemetery, receive the plot or interment allowance on behalf of the state, comply with all requirements for a state veterans' cemetery grant established by the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs, and apply for state veterans' cemetery grants from the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs. Authorizes the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to adopt regulations, enter into agreements for the operation of veterans' cemeteries, and solicit gifts, donations, and grants in addition to grants from the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs.

DMB:ljw
07-207.ljw

FAIRBANKS VETERANS CEMETERY WORKSHEET OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

Demographic Factors	Data	Notes
Veterans in four areas	11,164	Fairbanks/North Star and 3 adjoining areas
Avg. annual death rate	149	2005-2026 VA figures
Usage factor	0.50	50% will choose cemetery
Dependents factor	1.50	1 dependent per 2 veterans
Annual burial rate	112	[Death rate x usage] x dependents factor
Graves per acre (gross)	600	Rule of thumb
Min. gravesites needed (20 yr.)	1,678	[Annual burials x 0.75] x 20
Min. burial acreage needed	2.79	One of four is a "second interment"
Gross acreage recommended	20.00 ²	Min. gravesites/600 see note below
Personnel Factors		
Data		
Admn. Workers (230 inter. Per FTE)	0.49	Based on NCA estimates
Field workers		Cumulative
Interments (250 per FTE)	0.45	Includes PT, temp., etc.
Gravesites (7,844.4 per FTE)	0.21	Rises over time
Acres Maint. (10.7 per FTE)	0.26	Burial acres used/developed acres may vary
Field Workers Subtotal	0.92	
Employees	1.41	Admn. & field workers
Cem. Director (GS 9--\$36.7 x 1.3 for fringes)	\$47,652.80	NCA Costs 1.0 Full Time Equivalent Employee (FTEE)
Equip. Operator (WG-8--\$28 x 1.3)	\$36,142.60	1.0 FTEE
Total Salary	\$83,795.40	
Operations Factors		
Data		
Utilities & communications	\$1,117.50	Phone, water, electricity, gas (\$400 x acres)
Supplies & materials	\$2,095.31	Fuel, fertilizer, etc. (\$750 x acres)
Contractual services	\$1,187.34	Janitorial, security, irrigation (\$425 x acres)
Subtotal	\$4,400.16	
Total Annual Operations \$88,195.56		
<i>Maintenance and Repairs extra</i>		
<i>Equipment Replacement extra</i>		

¹ The standard usage factor is 25% but we have increased the factor to 50% in this case because of the difficulty in projecting usage in this area. While 50% usage may be high, it would be better to estimate a higher number at this point rather than a lower number.

² The model assumes a suitable site with easily developed cemetery land. In this case, it would be better to acquire as large a parcel as possible in order to assure suitable land and the ability to buffer surrounding land uses. At least 20 acres should be considered.



BURIAL & MEMORIALS

State Cemetery Grants Program - General Information

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) State Cemetery Grants Program was established in 1978 to complement VA's National Cemetery Administration.

The program assists states in providing gravesites for veterans in those areas where VA's national cemeteries cannot fully satisfy their burial needs.

Grants may be used only for the purpose of establishing, expanding or improving veterans cemeteries that are owned and operated by a state or U.S. territory. Aid can be granted only to states or U.S. territories. VA cannot provide grants to private organizations, counties, cities or other government agencies.

VA can now provide up to 100 percent of the development cost for an approved project. For establishment of new cemeteries, VA can provide for operating equipment. VA does not provide for acquisition of land. The value of the land cannot be considered as an "allowable cost" under the grant. States are solely responsible for acquisition of the necessary land. Any state ceasing to own or operate a cemetery established, expanded or improved through the use of grant funds, or using the funds for any other purpose than for which the grant was made will be liable for the total refund of all grants made for that cemetery. Federal funds can also be suspended or withdrawn for noncompliance with the terms and conditions of the grant.



Massachusetts State Veterans Cemetery Agewam

Cemeteries established under the grant program must conform to the standards and guidelines pertaining to site selection, planning and construction prescribed by VA. Cemeteries must be operated solely for the burial of service members who die on active duty, veterans, and their eligible spouses and dependent children. Any cemetery assisted by a VA grant must be maintained and operated according to the operational standards and measures of the National Cemetery Administration.

The administration, operation and maintenance of a VA-supported state cemetery is solely the responsibility of the state. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs is authorized to pay a plot or interment allowance (not to exceed \$300) to a state for expenses incurred by the state in the burial of eligible veterans in a cemetery owned and operated by the state if the burial is performed at no cost to the veteran's next-of-kin. This benefit is administered by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the state must apply to VBA to receive it.

VA has awarded 152 grants totaling more than \$264 million to establish, expand or improve 65 veterans cemeteries in 35 states, Guam and Northern Mariana Islands.

There are 65 operational cemeteries and four more under construction.

A [list of state veterans cemeteries](#) is available.

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Reviewed/Updated Date: January 3, 2007



BURIAL & MEMORIALS

Establishing a State Veterans Cemetery

Determine Need

Analyze existing service provided by national cemeteries and other state cemeteries. Consider service life of existing cemeteries. Provide data on veteran population, including age.

Investigate Availability of Suitable Land

Suitable land should be easily accessed by road, free of limitations such as rock, steep slopes and wetlands, uncompromised by incompatible land uses near by, and appropriate for cemetery use. Land already owned by the state, county or municipality is usually the best choice. The state must have title to the land.

Assess Impacts

Analyze possible negative environmental and historic preservation impacts the cemetery location may have. Can such limitations be overcome?

Encourage Support

Veterans service organizations should be informed of the project and be in support of an effort to establish a state veterans cemetery. Local governments should also be supportive. Ultimately, the state legislature must pass necessary legislation authorizing the state cemetery and appropriating funds for establishment and operation.

Complete Application

Apply to the Department of Veterans Affairs for federal assistance with a grant for establishing a state veterans cemetery. For forms and other guidance, see [QMB Grants Management](#) and the [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance](#).

[Español](#) | [VA Forms](#) | [Facilities Locator](#) | [Contact the VA](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
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Reviewed/Updated Date: September 13, 2006



BURIAL & MEMORIALS

State Grants Planning Model Overview

[Veterans Shrine Commitment](#)

[General Program Requirements](#)

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[Site Considerations - Site Selection Standards for a State Cemetery](#)

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Veterans Shrine Commitment

The appearance of state veterans cemeteries demonstrates to America's veterans that the nation appreciates their selfless service and the sacrifices they have made. Elevating the appearance of the cemeteries to shrine status signals the commitment to maintain our veterans' cemeteries at the highest standards forever. State veterans cemeteries help foster patriotism and preserve the nation's history.

Each visitor should depart feeling that the grounds, the gravesites and the environs of the state cemetery are a beautiful and awe-inspiring tribute to those who gave much to preserve the nation's freedom and way of life.

Each state cemetery exists as a veterans shrine and serves as an expression of the appreciation and respect of a grateful state and nation for the service and sacrifice of its veterans. Each cemetery provides an enduring memorial to their sacrifice as well as a dignified and respectful setting for their final rest.

To satisfy this requirement, pre-applications should include a written assurance that the state will maintain the cemetery according to VA National Cemetery Administration standards as established in 38 CFR Section 39.6(4).

General Program Requirements

In general, state cemetery projects should be built to create a sense of visual continuity with the site and reflect the tradition and heritage of the area. Cemetery buildings should not be isolated, preeminent elements of the cemetery. Buildings should blend with the site design and may be contemporary, single-story architectural structures found in the project region, or transitional, with a style reminiscent of historic state architecture. All buildings should be designed to reflect permanence and durability with minimum maintenance required. The overall design should consider human scale and privacy for visitors. A consistent architectural expression shall be maintained throughout the cemetery.

Cemetery master plans should be laid out in a looped circulation configuration. Loop configurations include roads that separate vehicular, pedestrian and maintenance traffic. Loop configurations also help define memorial areas but roads should not be used as boundaries to circumscribe the burial areas. The design should establish a strong sense of entry into the cemetery and create an interesting and dramatic sequence of spaces.

The development plan should be divided into phases, each consisting of an area approximating the burial need over a 10-year period. Construction of burial areas in latter phases should be programmed to be completed two years before actual need. This lead-time allows for the continuity of interment service.

Prior to construction, the site chosen should be evaluated for environmental impact and issues. Projects are required to support a FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact) indicating the project will not have an undue negative impact on the environment.

In general, cemetery plans should avoid lakes, greenhouses and bridges. Chapel buildings, whether freestanding or part of another structure, are not allowed under 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 39. The cost to build and maintain cemetery features of this nature is not supported by the State Cemetery Grants Program. Additionally, per the CFR, the grants program does not fund cemetery land costs or offsite utilities. Some current state cemeteries received land donations for their project.

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Project Design Requirements

The following is a list of the reference documents required for the design of the project.

- 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations), Part 39
- [Your State Contract Requirements \(A/E, Construction\)](#)
- State Cemetery Grants Program - Grant Information Kit July 2001
- A/E Submission Requirements; PG-18-15 Volume D June 1999

All cemetery designs must conform to all state and local codes and requirements.

Site Considerations

Site Selection Standards for a State Cemetery:

- **Proximity** - Locate the site as close as possible to the most densely populated location in the area under consideration. Not only actual distance, but travel time to the site must be considered.
- **Size** - Site acreage is sufficient to provide at least 20-40 years of gravesites based on state projected burial rate. More acreage is encouraged. The acreage required will depend on the burial method, gravesite yield, projected burial rates based on the state's estimated needs for at least 20 years, and the project site's proximity to other national and state cemeteries.
- **Shape** - Uniform boundaries, undivided by roads or easements, with generally square or rectangular shapes are desired. Irregularly shaped sites are more difficult to access and less efficient to design and develop.
- **Accessibility** - Site accessible by highway. Public transportation service is desirable but not required. Road quality of access streets should also be considered.

- **Utilities & Water** - Availability of public utilities (electricity, water, sewer, gas) is important. However, on-site septic systems and on-site potable water wells or ponds are acceptable. An adequate water supply for irrigation is of primary importance. Consider the availability of on-site or off-site recyclable water. The grant program does not fund off-site improvements such as water line extensions.
- **Surrounding Land Use** - Surrounding land should be free from noise or adverse environmental impact(s) (nuisance, landfills or hazardous waste sites). Consider the attractiveness and compatibility of adjacent land. Sites adjacent to visually objectionable, loud noise, high traffic, or other nuisance elements should be avoided. Both current and future projected land use are considered.
- **Soils** - Soils should be of a quality which will provide adequate topsoil for growing turf. The soil should have adequate stability for constructing roads and buildings and should be free from shallow-depth groundwater. The water table must be lower than the maximum proposed depth of burial. There should be no sub-surface obstructions or hazardous waste present. Site soil information is available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture (www.nrcs.usda.gov).
- **Topography** - Land should be relatively level to rolling terrain for areas to be developed. The grade of the site should be in the two to ten percent range. There should be sufficient slope to enable proper drainage of the site. Ravines, wetlands, lakes, streams, floodplains and sinkholes cannot be developed. If hilly land is used, access must not be cost prohibitive.
- **Aesthetics** - Existing site amenities such as pleasant views and quality vegetative cover are favorable.
- **Restrictions to Development** - The presence of elements such as cultural/historic/archaeological elements, utility easements, rights-of-way or mineral rights can hamper or legally prevent development. Presence of endangered species limits land development. Potential flood hazards must be avoided.
- **Site Suitability and Acceptability** - Consider the following tests and items to determine site suitability and acceptability: 1) Soil Borings and Test Pits, Perk Test (Septic Field Requirements), Soil Sample Analysis; 2) Well, Aquifer Level, Underground Water Quality Testing; 3) Historic and Archaeological Land Use Review; 4) Cultural Resources; 5) Flood Plains, Wetlands, and Endangered Species; 6) Land Use and Public Access; 7) Utilities; 8) Hazardous Waste; 9) Corrective Action Agreement.

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Site Description and Site Analysis

Per 38 CFR 39.8, the plan for a state cemetery requires a description of the site and its various elements. The description should explain specific development of the site, design concepts and include space and area requirements (space outline) for support facilities. The description should also include: proposed and existing burial acreage; available gravesites; total acreage and gravesites upon completion of the project; and the projected annual interment rates. (If the cemetery is to be developed in phases, each phase will be handled as a separate project.)

As part of the site selection process, NCA may provide states with demographic data from the Future Burial Needs report. This information will assist states in locating state veterans cemeteries in the most advantageous sites. Through its technical assistance program, NCA will assist State Directors of Veterans Affairs in answering related questions from other state officials.

Cemeteries established under the grant program must conform to VA-prescribed standards and guidelines for site selection, planning and construction. Cemeteries must be operated solely for the interment of service members who die on active duty, eligible veterans and their spouses and minor children. The administration, operation and maintenance of a VA-supported state cemetery are solely the responsibility of the state. VA is authorized to pay a "plot allowance" of \$300 to a state for expenses incurred in the burial of an eligible veteran.

Planning Process for Establishing State Cemeteries

Using the Site Selection Standards listed above, states should identify several potential sites. Sites should be assessed for overall site potential, proximity to veterans in the state, topographical features, available acreage and the surrounding land use. Once the number of sites has been narrowed to the most favorable locations, consider the suitability of the land for development as a cemetery. The preferred site is then described in the pre-application for a grant. States have always been partners with the Federal government in providing for the needs of military veterans. The VA State Cemetery Grants Program (SCGP) assists the states in providing gravesites with grants used to establish, expand or improve veterans cemeteries owned and operated by the state.

Phasing

Cemeteries are constructed in phases based on the needs of the veteran population. The initial phase of construction should be based on a projected ten-year interment rate. Initial development of larger increments would unnecessarily increase state maintenance costs. This first phase includes the development and construction of the cemetery infrastructure as follows:

- Entry Features (including Avenue of Flags)
- Roads and Parking
- Avenue of Flags
- Assembly Area (Flag Location)
- Burial Areas and Burial Sections
- Committal Service Shelter
- Columbarium and In-Ground Cremation Burials
- Memorial Walk
- Administration Building
- Public Information Center (PIC)
- Public Restrooms
- Maintenance Building
- Service Yard
- Irrigation System
- Utility Distribution System
- Carillon Tower

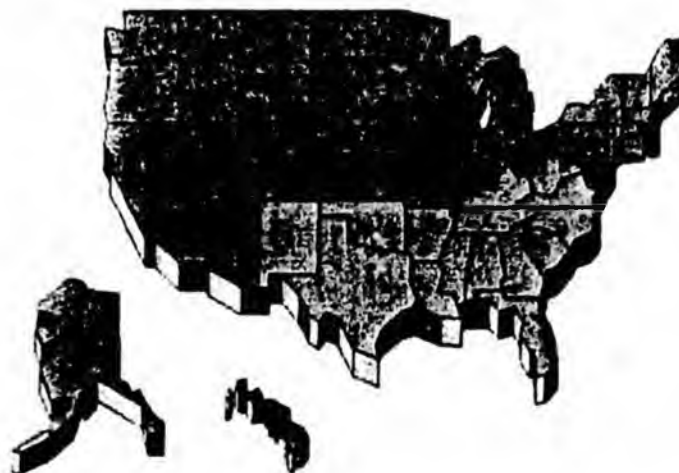
In subsequent phases cemeteries should look at burial needs for 10 years. Subsequent phases will include the build out of additional burial sections and continuation of the columbarium, as required. The additional phases will require the extension of roadways to access the planned burial sections. Initially, cemeteries are specifically designed with loop roads to easily accommodate additional phases. Planning for the second phase should start approximately six years after the cemetery opens.

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BURIAL & MEMORIALS

State Cemetery Grants Program/Grant Information Kit



[Applicant Eligibility](#) [Program History and Background](#) [Scope of the Program](#) [Availability of Funds](#) [Application Guidelines](#) [Application Content](#) [Selection Criteria](#) [Review Process](#)

Applicant Eligibility

1. State governments are eligible to receive grants to **establish, expand or improve** state veterans cemeteries. The term "state" means each of the several states, territories and possessions of the United States, including Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are also eligible to receive grants.
2. Counties, cities and other state subdivisions, including multi-agency organizations are not eligible for grants. Native American tribal governments and entities are not eligible to receive grants. Private organizations are not eligible to receive grants.
3. **Applicants must own the land** on which the cemetery is to be established. The state is responsible for the provision of land. Land may be purchased, transferred from another agency or donated.
4. Eligible applicants must provide assurance that they possess legislative authority and adequate appropriations to construct the project to be built with grant assistance.
5. Cemeteries must be operated solely for the interment of service members who die on active duty, veterans (as defined in Title 38, U.S. Code §101.(2)), and their spouses and minor children. States may impose residency requirements for eligibility but are encouraged not to.
6. Grants may only be awarded to establish, expand or improve state-owned veterans cemeteries. Grants may not be awarded for maintenance or repairs.

7. New cemeteries must be capable of providing at least 20 years of service.

Program History and Background

1. The federal government's system of national cemeteries was first established during the Civil War. The Army operated most of the cemeteries until 1973 when they were transferred to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Arlington National Cemetery is still operated by the Department of the Army. The National Park Service operates several historical national cemeteries such as Gettysburg and Vicksburg. An independent agency, the American Battle Monuments Commission, maintains cemeteries overseas for the dead of World War I and World War II. States have operated veterans cemeteries since the War with Mexico.
2. The VA State Cemetery Grants Program was established in 1978 to complement VA's network of national cemeteries. Funds were first appropriated for the program in 1980. As originally authorized, VA provided 50 percent of the cost and states provided 50 percent. The value of the state land dedicated to the cemetery comprised up to half of the state's share.
3. The program assists states in providing gravesites in those areas where the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) cannot fully satisfy veterans' burial needs.
4. 4. Public Law 105-368, which went into effect in 1999, authorized VA to provide up to 100 percent of the development cost for an approved project. VA can now provide for operating equipment for establishment of new cemeteries. VA does not provide for acquisition of land.
5. The administration, operation and maintenance of a VA-supported state cemetery are solely the responsibility of the state.
6. VA is authorized to pay a "plot allowance" of \$300 to a state for expenses incurred in the burial of an eligible veteran without charge.
7. Federal statutes authorizing the program are codified at 38 U.S.C. § 2408. Regulations are at 38 C.F.R. Part 39.
8. The State Cemetery Grants Program is described in the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* under "State Cemetery Grants" at 64.203.

Scope of the Program

1. The State Cemetery Grants Program is intended to complement the service provided by the VA's system of veterans cemeteries operated by the National Cemetery Administration.
2. VA seeks to provide the service of a veterans cemetery within 75 miles of 90 percent of the veterans across the country. Data shows that a 75-mile radius defines the effective "service area" of a veterans cemetery.
3. Since 1973, VA has opened many new cemeteries, primarily in large metropolitan areas where veterans previously had no effective service. VA also works to expand existing national cemeteries to maintain current service. VA has more than doubled the acreage available in federal veterans cemeteries since 1973 and the burial rate at these cemeteries has also increased by more than 100 percent.
4. Smaller cities and rural areas located beyond the 75-mile service areas of these existing national cemeteries are ideal locations for state veterans cemeteries.

Availability of Funds

1. Federal funds are appropriated each year for the State Cemetery Grants Program. VA requested \$32 million in funding for FY 2004 (October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004).
2. Appropriated funds are available until expended.
3. If a state that has received a grant under this program ceases to operate the cemetery as a veterans cemetery, the federal government is entitled to recover the total of all grants made under this program to that state.
4. Funds must be expended in accordance with applicable guidelines, including Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments."
5. All grant costs must be "necessary, reasonable" and allocable to the project for which funds have been requested.
6. When all requirements for Federal funding have been met, VA will award grants providing sufficient funds are available.
7. If sufficient funds are not available, VA will award funds according to the priority established (see "**Selection Criteria**").

Application Guidelines

1. A state seeking grant funding for a veterans cemetery project must apply to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in accordance with 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 39. The applicant must also conform with the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 38 CFR Part 43, known as the "Common Grants Management Rule."
2. The applicant must have clear legislative authority from the state to apply for the grant.
3. The applicant must have the funds necessary to begin design and planning work. Federal funds are awarded on the basis of the bids received for construction. **State funds are needed to prepare plans and specifications prior to bidding.** Once the successful bidder has been determined and VA has awarded the grant, the state may be reimbursed for allowable costs already incurred.
4. The applicant must provide written assurance that any cemetery established, expanded, or improved through a grant will be maintained and operated in accordance with the operational standards and measures of the National Cemetery Administration.
5. VA provides **no monetary assistance to operate state veterans cemeteries.** States must be aware of the commitment to operate the cemetery.
6. VA must receive applications by July 1 for projects to be funded in the next Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30).
7. Applications must be reviewed by the State "Single Point of Contact" under the Executive Order 12372 process.
8. Applications must be signed and dated by the authorized state representative, normally the director of

the state veterans affairs agency.

9. Cemeteries established under the grant program must conform to VA-prescribed standards and guidelines for site selection, planning and construction.

Application Content

1. Standard forms approved by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) must be used to apply for grants. All these forms are provided in the "State Cemetery Grants Program Guide, PG 40-1." They are also available on the OMB Grants Management website.

- o The basic application form is SF (Standard Form) 424, titled "Application for Federal Assistance," and known as the "face sheet."
- o The application must also include SF 424C, "Budget Information—Construction Programs."
- o The applicant must also submit SF 424D, "Assurances—Construction Programs."
- o The "Certificate of Compliance" with Federal drug-free workplace and debarment and suspension requirements is required.
- o In addition, the applicant must submit the "Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loan and Cooperative Agreements," which certifies that the applicant will not use grant funds for lobbying. If grant funds are to be used for lobbying, they must be disclosed on the "Disclosure" form.

The applicant must submit written assurance that it possesses authority to establish and operate a state veterans cemetery and that it will maintain the cemetery in accordance with VA standards.

2. For all projects expected to cost \$100,000 or more, the applicant must submit a pre-application. The pre-application is intended to:

- o Establish communication between the grantor agency (VA) and the applicant;
- o Determine the applicant's eligibility;
- o Determine how well the proposed project can compete with applications from others;
- o Discourage proposals that have little or no chance of being funded.

3. Pre-applications must include the following:

- o The location of the cemetery. A specific site may be designated during the review phase of the application, but the pre-application must designate the area to be served and the preferred location of the cemetery;
- o A design concept that describes the primary features to be included in the project and the number of gravesites to be provided. Standard features include items such as the entrance gate, administration building, committal service facility, flag plaza and assembly area;
- o A needs assessment that explains the need for the project to establish, expand or improve the veterans cemetery. This should be concise and quantitative to the degree possible.

Selection Criteria

1. Preapplications received by July 1, will be prioritized for funding in the following fiscal year.
2. Only preapplications which have met the requirements noted in the "Application Guidelines" and the "Application Content" sections will be prioritized. That is, applications must be properly completed on the appropriate forms. They must include the proper attachments and the applicant must have clear authority and adequate funding to begin the design process.
3. Preapplications meeting these basic requirements will be prioritized according to published criteria in the Program Guide, PG 40-1.
4. VA will rank the preapplications and announce priorities by August 15. VA will rank applications according to priority and the date on which the application was received.
5. Prioritization follows these rules:
 - o PRIORITY I - Projects needed to avoid disruption in burial service that would otherwise occur at existing veterans' cemeteries within 4 years of the date of the preapplication. Such projects would include phased expansion projects as well as improvement projects that are needed to continue interment operations.
 - o PRIORITY II - Projects for the establishment of new veterans' cemeteries.
 - o PRIORITY III - Planned phased developments prior to need.
 - o PRIORITY IV - Other improvement projects.

Within priority groups 1, 2 and 3, highest priority will be given to projects in geographical locations that would provide **service to the largest number** of unserved veterans as determined by VA. Within priority group 4, projects will be ranked in order based upon VA's determination of the relative importance and necessity to operate.

Review Process

1. In addition to the required forms, assurances, certifications and attachments, all projects must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. In many cases, especially with new cemeteries, the applicant will be required to perform an Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine whether a more in-depth Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is required. The EA should progress toward a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The FONSI should be made available for public review and comment.
2. The National Historic Preservation Act requires VA to determine whether proposed projects will have any impact on historic or cultural resources. When a new cemetery is being established, it is normally necessary to perform an investigation of the site to determine whether any historic or cultural resources would be affected and, if so, what mitigation or protection may be afforded. The applicant then confers with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which renders an opinion of the project's impact. Depending on the opinion of the SHPO, VA may be able to approve the project.
3. Most states hire architect/engineer (A/E) firms to design major projects. In the case of major projects, including all establishment grants, VA requires a "pre-design conference" in which VA, state and A/E representatives meet to familiarize themselves with the site and VA design requirements.
4. VA requires a "master plan" for establishment of new cemeteries. The master plan should analyze the

major factors affecting design of the cemetery—including climate, soil, hydrology, site constraints, views, and activity level. The plan should analyze alternative designs and address the ultimate "build-out" of the site and planned phases of development.

5. The design process then proceeds to "design development" or partial plans, sometimes called 40 percent or 50 percent drawings. Again VA must review these submissions and approve them.
6. The final design submission comprises the construction drawings and specifications. VA is required to approve these documents before the state advertises for bids. Cemetery plans must be complete, comprehensive and professional.
7. Based on construction bids, the state submits a new form 424 and 424C that reflects the actual construction amount rather than the estimated amount provided in the preapplication. Along with the forms, the state must submit a tabulation of bids and designate the contractor to whom the contract will be awarded. VA reviews these materials and then awards the grant. Once the state receives the Notification of Grant Award, they may request reimbursement for costs they have already incurred such as design costs.

[Español](#) | [VA Forms](#) | [Facilities Locator](#) | [Contact the VA](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
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Reviewed/Updated Date: September 13, 2006



64.203 State Cemetery Grants

FEDERAL AGENCY:

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

AUTHORIZATION:

Veterans Housing Benefits Act of 1978, Section 202, Public Laws 95-476, 98-223, 100-687, 103-446, and 105-368; 38 U.S.C. 2408.

OBJECTIVES:

To assist States in the establishment, expansion, and improvement of veterans' cemeteries.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE:

Project Grants.

USES AND USE RESTRICTIONS:

Monetary assistance is provided under this program to construct, expand, and improve State veterans' cemeteries. Cemeteries must be State-owned and operated solely for the interment of eligible veterans and their dependents and/or spouses. Construction cost means the amount found necessary to convert a tract of land to an operational cemetery.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Applicant Eligibility:

Any State may apply.

Beneficiary Eligibility:

The cemetery must be used solely for the interment of veterans, their wives, husbands, surviving spouses, minor children, and unmarried adult children who were physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self support: section 1.620 of 38 CFR.

Credentials/Documentation:

Costs will be determined in accordance with revised OMB Circular No. A-87 for State Governments, dated May 4, 1995, and further amended August 29, 1997.

APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCESS:

Preapplication Coordination:

Consultation or assistance is available from VA Central Office personnel (State Cemetery Grants Service) to aid in the preparation of an application. The standard application forms as furnished by VA and required by OMB Circular No. A-102 must be used for this program (Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance," with attachments). An environmental assessment is required. This program is eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her State for more information on the process the State requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if

the State has selected the program for review.

Application Procedure:

Submit Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance for Construction Programs," with attachments, to the Director, State Cemetery Grants Service (401C), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. This program is excluded from coverage under OMB Circular No. A-110.

Award Procedure:

Formal notification of the award to the State is made by the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration.

Deadlines:

A deadline of July 1 is established for the filing of applications in the year prior to the fiscal year in which funding is requested.

Range of Approval/Disapproval Time:

From 30 to 60 days.

Appeals:

No application shall be disapproved until the applicant has been afforded an opportunity for a hearing.

Renewals:

Not applicable.

ASSISTANCE CONSIDERATIONS:

Formula and Matching Requirements:

The amount of the Federal contribution to a State is up to 100 percent of the cost of establishing, improving or expanding State Veterans Cemeteries. In the case of establishment grants, the cost of operating equipment may also be included. Land value is not included as an allowable cost for reimbursement under the grant.

Length and Time Phasing of Assistance:

Funds are provided by electronic transfer of funds and must be used within 3 years.

POST ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Reports:

Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs, and Performance Reports are accomplished in accord with 38 CFR Part 43.

Audits:

In accordance with the provisions of OMB Circular No. A- 133 (Revised, June 24, 1997), "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations," nonfederal entities that expend financial assistance of \$300,000 or more in Federal awards will have a single or a program-specific audit conducted for that year. Nonfederal entities that expend less than \$300,000 a year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in Circular No. A-133.

Records:

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records and all other records pertinent to a grant shall be retained for a period of 3 years. If any claim or audit is started before the expiration of the 3 year period, the records shall be retained until all litigation, claims or audit findings involving the records



What Is A VA Burial Allowance ?

A VA burial allowance is a partial reimbursement of an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is not service-related, the reimbursement is generally described as two payments: (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot interment allowance.

Who Is Eligible ?

You may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:

- ❖ you paid for a veteran's burial or funeral **AND**
- ❖ you have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer **AND**
- ❖ the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- ❖ the veteran died because of a service-related disability **OR**
- ❖ the veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death **OR**
- ❖ the veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay **OR**
- ❖ the veteran died in a VA hospital or while in a nursing home under VA contract, or while in an approved state nursing home.

How Much Does VA Pay ?

Service-Related Death. VA will pay up to \$1,500 toward burial expenses for deaths prior to September 10, 2001. For deaths on or after September 11, 2001, VA will pay \$2,000. If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of moving the deceased may be reimbursed.

Nonservice-Related Death. VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses, and a \$150 plot interment allowance for deaths prior to December 1, 2001. The plot-interment allowance is \$300 for deaths on or after December 1, 2001. If the death happened while the veteran was in a VA hospital or under contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the deceased's remains may be reimbursed.

How Can You Apply ?

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-530, Application for Burial Allowance. You should attach proof of the veteran's military service (DD 214), a death certificate, and copies of funeral and burial bills you have paid.

Related Benefits

Burial in VA National Cemeteries
Presidential Memorial Certificates

Headstones and Markers
Burial Flags

**For More Information Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
Or Visit Our Web Site At <http://www.cem.va.gov>**

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner

1300 W BENSON BLVD
ANCHORAGE, AK 9950
PHONE: (907) 269-5559
www.state.ak.us/dmv/

February 5, 2007

The Honorable David Guttenberg
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 418
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

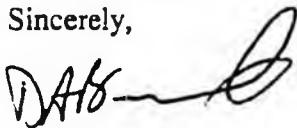
Dear Representative Guttenberg:

I received your request for information concerning the revenues associated with the Veteran License Plate programs. The following schedule shows revenues collected for FY03 through FY06, and for the first half of FY07.

	Standard Veteran License Plates	Commemorative Veteran License Plates - Original	Commemorative Veteran License Plates - Renewal
FY03	\$ 18,330	\$ 0	\$ 0
FY04	18,390	200	0
FY05	22,510	1,800	70
FY06	21,160	1,700	0
FY07 (Jul-Dec)	10,755	970	0

I hope you find this information useful. If I may be of further assistance on this, or any other DMV matter, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Duane Bannock
Director

CC: Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner, Department of Administration



April 17, 2007

The Honorable Mike Chenault, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 505
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

The Honorable Kevin Meyer, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 515
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: HB 45 (Guttenberg & Doll)—Support

Dear Co-Chairs Chenault and Meyer:

On behalf of the members of AARP in Alaska, we urge you and your colleagues on the House Finance Committee to support HB 45, authored by Representatives David Guttenberg and Andrea Doll and co-sponsored by your Committee colleague Representative Harry Crawford as well as Representatives Lynn, Kerttula, Roscs, Johnson, Gruenberg and Olson.

HB 45 would establish a fund for the maintenance of and development of future veterans' cemeteries in Alaska. As you know, the only veterans' cemeteries are in Anchorage and Sitka yet the Fairbanks area alone has over 11,000 veterans, many of whom are AARP members. Certainly veterans and their families would like to have a cemetery closer to where they live.

Burial in a veterans' cemetery is one of the last honors we can offer our fellow citizens who have served in the Armed Forces. We think it is a well-deserved tribute to these men and women who served our country. It is a proper thank-you to the veterans and their families.

Undoubtedly there may be some costs associated with a new cemetery. Our veterans didn't weigh the costs when they joined the armed services. Surely we can bear the costs of this. Thank-you to them.

AARP recommends an "AYE" vote on HB 45.

Should you have any questions about our position, please feel free to contact me (586-3637) or Patrick Luby, AARP Advocacy Director (907-762-3314).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marie Darlin

Marie Darlin, Coordinator
AARP Capital City Task Force
415 Willoughby Avenue, Apt. 506
Juneau, AK 99801
586-3637 (voice)
463-3580 (fax)

CC: Vice-Chair Bill Stoltze
Representative Richard Foster
Representative Mike Hawker
Representative Bill Thomas
Representative Harry Crawford
Representative Les Gara
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Mike Kelly
Representative Mary Nelson
Representative Andrea Doll
Representative David Guttenberg



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Office of the Mayor

809 Pioneer Road • PO Box 71267 • Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1267 •

Phone 907/459-1300 Fax 907/459-1102 Email mayor@co.fairbanks.ak.us

12 February, 2007

Dear Committee Members,

This is a letter of **support** for **HB 45: State Veterans Cemetary** and a thank you to Representative David Guttenberg for his sponsorship of this valuable piece of legislation.

This legislation serves to better meet the need of our Alaskan Veterans and their families through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, State Cemetery Grants Program.

As the home of the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (formerly the 172nd SBCT / now the 1-25 SBCT), and having recently emerged successfully from our efforts to challenge the BRAC recommendations to scale back the military presence in Alaska, we have no choice but to continue to provide adequate reason for the military to stay here. This bill does that.

I fully support this legislation which honors Alaskans who have served their country with dignity as well as their family members in our community.

Sincerely,

Jim Whitaker, Mayor - Fairbanks North Star Borough

Disabled American Veterans
Department of Alaska
Resolution #2007-01

SUPPORT FOR A POLICY FOR A STATE VETERANS CEMETARY

WHEREAS, Alaskan veterans deserve a cemetery that is located in the Interior that honors their service; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration, Alaska has more residents in the military on a per-capita basis than any other state. The Fairbanks North Star Borough has approximately 11,164 veterans; Forty percent of families in the Fairbanks area have at least one veteran in their household and sixteen percent have at least one woman in the household who is a veteran; and

WHEREAS, A State Veterans' Cemetery in the Interior would better serve needs of the veterans and their families and provide a place that is centrally located, honorable and well maintained; and

WHEREAS, The nearest officially designated military cemetery is located 350 miles North of Anchorage at Ft. Richardson; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administrations' goal is to provide eligible veterans reasonable access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) burial options; and

WHEREAS, The VA provides a burial and funeral expense allowance of \$300 and a plot-interment allowance of \$300; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration follows a six-step process to build a new state veteran cemetery; site selection; environmental statement; land acquisition; master planning and design development; construction document preparation; and construction award and completion; and

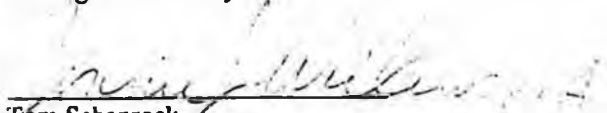
WHEREAS, The Alaska Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs can be awarded up to 100% of the development costs from the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration for an approved project; and

WHEREAS, To date, the Veterans Administration has awarded 137 grants totaling more than \$200 million to establish, expand or improve sixty-two veterans cemeteries in thirty-two states, plus Guam, Fifty-six cemeteries in twenty-one states and Guam are now operational; and

WHEREAS, According to the Division of Motor Vehicles from FY03 to FY05, \$45,040, has been generated from both the Federal and Commemorative Veterans license plate programs. The monies collected from the state license plate program currently goes into the general fund; and

WHEREAS, The construction of a state veterans cemetery in the Interior would be a great benefit to the friends and families of veterans in our community and would provide a place in the Interior for soldiers to be laid with full military funeral honors, pallbearers, rifle team, flag folding and flag presentation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Alaska, That support be given in the creation of a veterans state cemetery, as proposed in HB45, open to all veterans in the state and recognizes the veterans sacrifices while serving our cemetery.


Tom Schanrock,
Department Commander



AMERICAN LEGION

C. RUSSELL HUBER POST #57

"The Friendly Post" -- Home of Happy Bears
1634 Cushman Street • Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: (907) 452-5757 • Fax: (907) 452-8954

January 30, 2007

Representative David Guttenberg
State Capital
Room 418
Juneau, AK. 99801

Reference: Veterans Cemetery in Fairbanks

Dear Representative Guttenberg:

As the 2007 Legislative session begins, Veterans organizations are again requesting Legislative support for the establishment of a Veterans Cemetery in Fairbanks. You will recall that the American Legion, Department of Alaska, at their 2005 State Convention in Kodiak voted unanimously in support of that cemetery. Most noteworthy is that the resolution calling for a new veteran's cemetery came from our Anchorage American Legion comrades who recognized the only existing veteran's cemetery in Alaska is located at Fort Richardson.

We have met with Federal Veterans Affairs officials, State Veterans Affairs personnel, American Legion Posts, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Alaska Native Veterans, members of the Order of The Purple Heart and other veterans organizations who all strongly support your bill to establish a second veterans cemetery to serve the desperate need for a final resting ground for those many who have served our country in times of war and peace.

The need for a new veteran's cemetery is urgent as the few veterans' sites available will soon be filled with no provision existing for veteran's grave anywhere in the interior.

Please share this letter with other members of the Legislature.

For God and Country,

Darrell Peterson, Commander

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By: Luke Hopkins
Hank Bartos
Introduced: 03/24/05
Adopted: 03/24/05

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH
RESOLUTION NO. 2005 - 15

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF A STATE VETERANS' CEMETERY IN THE INTERIOR THROUGH LEGISLATION THAT ESTABLISHES AN ALASKAN VETERANS CEMETERY WITH FUNDS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) STATE CEMETERY GRANTS PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, Alaskan veterans deserve a cemetery that is located in the Interior that honors their service; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration, Alaska has more residents in the military on a per-capita basis than any other state. There are approximately 11,164 veterans living in the Fairbanks North Star Borough; and

WHEREAS, the nearest officially designated military cemetery is located in Anchorage at Fort Richardson Army base; and

WHEREAS, the VA National Cemetery Administration follows a 6-step process to build a new state veterans cemetery: site selection; environmental assessment; land acquisition; master planning and design development; construction documents preparation; and construction award and completion; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs can be awarded up to 100 percent of the development costs from the VA State Cemetery Grants Program for an approved project and the VA has awarded 137 grants to establish and improve veterans cemeteries around the country; and

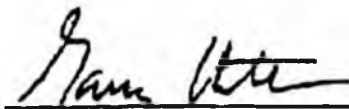
WHEREAS, a State Veterans' Cemetery in the Interior would better serve needs of the veterans and their families, and provide a place that is centrally located, honorable, and would provide a place in the Interior for soldiers to be laid with full military funeral honors, pallbearers, rifle team, flag folding, and flag presentation; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly supports the creation of a State Veterans' Cemetery in the Interior and recognizes veterans' sacrifices while serving our country.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be
47 forwarded to The Honorable Governor Frank Murkowski, the Alaska Interior Delegation,
48 members of the House Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, Major General Craig E.
49 Campbell Adjutant General/Commissioner, Military and Veterans Affairs, The Honorable
50 Senator Ted Stevens, the Honorable Senator Lisa Murkowski, the Honorable
51 Congressman Don Young.

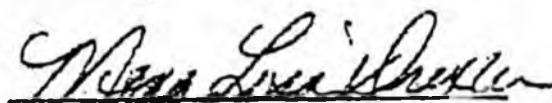
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PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 24th DAY OF MARCH 2005.



Garry Hutchison
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:



Mona Lisa Drexler, GMC
Municipal Borough Clerk

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Ayes: Romans, Bartos, Sattley, Rex, Williams, Hopkins, Aldridge, Frank, Hutchison
Noes: None