

SB

45

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senator Charlie Huggins
State Capitol, Room 119
Juneau AK 99801-1182
907-465-3878
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Senator Gene Therriault
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ALASKA STATE SENATE

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 29, 2009

To: Senator Linda Menard, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

From: Senator Charlie Huggins, Chair
Senate Rules Committee

Senator Gene Therriault
Senate Minority Leader

Re: Request for Hearing – SB 45

We respectfully request Senate Bill 45 be scheduled for hearing before the Senate State Affairs Committee.

Senate Bill 45 would create a specially designated State Veterans' Cemetery in Fairbanks to honor deceased members of the military. At this time, Fairbanks is home to a significant military population however it does not have a designated Veterans' Cemetery.

The legislation also clarifies and strengthens current statute for Veterans' employment preferences and seeks to create a Veterans' fund to be used to support Alaska veterans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Senator Charlie Huggins
R-Rural Mat-Su



Senator Gene Therriault
R-North Pole, Valdez

ALASKA STATE SENATE

SPONSOR STATEMENT SENATE BILL 45

By the passage of this legislation, a new Veterans' Cemetery would be created in Fairbanks to serve those members of the military wishing to be buried in this specially designated cemetery. The United States standards for creating veterans' cemeteries suggests that designated cemeteries be established within 75 miles of any populated area to honor deceased military personnel. At this time, Fairbanks is home to a significant military population but does not have a designated Veterans' Cemetery.

The Veterans' Cemetery fund would be established as a sub account of the general fund to be used to support programs benefiting Alaska veterans. The fund would receive deposits through appropriation and by proceeds from the purchase of special veterans' license plates. The balance of the fund could be used for the construction, operation and maintenance of a Veterans' Cemetery.

Veterans' employment preferences are currently established in AS 39.25.150 however they are somewhat difficult to understand. The existing statute is rewritten for clarification and does not change the preferences already established. The employment preferences as rewritten are similar to most other United States and do not breach collective bargaining agreements within the State of Alaska.

We urge your support in this legislation regarding honor and benefits for Alaska's military veterans.

26-LS0277AS
Wayne
2/6/09

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 45()

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION**

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATORS HUGGINS AND THERRIAULT

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to state employment preferences for veterans, former prisoners of war,**
2 **and members of the Alaska National Guard; authorizing the Department of Military**
3 **and Veterans' Affairs to establish and maintain Alaska veterans' cemeteries;**
4 **establishing the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund in the general fund; and authorizing the**
5 **legislature to appropriate income from fees collected for commemorative veterans'**
6 **plates to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund."**

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

8 *** Section 1.** AS 28.10.421(d)(16) is amended to read:

9 (16) special request plates commemorating Alaska veterans \$100
10 plus a fee of \$35 and the fee required for that vehicle under (b), (c), (h), or (i) of this
11 section; the \$100 fee required by this paragraph shall be collected only on the first
12 issuance of and the replacement of the commemorative veterans' plates; the \$35 fee
13 required by this paragraph shall be collected biennially in the same manner as the fee

1 required under (b), (c), (h), or (i) of this section; the commissioner of administration
 2 shall separately account for the fees received under this paragraph that the department
 3 deposits in the general fund; notwithstanding (g) of this section, the annual estimated
 4 balance in the account that is in excess of the cost of issuing special request plates may
 5 be appropriated by the legislature to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund created
 6 under AS 37.05.600 and for the support of programs benefiting Alaska veterans;

7 * **Sec. 2.** AS 37.05.146(c) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

8 (85) gifts, donations, and grants received by the Department of
 9 Military and Veterans' Affairs for the purpose of establishing and maintaining Alaska
 10 veterans' cemeteries under AS 26.10.030 and AS 44.35.035(b).

11 * **Sec. 3.** AS 37.05 is amended by adding a new section to article 6 to read:

12 **Sec. 37.05.600. Alaska veterans' cemetery fund.** (a) There is created as a
 13 special account in the general fund the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund into which
 14 shall be deposited appropriations to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund.

15 (b) Beginning with the appropriations for the fiscal year beginning July 1,
 16 2008, on an annual basis and under AS 37.07 (Executive Budget Act), the legislature
 17 may appropriate amounts from the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund to the Department
 18 of Military and Veterans' Affairs for the construction, operation, and maintenance of
 19 the Alaska veterans' cemeteries established under AS 44.35.035.

20 (c) Appropriations to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund are not one-year
 21 appropriations and do not lapse under AS 37.25.010.

22 (d) The unexpended and unobligated balance of an appropriation from the
 23 Alaska veterans' cemetery fund lapses into the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund at the
 24 end of the fiscal year for which it was appropriated.

25 (e) Nothing in this section exempts money deposited into the Alaska veterans'
 26 cemetery fund from the requirements of AS 37.07 (Executive Budget Act) or dedicates
 27 that money for a specific purpose.

28 * **Sec. 4.** AS 39.25.150 is amended to read:

29 **Sec. 39.25.150. Scope of the rules.** The personnel rules must provide for

30 (1) the preparation, maintenance, and revision, by the director of
 31 personnel, subject to approval of the commissioner of administration and the

1 personnel board, of a position classification plan for all positions in the classified and
2 partially exempt services; the position classification plan must include

3 (A) a grouping together of all positions into classes on the basis
4 of duties and responsibilities;

5 (B) an appropriate title, a description of the duties and
6 responsibilities, training and experience qualifications, and other necessary
7 specifications for each class of positions;

8 (2) the preparation, maintenance, revision, and administration by the
9 director of personnel of a pay plan for all positions in the classified and partially
10 exempt services; the pay plan (A) shall be based upon the position classification plan;
11 (B) must provide for fair and reasonable compensation for services rendered, and
12 reflect the principle of like pay for like work; (C) may be amended, approved, or
13 disapproved by the legislature in regular or special session; after the pay plan is in
14 effect, a salary or wage payment may not be made to a state employee covered by the
15 plan unless the payment is in accordance with this chapter and the rules adopted under
16 this chapter or unless the payment is in accordance with a valid agreement entered into
17 in accordance with AS 23.40;

18 (3) the use of employee selection methods, including open competitive
19 assessment devices, when appropriate, that will fairly evaluate the capacity and fitness
20 of the person assessed to discharge the duties of the position in which employment is
21 sought;

22 (4) the formulation of a list for appointment and promotion to a
23 position;

24 (5) the procedure for filling positions; the rule adopted under this
25 paragraph may include procedures providing a preference for local residents when
26 appropriate;

27 (6) promotions from within the state service when there are qualified
28 candidates in the state service; vacancies shall be filled by promotion whenever
29 practicable and in the best interest of the state service, and promotion shall be by
30 competitive assessment whenever possible; in considering promotions, the applicants'
31 qualifications, performance records, seniority, and conduct shall be evaluated;

1 (7) a period of probation not to exceed one year before an appointment
2 to a position becomes permanent, unless the period of probation is extended as set out
3 in a collective bargaining agreement under AS 23.40; however, a permanent employee
4 receiving a promotional appointment retains permanent status in the service and job
5 class from which appointed for the duration of the probationary period and may be
6 demoted to a former class without right of appeal, notwithstanding AS 39.25.170, but,
7 if the employee is dismissed from the service, the appeal rights under AS 39.25.170
8 apply;

9 (8) nonpermanent and emergency appointments to positions in the
10 state service in accordance with AS 39.25.195 - 39.25.200;

11 (9) provisional appointment without competitive assessment when the
12 recruitment and assessment procedures have not identified qualified candidates in
13 sufficient number;

14 (10) transfers from one department to another and from another merit
15 system jurisdiction to the state service;

16 (11) transfers from one area of the state to another;

17 (12) the reinstatement of a person who resigns in good standing;

18 (13) layoffs for reason of lack of money or work, abolition of
19 positions, or material changes in duties or organization; both performance and
20 seniority records shall be considered in the development of layoff orders;

21 (14) the development, maintenance, and use of employee performance
22 records;

23 (15) the establishment of disciplinary measures, which may include
24 disciplinary suspension without pay;

25 (16) the procedures for review of disputed personnel actions, for
26 resolving employee and interagency grievances, and for resolving grievances of the
27 general public concerning the operation of the state personnel system;

28 (17) hours of work for all employees in the state service;

29 (18) methods and procedures covering overtime work and pay;

30 (19) the granting of employment preference rights, not within the area
31 of promotion, to a veteran, [OR] former prisoner of war, or member of the national

1 guard under AS 39.25.159;

2 (20) the employment of persons in permanent positions on a part-time
3 basis of 15 hours or more a week, including the employment of two persons to fill one
4 permanent full-time position; these employees shall be designated as permanent part-
5 time employees;

6 (21) the granting of employment preference to individuals with severe
7 disabilities; this includes the right to provisional appointment without competitive
8 assessment for periods of up to four months and the granting of eligibility to an
9 individual with a severe disability provisionally appointed under the rules who
10 demonstrates ability to perform the job for permanent appointment without
11 competitive assessment; provisional employment under this paragraph may not exceed
12 four months during a 12-month period; "individual with a severe disability," as used in
13 this paragraph, means an individual certified by the director of the division of
14 vocational rehabilitation to be severely disabled;

15 (22) the establishment of programs facilitating the employment of
16 disadvantaged persons;

17 (23) the delegation, when feasible, of personnel responsibilities and
18 duties to the principal departments of the executive branch;

19 (24) the establishment of a transition period of up to 12 months for an
20 employee to be reappointed to a classified position if the employee's position is
21 withdrawn from the partially exempt or exempt service and placed in the classified
22 service;

23 (25) other rules and administrative regulations, not inconsistent with
24 this chapter, that are necessary for its enforcement.

25 * **Sec. 5.** AS 39.25.159(a) is amended to read:

26 (a) A veteran or former prisoner of war who possesses the necessary
27 qualifications for a position or job classification applied for under this chapter is
28 entitled to an employment [A] preference as follows:

29 (1) in [UNDER THIS SUBSECTION. IN] an assessment using
30 numerical ratings, points equal to five percent of the points available from the
31 assessment device or devices shall be added to the passing score of a veteran, and

1 points equal to 10 percent of the points available from the assessment device or
2 devices shall be added to the passing score of a disabled veteran or former prisoner of
3 war;

4 (2) in [. IN] an assessment not using numerical ratings, consideration
5 shall be afforded to a veteran; additionally, an opportunity to interview for the position
6 shall be afforded to a disabled veteran or a former prisoner of war. [A PERSON MAY
7 RECEIVE PREFERENCE UNDER ONLY ONE OF THE CATEGORIES
8 DESCRIBED IN THIS SUBSECTION OR IN (c) OF THIS SECTION. A PERSON
9 MAY USE THE PREFERENCE WITHOUT LIMITATION WHEN BEING
10 CONSIDERED FOR A POSITION FOR WHICH PERSONS WHO ARE NOT
11 CURRENTLY STATE EMPLOYEES ARE BEING CONSIDERED. IF THE
12 RECRUITMENT FOR A POSITION IS LIMITED TO STATE EMPLOYEES,
13 PREFERENCE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE COUNTED. IF A
14 POSITION IN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE IS ELIMINATED, EMPLOYEES
15 SHALL BE RELEASED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULES ADOPTED UNDER
16 AS 39.25.150(13). IN THE CASE OF A COMPARISON OF EMPLOYEES WITH
17 EQUAL QUALIFICATIONS ON THE FACTORS ADOPTED UNDER
18 AS 39.25.150(13), A VETERAN OR FORMER PRISONER OF WAR SHALL BE
19 GIVEN PREFERENCE OVER A PERSON WHO IS NOT A VETERAN OR
20 FORMER PRISONER OF WAR, AND THE VETERAN OR FORMER PRISONER
21 OF WAR SHALL BE KEPT ON THE JOB. THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE
22 INTERPRETED TO AMEND THE TERMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
23 AGREEMENT.]

24 * Sec. 6. AS 39.25.159(c) is amended to read:

25 (c) A member of the national guard who possesses the necessary qualifications
26 for a position or job classification applied for under this chapter is entitled to an
27 employment [A] preference as follows:

28 (1) in [UNDER THIS SUBSECTION. IN] an assessment using
29 numerical ratings, points equal to five percent of the points available from the
30 assessment device or devices shall be added to the passing score of a member of the
31 national guard;

1 (2) in [. IN] an assessment not using numerical ratings, consideration
2 shall be afforded to a member of the national guard. [A PERSON MAY USE THE
3 PREFERENCE WITHOUT LIMITATION WHEN BEING CONSIDERED FOR A
4 POSITION FOR WHICH PERSONS WHO ARE NOT CURRENTLY STATE
5 EMPLOYEES ARE BEING CONSIDERED. IF THE RECRUITMENT FOR A
6 POSITION IS LIMITED TO STATE EMPLOYEES, PREFERENCE UNDER THIS
7 SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE COUNTED. IF A POSITION IN THE CLASSIFIED
8 SERVICE IS ELIMINATED, EMPLOYEES SHALL BE RELEASED IN
9 ACCORDANCE WITH RULES ADOPTED UNDER AS 39.25.150(13). IN THE
10 CASE OF A COMPARISON OF EMPLOYEES WITH EQUAL QUALIFICATIONS
11 ON THE FACTORS ADOPTED UNDER AS 39.25.150(13), A MEMBER OF THE
12 NATIONAL GUARD SHALL BE GIVEN PREFERENCE OVER A PERSON WHO
13 IS NOT A VETERAN, A FORMER PRISONER OF WAR, OR A MEMBER OF
14 THE NATIONAL GUARD. THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE INTERPRETED
15 TO AMEND THE TERMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT. IN
16 THIS SUBSECTION, "MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD" MEANS A
17 PERSON WHO IS PRESENTLY SERVING AS A MEMBER OF THE ALASKA
18 NATIONAL GUARD AND WHO HAS AT LEAST EIGHT YEARS OF SERVICE
19 IN THE ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD.]

20 * **Sec. 7.** AS 39.25.159(d) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

21 (5) "member of the national guard" means a person who is presently
22 serving as a member of the Alaska National Guard and who has at least eight years of
23 service in the Alaska National Guard.

24 * **Sec. 8.** AS 39.25.159 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

25 (e) A person may receive an employment preference under only one of the
26 categories described in (a) or (c) of this section. A person may use the preference
27 without limitation when being considered for a position for which persons who are not
28 currently state employees are being considered. If the recruitment for a position is
29 limited to state employees, preference under (a) or (c) of this section may not be
30 counted. If a position in the classified service is eliminated, employees shall be
31 released in accordance with rules adopted under AS 39.25.150(13). In the case of a

1 comparison of employees with equal qualifications on the factors adopted under
2 AS 39.25.150(13), a veteran, former prisoner of war, or member of the national guard
3 shall be given preference over a person who is not a veteran, former prisoner of war,
4 or member of the national guard, and the veteran, former prisoner of war, or member
5 of the national guard shall be kept on the job.

6 (f) Subsections (a), (c), and (e) of this section may not be interpreted to amend
7 the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

8 * **Sec. 9.** AS 44.35 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 **Sec. 44.35.035. Alaska veterans' cemeteries.** (a) The department may, subject
10 to the requirements of 38 U.S.C. 2408, establish and maintain Alaska veterans'
11 cemeteries in the state to serve state veterans and spouses and eligible dependents of
12 state veterans.

13 (b) The department may accept gifts, donations, and grants, including land,
14 under AS 26.10.030 for the purpose of establishing and maintaining Alaska veterans'
15 cemeteries. Land received by the department for an Alaska veterans' cemetery shall be
16 owned by the state.

17 (c) The department shall, in consultation with the Alaska Veterans' Advisory
18 Council,

19 (1) receive the plot or interment allowance on behalf of the state under
20 38 U.S.C. 2303;

21 (2) comply with all requirements for a state veterans' cemetery grant
22 established by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs under 38 U.S.C.
23 2408; and

24 (3) apply to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for state
25 veterans' cemetery grants under 38 U.S.C. 2408.

26 (d) The department may

27 (1) adopt regulations necessary to administer Alaska veterans'
28 cemeteries;

29 (2) enter into agreements with political subdivisions of the state and
30 other persons for the maintenance and operation of Alaska veterans' cemeteries; and

31 (3) solicit gifts, donations, and grants in addition to a state veterans'

1 cemetery grant in (c) of this section that may be designated for the establishment and
2 maintenance of an Alaska veterans' cemetery and received by the department under
3 AS 26.10.030.

4 (e) In this section, "department" means the Department of Military and
5 Veterans' Affairs.

Deborah Prator

From: Deborah Prator

Sent: Friday, February 06, 2009 12:07 PM

To: Sen. Albert Kookesh; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Christine Marasigan; Anna Sorensen; Kimberly Clark; Kate Herring

Subject: Correction Last Sentence

Last sentence should read ".....agenda item....."

Debbie Prator
STA

LEGAL SERVICES

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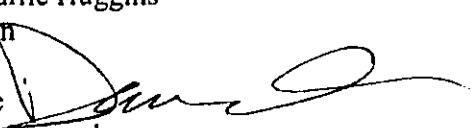
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

February 3, 2009

SUBJECT: Veterans, former prisoners of war, and members of the national guard (SB 45)

TO: Senator Charlie Huggins
Attn: Sharon

FROM: Dan Wayne 
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 would allow the legislature to appropriate, to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund, fees from the sale of special request motor vehicle license plates that commemorate Alaska veterans.

Sec. 2 adds certain gifts, donations and grants related to establishing and maintaining Alaska veterans' cemeteries to the list, under AS 37.05.146(c), of programs for which receipts are accounted for separately. (Receipts from programs on this list are not appropriated from the unrestricted general fund).

Sec. 3 creates a special account in the general fund called the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund., from which amounts may be appropriated for building and operating Alaska veterans' cemeteries.

Sec. 4 adds a requirement that state personnel rules must provide for the grant of employment preference rights to members of the national guard under AS 39.25.159, a statute under which veterans, former prisoners of war and members of the national guard already receive preference when they apply for a position, either in the form of extra points being added to their numerical rating (when assessments using numerical ratings are used in hiring), or, when hiring is based on assessments that are not based on numerical ratings, a guarantee that they will be considered for the position.

Senator Charlie Huggins

February 3, 2009

Page 2

Sec. 5 and 6 amend AS 39.25.159, a statute with the catch line "employment preference for veterans and former prisoners of war," by combining repetitious language from subsections (a) and (c) and moving it to a new subsection, and changing "preference," in subsections (a) and (c), to the more explicit "employment preference as a matter of form."

Sec. 7 defines "member of the national guard" under AS 39.25.159.

Sec. 8 adds two new subsections to AS 39.25.159. Subsection (e) consolidates and restores language that the bill, as noted above, removes from AS 39.25.159(c) and (d). Subsection (f) limits the applicability of subsections (a), (c), and (e) so that they may not be interpreted to amend the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

Sec. 9 adds language permitting the department of military and veterans affairs to establish and maintain Alaska veterans' cemeteries, allowing the department to raise funds for that purpose, and listing administrative duties and options of the department, including the duty, or in some instances the option, to adopt regulations.

If I may be of further assistance, please advise.

DCW:plm
09-063.plm

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB45 (STA)
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): SB45-DMVA-VS-2-6-09
 Title: An act relating to...authorizing DMVA to establish and maintain AK veterans' cemeteries; est AK cemetery fund...
 Sponsor: Senator(s) Huggins, Theriault
 Requester: State Affairs
 Dept. Affected: Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs
 RDU: Military and Veterans Affairs
 Component: Veterans Services
 Component Number: 421

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0
Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	240.0	240.0	240.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Interagency Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

	FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill establishes establishes an Alaska cemetery fund.

Our estimate for the amount of special request plates commemorating Alaska veterans is based on 2 year history of special veterans plates purchased per DOA/Division of Motor Vehicles. DMVA estimates that 100 sets of plates will be purchased annually at \$100/set.

Operations and maintenance of the Veteran's cemetery includes contracted services for maintenance, utilities, communications, supplies and materials is estimated at \$250,000 per year beginning in FY2012. Out years reflect additional receipts from sale of special license plates.

Prepared by: McHugh Pierre, Legislative Liaison/Communications Director
 Division: National Guard Military Headquarters/Office of the Commissioner
 Approved by: Commissioner Craig Campbell
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Phone 465-4402
 Date/Time 2/06/09 @ 11:00 am
 Date 2/6/2009

Deb

JOINT LEGISLATIVE ISSUES FOR 2009 SESSION

The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans

Support Statements

1. ***State Veterans' Service Officers Grant:*** For over 50 years, Alaska service organizations have been assisting our state veterans with much needed assistance in receiving state and federal benefits to which they are entitled. Each year, through the assisted representation of these State Service Officers, our veterans have received over 25 million dollars in federal benefits. VA statistics have shown that veterans representing themselves receive some \$7,000 less in annual benefits than those represented by a State Service Officer. This coming year, we are budgeted the same grant amount as last year, \$651,000, which is part of the Governor's budget under the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. These dollars will provide salaries and travel for the Joint Venture for the coming year. Our Service Officers cover the entire state, working closely with our members, the Alaska Department of Labor and the Department of Veterans Affairs, providing services to our State's veterans. This coming year will be exceptionally important as we provide for our returning Gulf veterans, assisting them with the complex laws and paperwork necessary to receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled. **Therefore, we ask the full support of our Legislature in approving the Governor's budget proposed grant of \$651,000.**
2. ***Property Tax exemption:*** Currently, veterans rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs at 50% or more disabled and senior citizens 65 and older receive a tax exemption on the first \$150,000.00 of their annual property tax. Our concern is the loss of this exemption. This could be devastating to both the seniors and veterans who, in many cases, receive the lowest of incomes, with many living on fixed incomes and concerned about losing their existing home mortgages. **Therefore, we request the tax exemption for the Disabled Veterans and Seniors remains.**
3. ***Flag Amendment:*** The flag amendment is an issue unresolved. Over 80% of Americans polled believe that our flag should be protected by amending our Constitution. We do not expect this issue to go unresolved forever; however, should it pass the United States Congress to constitutionally protect our flag, we request that Alaska be the first State to ratify the amendment to the Constitution. **Therefore, we ask our Legislature that, if Congress passes the amendment, our Alaska Legislature be the first to ratify that amendment.**
4. ***State Veterans Cemetery:*** If the issue of establishing a State Veterans Cemetery comes before legislature we request the legislature to consider supporting such legislation.

Hi Debbie:

It was a pleasure speaking with you today. To follow up on our conversation on SB 45, the fees collected for commemorative veterans plates are deposited into the general fund.

Currently, the funds collected for these plates are available for appropriation to support programs benefiting Alaska veterans. If SB 45 passes, those funds will be available specifically for appropriation for establishing and maintaining veterans' cemeteries. I misspoke when I told you that 3% was accounted for by the DMV for appropriation into veterans programs. If the legislature passes SB 45, it's my understanding that minus the DMV's costs all of the fees collected for the veterans' commemorative plate would be available for appropriation into the veterans' cemetery fund.

28.10.421(c)(16) special request plates commemorating Alaska veterans ... \$100

plus a fee of \$35 and the fee required for that vehicle under (b), (c), (h), or (i) of this section; the \$100 fee required by this paragraph shall be collected only on the first issuance of and the replacement of the commemorative veterans' plates; the \$35 fee required by this paragraph shall be collected biennially in the same manner as the fee required under (b), (c), (h), or (i) of this section; the commissioner of administration shall separately account for the fees received under this paragraph that the department deposits in the general fund; notwithstanding (g) of this section, the annual estimated balance in the account that is in excess of the cost of issuing special request plates may be appropriated by the legislature for the support of programs benefiting Alaska veterans.

Since the inception of the program in FY06, DMV has reported \$24,210.37 in net receipts for commemorative veteran's plates.

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Whitney

Deb

2/9/2009

SB 45 ~ Veterans' Cemetery & Hiring Preferences

Anticipated List of Testifiers:

✓ Mr. Joe Fields, Vice Chair of the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council
(in person)

Mr. Tim Wheeler, President of the Alaska Veterans Business Alliance
~ Call in ~

Mr. Benno Cleveland ~ Fairbanks Veteran

Mr. Pat Luby - AARP ✓

For Questions:

DMVA ~ McHugh Pierre ~ Legislative Liaison ✓

DNR ~ Deputy Director of Mining, Land and Water Division

Deborah Prator

From: Apache [apache@wwwjnu02.legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2009 3:16 PM
To: LIO Juneau; Peg Warren; Deborah Prator
Subject: Teleconference Order Form

Meeting: new

Sponsor and/or Committee Name: STA

Date of Teleconference: 2/10/09

Start Time: 9:00 a.m.

End Time: 11:00 a.m.

Chairing Site: Beltz Room 211

Juneau Room:

Testimony: yes

Testimony Time Limit: three min

Executive Session: no

Contact Person: Deborah (Debbye) Prator

Telephone Number: 465-4957

Email Address: Deborah_Prator@legis.state.ak.us

LIO Sites:

anchorage
barrow
bethel
cordova
deltajunction
dillingham
fairbanks
glennallen
homer
juneau
kenai
ketchikan
kodiak

kotzebue
matsu
nome
petersburg
seward
sitka
tok
valdez
wrangell

Other sites may add: yes

Offnet Name(s):

Subject of meeting and/or Bills on Agenda:

SB 45 \"Veterans\ Cemeteries, Fund/License Plates\"

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/21/09

FURTHER: Labor and Commerce
Finance

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

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 2/10/09

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 45

SB 45 VETERANS' CEMETERIES/FUND/LICENSE PLATES

"An Act relating to state employment preferences for veterans, former prisoners of war, and members of the Alaska National Guard; authorizing the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to establish and maintain Alaska veterans' cemeteries; establishing the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund in the general fund; and authorizing the legislature to appropriate income from fees collected for commemorative veterans' plates to the Alaska veterans' cemetery fund."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS SB 45 (STA)
- 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#
MVA	2/16/09	✓			

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
<i>Alfrit Kooker</i>	KOOKER	-			
<i>Joe Parkvan</i>	PARKVAN	X			
<i>Jinida Menard</i>	MENARD	X			
<i>K. Meyer</i>	Meyer	X			
<i>French</i>	French	X			
CHAIR: <i>Jinida Menard</i>		X			