

SB

216

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: SB 216
 Bill Version: _____
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): SB 216-DOT-NDE-02-06-08 Dept. Affected: DOT&PF
 Title Act Designating AK Hwy/Richardson Hwy as the Purple Heart RDU Highways and Aviation
 Component Northern Region Hwys and Aviation
 Sponsor Senator Ellis
 Requester Senate Transportation Component Number 2068

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual	150.0							
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	150.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF	150.0							
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
TOTAL	150.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Installation of six (6) major signs (approx 5'x12'), six (6) minor signs (4.5'x3'), and three (3) informational kiosks along locations on the Richardson and Alaska Highways. The cost for initial installation includes the concrete foundations and crash supports that breakway in an accident. A contractor will install these signs under the direction of the Department.

Prepared by: Mary Siroky
 Division: DOT&PF, Commissioner's Office
 Approved by: Nancy Slagle
Director of Division of Administration

Phone 465-4772
 Date/Time 2/6/08 2:00 PM
 Date 2/6/2008

Nancy Barnes

From: Nancy Barnes
Sent: Friday, February 01, 2008 3:05 PM
To: George Ascott; Ryan Makinster; Tim Sunday; David Gray
Cc: Nancy Barnes; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Subject: FW: Purple Heart Trail (HB283/SB216).

For your legislator's SB 216 Senate Transportation File for 02/07/08.
Nancy Barnes, Sen. Kookesh's Office

From: Ron Siebels [mailto:ronakph@gci.net]
Sent: Friday, February 01, 2008 2:55 PM
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Gene Therriault; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Albert Kookesh
Cc: Rep. Berta Gardner; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Jim Isturis; Max Hensley
Subject: Purple Heart Trail (HB283/SB216).

I want to personally thank each and everyone one of you for taking the time out of your busy workload to work on the Purple Heart Trail issue (SB216/HB283). I have sort of made this a personal crusade and I have been working hard on this issue for about a year now. It is a real joy to see it moving forward in the legislative process. I can assure you that Alaska veterans are gaining a sincere and larger appreciation for the work that you "our Juneau supporters" are putting forth for veterans. Please continue with your caring efforts and don't let them down.

Representative Gardner and Senator Ellis have gone out of their way to help me get this going and I am so very appreciative for their devoted assistance. I want to extend that appreciation to those of you who now have this issue before you and I want to thank you in advance for your future endeavors on behalf of our wounded combat vets.

I firmly believe that the Purple Heart Trail will do two things: one it will establish a visible honor for "ALL" wounded and deceased combat veterans, and two it will provide visual proof to all who travel the Purple Heart Trail that Alaska not only cares but that we show we care.

The Purple Heart Trail already exists in 42 other states as well as Guam. I just want Alaska to be part of something very special. I submit that the many Alcan travelers who see these signs, and know or be related to someone who was killed or wounded in battle, will be very appreciative to Alaska for showing that we care.

On behalf of our wounded combat vets I thank you for your support and I anxiously await the day this important legislation is passed in Juneau.

I have made plans to be ready to assist you and testify by phone on Feb 7, from 1-3 during your Transportation Committee meeting. The Anchorage legislative office will have a place (teleconference Anchorage to Juneau) where I can be ready to assist and answer any questions or concerns you may have. In the mean time feel free to contact me, I will be more than glad to help you in any way I can.

I will be heading to Washington DC on Feb 8, to work on some other veteran issues, but I will be glad to do anything I can to help you before I leave. I will be gone for a couple of weeks.

2/1/2008

**My phone number is 907/562-4254.
My email address is ronakph@gci.net**

Once again, thank you so very kindly;

**Yours In Patriotism;
Ron Siebels
MOPH, Alaska**

**SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 1/16/08

FURTHER:

Date of 5-Day Notice: _____
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: _____

Transportation Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 216

SB 216 PURPLE HEART TRAIL

"An Act designating the Alaska Highway and portion of the Richardson Highway as the Purple Heart Trail."

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:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
<hr/>	
HOUSE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	No REC	AMEND
CHAIR:					



SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

State Capitol, Room 11
Juneau AK, 99801-1152
907-465-6828

To: Senate Transportation Committee Members

From: Albert M. Kookesh, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
465-6828 *Albert Kookesh*

Date: January 31, 2008

Re: Senate Transportation Committee
For the week of February 4 - February 8, 2008

Tuesday, February 5, 2008 1:00 - 3:00 pm Butrovich Room #205

SB 218: An Act relating to the use of child safety seats and seat belts (Senator French)

SB 236: An Act establishing the Alaska transportation fund and relating to the fund (Senate Rules)

Bills previously heard and/or scheduled.

Thursday, February 7, 2008: 1:00 - 3:00pm Butrovich Room #205

SB 216: An Act designating the Alaska Highway and part of the Richardson Highway as the Purple Heart Trail.

SB 224: An Act providing for and relating to the issuance of general obligation bonds for the purpose of paying the cost of state transportation projects (Rules at the Request of the Governor)

Bills previously heard and/or scheduled.

Please note that last week you received bill packets for SB 218, SB 236 and SB 224. SB 216 is attached.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Barnes at 465-6828 (office/direct) or 723-2496 (cell)

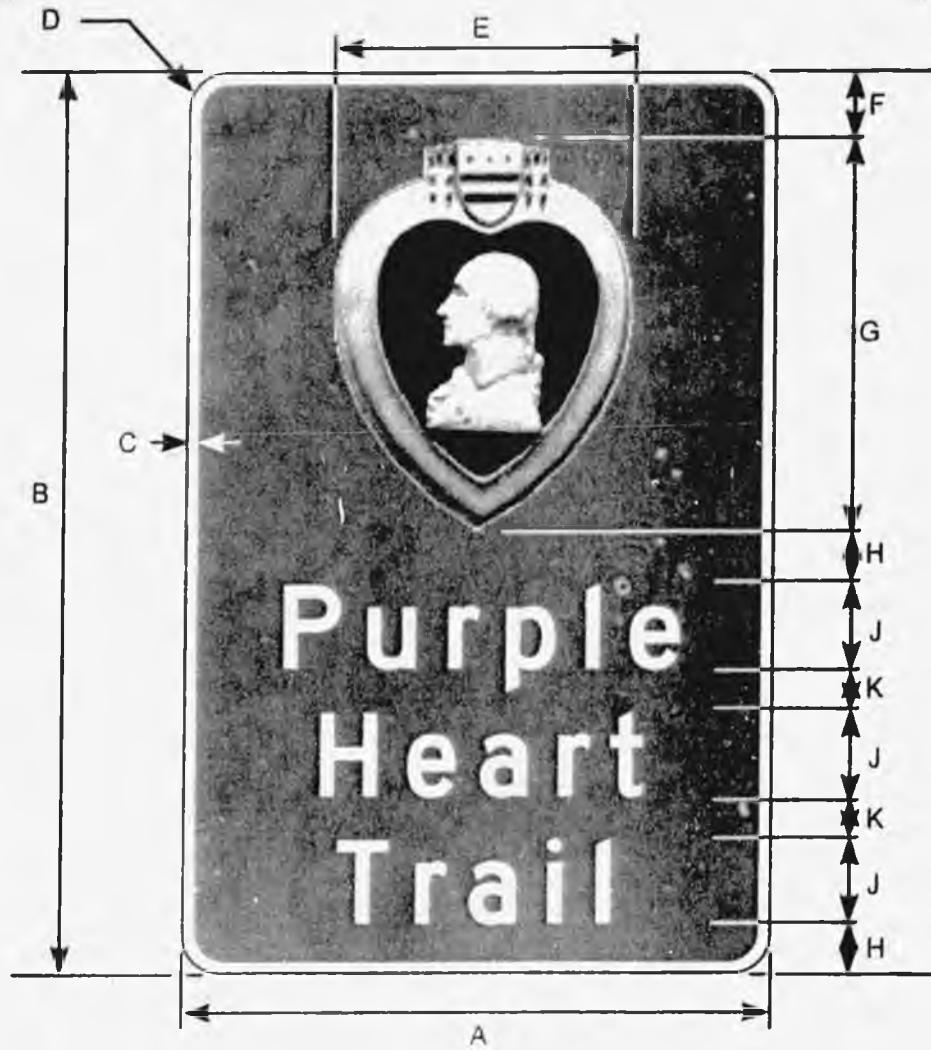


Legend: White
 Background: Green
 Route Plaque: Black on White

Make symbol proportional
 to graphic shown.

Road Class	Dimensions (inches)								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J
Expressway	150	72	2	8	10	6	6	6	4
	K	L	M	N	P	R	S	T	U*
	5.75	138.5	13.25	24	49.5	10	30	18	11.75

* Proportionately scale Purple Heart Emblem to 30" wide



Border and Legend: White
 Background: Green
 Marker: Black on White

* See Appendix B-4 for
 Standard Arrow Details.

Make symbol proportional to graphic shown

Letter Size (inches)	Dimensions (inches)									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K
5	36	54	0.75	2.25	19.2	4	24	3	5	25



END
DOUBLE
TRAFFIC
FINES

PASS
WITH
CARE

↑
40°
↓
↑36°↑

PASS
WITH
CARE





HISTORY IN THE SENATE

2008

Read first time and referred to:

1/16

TRA

____ RPT CS() ____ New Title
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN
To: _____

____ RPT CS() ____ New Title
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN
To: _____

____ RPT CS() ____ New Title
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN
To: _____

Read second time

CS() Adopted New Title

Amended _____
 _____ Advanced / 3rd Rdg. _____

Read third time

Title Amendment
 Return to 2nd & amended _____

Passed Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 EFD same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CBR same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CRT same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____

Reconsideration

Reconsideration not taken up

Title Amendment
 Return to 2nd & amended _____

Passed/Rec Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 EFD same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CBR same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CRT same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____

Engrossed, signed by the President
Transmitted to the House

Secretary of the Senate

HISTORY IN THE HOUSE

20

Read first time and referred to:

____ RPT HCS() ____ NT: HCR ____
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN

____ RPT HCS() ____ NT: HCR ____
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN

____ RPT HCS() ____ NT: HCR ____
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN

____ RPT HCS() ____ NT: HCR ____
____ DP ____ DNP ____ NR ____ AM
____ FN ____ OFN / Prev: ____ FN ____ OFN

Read second time

HCS() Adopted New Title
HCR No. _____

Amended _____
 _____ Advanced / 3rd Rdg. _____

Read third time

Title Amendment
 Return to 2nd & amended _____

Passed Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 EFD same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CBR same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CRT same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____

Reconsideration

Reconsideration not taken up

Title Amendment
 Return to 2nd & amended _____

Passed/Rec Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 EFD same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CBR same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____
 CRT same or Y ____ N ____ E ____ A ____

Engrossed, signed by the Speaker
Returned to the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

SENATE-HOUSE HISTORY (continued)

20

Version Received from the House:

Concur in House Amendment

Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] EFD same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CBR same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CRT same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

Failed concur in House amd., ask House recede

Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

House failed to recede from amendment

Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

CC appointed by Senate _____ Chair

CC appointed by House _____ Chair

(S) Granted Limited Powers of Free Conference

(H) Granted Limited Powers of Free Conference

20

(S) Adopted CC Rpt _____

Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] EFD same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CBR same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CRT same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

(H) Adopted CC Rpt _____

Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] EFD same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CBR same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

[] CRT same or Y ___ N ___ E ___ A ___

Sent to enrolling

Received from Enrolling _____ Manifest Error

Sent to Governor

_____ By Governor

Chapter Number _____

Filed with Lieutenant Governor

25-LS1280C
Kane
2/7/08

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 216(TRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATOR ELLIS

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act designating the Alaska Highway and portion of the Richardson Highway as the**
2 **Purple Heart Trail."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1. AS 35.40 is amended by adding a new section to read:**

5 **Sec. 35.40.210. Purple Heart Trail. (a) The Alaska Highway from the**
6 **Alaska-Canada border to Delta Junction and the Richardson Highway between Delta**
7 **Junction and Fairbanks are concurrently designated the Purple Heart Trail.**

8 **(b) The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities shall erect and**
9 **maintain appropriate signs facing the oncoming traffic in both directions entering the**
10 **highway at Fairbanks, Delta Junction, Tok Junction, the Alaska border, and at points**
11 **approximately halfway between those locations designating the highways described in**
12 **(a) of this section as the Purple Heart Trail. Each sign must**

13 **(1) display a replica of the Purple Heart Medal;**

14 **(2) contain the following statement: "Purple Heart Trail."**

- 1 (c) At not less than three pullouts along the Purple Heart Trail, selected by the
2 commissioner of transportation and public facilities, the Department of Transportation
3 and Public Facilities shall erect informational displays including
4 (1) a replica of the Purple Heart Medal;
5 (2) the following statement: "Purple Heart Trail";
6 (3) information pertinent to the Purple Heart and Purple Heart Trail
7 and its history.
- 8 (d) The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities shall determine the
9 appropriate size for the signs to be erected under (b) of this section and informational
10 displays described in (c) of this section.

SENATE BILL NO. 216

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

BY SENATOR ELLIS

**Introduced: 1/16/08
Referred: Transportation**

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act desi" ating the Alaska Highway and portion of the Richardson Highway as the**
2 **Purple Heart Trail."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 *** Section 1.** AS 35.40 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 35.40.210. Purple Heart Trail.** (a) The Alaska Highway from the
6 Alaska-Canada border to Delta Junction and the Richardson Highway between Delta
7 Junction and Fairbanks are concurrently designated the Purple Heart Trail.

8 (b) The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities shall erect and
9 maintain appropriate signs at selected visitor centers and pullouts, at each terminus of
10 the highways, and at least every 50 miles on the highways described in (a) of this
11 section designating the highways as the Purple Heart Trail. Each sign must

- 12 (1) be not less than 20 inches high and not less than 30 inches wide;
- 13 (2) display a replica of the Purple Heart Medal;
- 14 (3) contain the following statement: "Purple Heart Trail."

1
2
3
4

(c) At not less than three visitor centers and pullouts along the Purple Heart Trail, selected by the commissioner of transportation and public facilities, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities shall provide additional information about the Purple Heart Trail.



Tok Chamber of Commerce
"Main Street Alaska"
PO Box 389
Tok, Alaska 99780
907-883-5775

Fax: 907-883-5774
<http://www.tokalaska.info.com>

TO: State of Alaska
Senator Ted Stevens
Senator Johnny Ellis
Representative Don Young
Representative Berta Gardner

We are proud to offer our strong support for Alaska to be a part of the "Purple Heart Trail". We think its simple visible message is well deserved by those who bravely gave so much of themselves in defending this nation.

This worthy project can be of great benefit to our community and the State of Alaska. We believe that those who see the signs will have a better understanding of the sacrifices made by those who wear the Purple Heart. We believe that the traveling public, whether Alaskans or visitors, will realize that we care about our wounded veterans. We further believe that the signs will bear witness that we in Alaska not only care about our wounded veterans, but we are willing to put forth the effort to visibly display our deepest fondness for their sacrifice.

Many who travel our roads will surely know or be related to a wounded veteran or a veteran who lost their life in defense of our nation. The warm feeling they obtain will certainly be in their minds as they traverse the roads of our great state. By showing them we care we can instill a kind Alaskan memory of their travels, and hopefully we will see them again.

Be it known to all that the community of TOK Alaska will be proud to be part of the Purple Heart Trail. We support it and we encourage all Alaskans to support it as well.

Sincerely yours,

John A. Rusyniak, President
Home 883-3124; Cell 206-724-4591; E-Fax 305-425-7901
E-mail: john@rusyniak.com

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate Labor and Commerce
Committee, Chair

•
Legislative Budget and Audit
Committee

•
Senate Rules Committee

•
Committee on Committees



While in Session
State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-3704
Fax: (907) 465-2529

While in Anchorage
716 W. 4th Ave, Ste. 440
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-0169
Fax: (907) 269-0172

SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS

SPONSOR STATEMENT SB 216

*"An Act designating the Alaska Highway and portion of the Richardson Highway
as the Purple Heart Trail"*

The Purple Heart medal is a United States military decoration, awarded in the name of the President to those who have been wounded or killed while in service to their country. SB 216 seeks to recognize and honor award recipients by establishing a Purple Heart Trail in Alaska.

The Purple Heart Trail is a national project to designate portions of the interstate highway system as "Purple Heart Trail System", reminding Americans of the sacrifices made by their men and women in uniform. The original Purple Heart Trail was established in the Commonwealth of Virginia at Mt. Vernon and runs the length of the Virginia Highway.

Today, the Purple Heart Trail extends across the nation. Signage drawing attention to the designation is placed at appropriate intervals along the highways to stimulate thought and discussion among adults and children alike in contemplating the history of this nation, and those who have sacrificed for it.

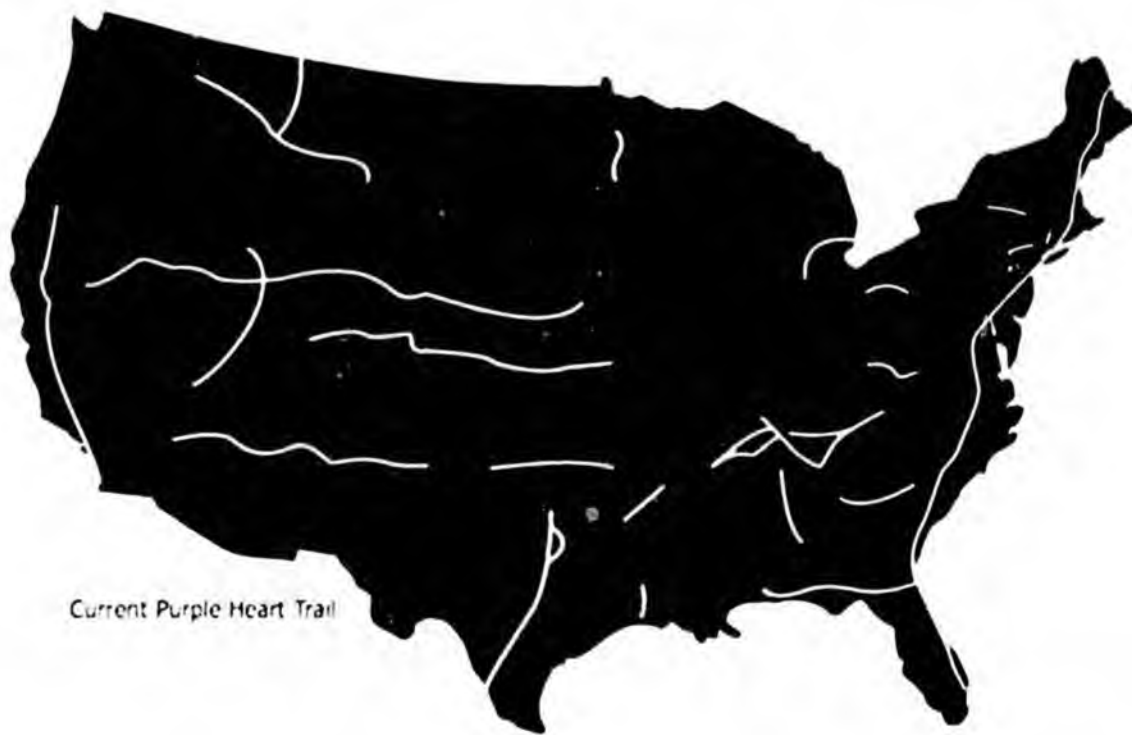
Alaska's participation in this national effort is long overdue. We have a strong military tradition; an estimated 73,000 resident veterans, approximately 25,000 active duty military, and more serving in the National Guard. In recent months, many returning Alaskan soldiers have been honored with the Purple Heart Medal.

The Alaska Highway, completed during World War II by the US Army to serve as a supply route, is an apt choice for the designation as "Purple Heart Trail System". Signs designating the Purple Heart Trail will be seen by both visitors and residents alike and will demonstrate that Alaska recognizes and honors the sacrifices made by our wounded and fallen soldiers.

Please join me in supporting the establishment of a Purple Heart Trail in Alaska.

<http://www.purpleheart.org/purple-heart-trail.html>

Purple Heart Trail was initially established in the Commonwealth of Virginia from its start point at Mt. Vernon, VA. Through positive legislative support of the Virginia General Assembly and through the leadership of two of its governors, The Honorable George Allen (now U.S. Senator) and incumbent Governor James Gilmore the trail now extends down Virginia highway 285 (the Mt. Vernon Parkway) to US Route #1, thence to I-95. All of I-95 is designated the Purple Heart Trail from the Potomac River in Alexandria, on the Maryland border, down to the State of North Carolina. It branches off at Fredericksburg on Virginia Highway 3 (the Kings Highway) to Stafford County and thence to the George Washington Birthplace National Monument in Westmoreland County, VA. Another leg goes eastward on I-64 at Richmond, the state capital, to the city of Norfolk. The Virginia Department of Transportation has placed "Purple Heart Trail" signs at all rest stops on I-95 and I-64 and at other special points along the total trail.



Ultimately, the Purple Heart Trail will be extended from Virginia to all other states and major cities of the United States. Historically, the Purple Heart Trail concept was inspired by the George Washington Chapter #1732 of Fredericksburg Spotsylvania, VA, in 1992. In convention of the Order, the delegates voted to approve a resolution establishing a symbolic Purple Heart Trail throughout the 50 states. With the Commonwealth of Virginia being the home of the two distinguished general officers involved in the development of the Purple Heart, Generals Washington and MacArthur, the Department of Virginia members of the Order took the lead to institute The Purple Heart Trail in Virginia, with a memorial marker to be erected and dedicated at Mt. Vernon as the start point of the trail.

In 1996, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth approved the first step in establishing the Purple Heart Trail parallel to I-95 and that portion of Virginia Route 3 from Washington's birthplace in Westmoreland County, VA, to his boyhood home at

<http://www.purpleheart.org/purple-heart-trail.html>

Ferry Farm in Stafford County, VA. In 1998, through subsequently legislative fiat, the trail was extended to Norfolk, VA, ending at the tomb of General Douglas MacArthur on Interstate 64 from Richmond (I-95) to Norfolk and to Mt. Vernon. The purpose of the Purple Heart Trail is to commemorate the patriotic American heritage given to us by George Washington and General MacArthur and for the people of Virginia, and ultimately all the states, to memorialize those service persons who have had the Purple Heart medal bestowed on them or their next of kin for wounds received in combat in defense of our nation.



By marking these trails with appropriate signage, it was conceived that the automobile and the Interstate Highway System represent very tangible symbols of our freedom; the ability to get up and go anywhere anytime. While taken for granted by so many, this and so many other freedoms we enjoy as Americans have been earned through the sacrifice of millions of Americans who have shed their blood and the many who have died in defense of freedom and liberty. The signage was intended as a reminder that freedom is not free and would stimulate thought and discussion among adults and children alike in contemplating the bountiful heritage enjoyed by all Americans as part of their legacy.

Major highways are the ideal setting for this virtual trail, and ultimately, the Military Order of the Purple Heart would like to see the entire Interstate Highway System, conceived by General Dwight D. Eisenhower during his tenure as President of the United States, designated as major portions of the Purple Heart Trail. Instructional kits have been developed and are in the hands of all Department Commanders on how to initiate necessary legislation in their respective states to implement the continued growth of the Purple Heart Trail System.

National Commander Louie Spinelli has accepted expansion of the trail as a major thrust of his leadership during his term of office. We who are on the forefront of this great effort, can take great pride in establishing this system as a most noble and patriotic endeavor of the Military Order of the Purple Heart that will become an indelible part of our continuing service to this great nation. If your state is not yet on board, we encourage all local chapters to take this up within the scope of their Americanism projects. Most legislatures have been found to be most receptive in support of legislative initiatives required to implement the program. The mood of the country is also such that many salons would welcome the opportunity to offer the necessary legislative language to make it happen. God Bless America, our home, sweet home!



RESOLUTION 2008-05

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA DESIGNATE THE ALASKA HIGHWAY AS A "PURPLE HEART TRAIL" WITHIN THE ALASKA ROAD SYSTEM

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to never forget those who have given their lives and shed their blood in defense of this great nation; and

WHEREAS, a Purple Heart Trail system has been established throughout the major road system of the lower 48 states; and

WHEREAS, Alaska is geographically located at the far northwest reaches of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of Alaska's citizens, Alaska's veterans, and Alaska's tourism industry to be part of the Purple Heart Trail system; and

WHEREAS, Alaska is proud to join this worthy effort in providing America with the ability to establish this Purple Heart Trail all across America; and

WHEREAS, the placement of signs indicating "Purple Heart Trail" will simply indicate a part of a nationally existing system; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Purple Heart Trail within Alaska will in no way change the name or numerical designation of any existing road; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Highway has a well established historical military significance since it was built during the WWII era for military purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Highway is the best choice to establish and continue the Purple Heart Trail into the confines of the Alaska Road System.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The City Council for the City of Delta Junction by this resolution hereby requests the State of Alaska provide for the signage and placement of the Purple Heart Trail signs at approximately 50 mile intervals along the corridor of the Alaska Highway system within Alaska beginning at Beaver Creek and extending on to Delta Junction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: In order to inform all travelers, a sign designating the purpose for the Purple Heart Trail also be placed with the Purple Heart Trail signs at strategic locations such as entering or leaving the vicinities of Beaver Creek, Northway, Tok, Dot Lake, and Delta Junction; that explains the reason for the Purple Heart Trail; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The designated note of purpose signs read as follows:

***IN HONOR OF THOSE BRAVE PATRIOTS
WHO SHED THEIR BLOOD
WHILE ENGAGED IN THE SELFLESS ACT OF
DEFENDING OUR NATIONS FREEDOM***

PASSED AND APPROVED by a duly constituted quorum of the Delta Junction City Council this 4th day of December 2007.



CITY OF DELTA JUNCTION

Mary Leith-Dowling

Mary Leith-Dowling, Mayor

ATTEST

Pat White

Pat White, City Clerk

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20 wounded soldiers receive Purple Heart

Twenty with combat injuries honored for 'warrior spirit'

By GEORGE BRYSON
gbryson@adn.com

Published: October 17, 2007

Last Modified: October 17, 2007 at 12:55 PM

Twenty Purple Heart medals rested in the serving tray Tuesday while 19 Fort Richardson-based soldiers wounded in Iraq stood at attention as best they could -- some leaning on canes, one missing a leg, a few with injuries to the head.



Click to enlarge

One by one the medals were pinned on their chests by Maj. Gen. Stephen Layfield, the senior Army commander in Alaska, who sternly told about 200 onlookers to "never ever miss the chance to say thank you" to the men -- all of whom are members of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

The ways they were injured were as varied as their wounds. Some were riding in vehicles that were blasted apart by projectiles. Some were hit by roadside bombs. Some were walking on patrols and shot by

unseen snipers.

But Staff Sgt. Chad LeBlanc, of Anchorage, may have had the most unusual tale to tell. He was stationed at an outpost south of Baghdad and was just preparing to lie down for the night inside his "can" -- a small mobile trailer just large enough for two bunks -- when he heard the sound of mortar fire outside.

Sticking his head out the door, LeBlanc just had time to see a mortar round blast into a



ERIK HILL / Anchorage Daily News

enlarge

Staff Sgt. Chad LeBlanc of Anchorage receives his Purple Heart medal from Maj. Gen. Stephen Layfield, senior Army commander in Alaska, as 19 soldiers assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division received their medals Tuesday at Fort Richardson

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neighboring trailer -- one that was usually occupied by his buddy, Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Ferguson, who just then was away on leave in Alaska.

Shrapnel from the blast hit LeBlanc in the stomach and limbs and burnt his face and arms. Before falling into shock, he managed to find help.

"I ran about 25 meters to where the medics were and laid down on the ground and told them what happened," he recalled. "Then they put me on a helicopter, I went to Baghdad -- and that was it."

In an operating room, doctors removed 14 pieces of shrapnel from LeBlanc's arm and a big chunk from his side. The shrapnel that entered his stomach had to be removed through his back -- an operation that has since made the 32-year-old Alaskan less mobile.

He knows it could have been worse. He could have been inside the trailer that took the direct hit -- Ferguson's trailer. As it happened, however, his buddy didn't make it through their deployment unscathed either.

Returning to their unit -- a team within the 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion that trains Iraqi army forces -- Ferguson was badly wounded about five weeks later when his vehicle was struck by an armor-piercing projectile.

The blast tore up his lower legs and shattered his left knee. Ultimately the leg would have to be amputated. On Tuesday, Ferguson was standing in the ranks with the other Purple Heart recipients, supported by a cane and a prosthetic leg.

"I set a record getting out of Walter Reed (Medical Center) for an amputee," Ferguson said, noting how anxious he was to return to Fort Richardson and his family. Now he's hoping to remain in the military -- he's served 11 years so far -- and in Alaska.

"If I could stay here until I retire in nine years, that would be perfect," he said.

Spc. William Swails, a native of Rockingham, N.C. -- who received his second Purple Heart on Tuesday after suffering shrapnel wounds to his hand and arm -- is hoping to remain on active duty in Alaska too. His wife, Chastity, is currently enrolled in the nursing program at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Spc. Justin Tauriainen, who grew up in Anchorage -- and returned by motor home to a large throng of friends and family greeting him at the Muldoon overpass last week -- received a Purple Heart as well.

On May 21, his armored engineer vehicle was struck by "multiple IEDS," the improvised explosive devices his unit was charged with removing. Tauriainen, 23, sustained shrapnel wounds to his head, back, hands and legs.

Before pinning the medals on the assembled soldiers -- Sgt. Casey Wright of Tucson, Ariz., was unable to attend the ceremony -- Layfield emphasized their collective bravery.

"We're forever in your debt," he said. "We acknowledge your sacrifice and we acknowledge your warrior spirit and we acknowledge what you did for our country."

Find George Bryson online at adn.com/contact/gbryson or call 257-4318.