

**HB**

**235**

<TARGET><BILL>HB 235</BILL><SUBJECT>HB  
235</SUBJECT><COMM>HSTA30</COMM></TARGET>

# ALASKA LEGISLATURE

*Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins*

Angoon · Coffman Cove · Craig · Edna Bay · Elfin Cove · Game Creek · Hollis · Hoonah · Kake · Kasaan · Klawock · Kupreanof · Naukati  
Pelican · Petersburg · Point Baker · Port Alexander · Port Protection · Sitka · Tenakee Springs · Thorne Bay · Whale Pass

rep.jonathan.kreiss-tomkins@akleg.gov

Committees:  
State Affairs, Chair  
Fisheries  
Judiciary



Juneau, Alaska 99801 (Jan. – April)  
State Capitol, Room 411  
907.465.3732

Sitka, Alaska 99835 (May – Dec.)  
201 Katlian Street, Ste. 103  
907.747.4665

## **Sponsor Statement | HB 235 The North Star Medal**

HB 235 creates a rare and high honor to be awarded by the State of Alaska to first responders who are injured or killed while exhibiting great courage in the service of their fellow Alaskans. The North Star Medal is reserved for firefighters, peace officers, first responders, and search and rescue volunteers.

The idea for the bill came from Representative Bob Lynn, the former chair of the House State Affairs Committee, who envisioned the award as “a small thanksgiving” for the valor and sacrifice shown by these men and women.

One comparable award currently exists. The State Medal for Heroism was created by the legislature in 1965 to recognize the heroic and valorous deed of saving a life. In contrast to the North Star Medal, the Medal for Heroism can be awarded to any Alaskan, and has been awarded to individuals of all ages for what are often spontaneous acts of bravery. For example, the Medal for Heroism was awarded to a 10-year-old boy in Nome who lost his life rescuing a woman from a burning house in 1984, and to others who have saved people from drowning, or from death and injury in the aftermath of airplane and car crashes.

The North Star Medal does not duplicate this award; while the recipients of the State Medal for Heroism have responded to extraordinary events with courage, the North Star Medal honors those individuals who show up each day knowing that they could be asked to give their lives to protect and serve their fellow Alaskans. Other states such as Idaho, Illinois, Oregon, and Texas have similar awards that honor first responders for meritorious conduct and/or death or injury in the line of duty.

Nominations for the North Star Medal can originate within communities and organizations, and will be passed on to the highest ranking supervisor in the department or organization, who will then make recommendations to the Commissioner of Public Safety. After consideration, the Commissioner of Public Safety will submit the names of the nominees for the award to the Governor.

At a ceremony held no more than once a year, the Governor will present the recipient of the North Star Medal with a ribbon, a medal, and a citation. If the honoree is no longer living or cannot accept the award, the next of kin may accept it on their behalf.

The North Star Medal is a sign of gratitude from the people of Alaska to first responders whose dedication is a constant in a changing world.

# JUNEAU POLICE DEPARTMENT

6255 ALAWAY AVE. • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

BRYCE JOHNSON  
CHIEF OF POLICE

*Alaska's Capital City*

BUSINESS (907) 586-0600  
FAX (907) 586-4030

April 17, 2017

The Honorable Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Room 411, State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:

I am writing in support of the Act creating the North Star Medal. As the Chief of Police for the City and Borough of Juneau, it is my honor to interact with brave police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and search and rescue personnel. I see firsthand how these dedicated professionals risk their own lives in the service of others.

I have seen police officers move towards danger, even gunfire, to protect the innocent. I have seen police officers climb over the railing of a bridge to pull a citizen to safety. I watched a firefighter don a ballistic vest and run to assist the police officers who were in harm's way. These brave individuals show extraordinary valor, and all efforts on our part to recognize their heroic contributions to our society are appropriate and greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Bryce Johnson  
Chief of Police

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: HB 235

- 1 Page 1, line 5, following "officer,":
- 2       Insert "correctional officer,"

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred to Committee: April 16, 2017

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: April 20, 2017

The STATE AFFAIRS Committee considered:

HB 235

HOUSE BILL NO. 235

"An Act creating the North Star Medal."

HB 235-NORTH STAR MEDAL

Recommends it be replaced with  HCS or  CS for \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)   
 For Senate Bills with new title:  Technical Title  New Title: HCR \_\_\_\_\_  Same Title  New Title

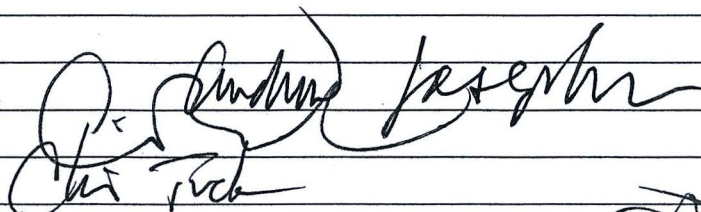
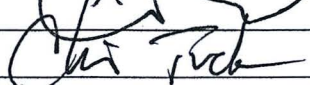
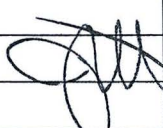
- attach amendments
- add new referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee
- Letter of Intent \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

List of  
Abbrev  
for  
Depts.:

- ADM
- AJS
- CED
- COR
- EED
- DEC
- DFG
- GOV
- DHS
- LWF
- LAW
- LEG
- MVA
- DNR
- DPS
- REV
- DOT
- UA

<u>NEW FISCAL NOTES</u>				
*FN# is assigned by Chief Clerk's Office				
*FN#	List by Dept(s):	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero
	DPS			✓

<u>PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTES</u>				
FN#	List by Dept(s):	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero

<u>Signing with recommendations</u>	Printed Last Name	DP ④	DNP	NR	AM
 Chair:	Josephson (alt.)	<del>X</del>			
 Chair:	Birch	<del>X</del>			
 Chair:	Tuck	<del>X</del>			
	Kreis Tomkins	X			

# Fiscal Note

State of Alaska  
2017 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 235  
Fiscal Note Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Identifier: HB235-DPS-COM-04-17-17  
Title: NORTH STAR MEDAL  
Sponsor: KREISS-TOMKINS  
Requester: (H) STA

Department: Department of Public Safety  
Appropriation: Statewide Support  
Allocation: Commissioner's Office  
OMB Component Number: 523

**Expenditures/Revenues**

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2018 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2018 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services								
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
<b>Total Operating</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**Fund Source (Operating Only)**

None								
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**Positions**

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

**Change in Revenues**

None								
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2017) cost:** 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*  
*(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)*

**Estimated CAPITAL (FY2018) cost:** 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*  
*(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)*

**ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS**

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No  
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

**Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:**

Not applicable, initial version.

Prepared By:	Kelly Howell	Phone:	(907)465-4336
Division:	Administrative Services	Date:	04/17/2017 02:30 PM
Approved By:	Walt Monegan	Date:	04/17/17
Agency:	Public Safety		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA  
2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 235

**Analysis**

This legislation amends AS 44.09 by adding a new section creating the North Star Medal to be awarded by the Governor to certain individuals who die or are seriously injured in the line of duty. Nominations for the North Star Medal shall be submitted to the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and, after reviewing nominations, the DPS Commissioner shall submit the name or names of persons recommended for the North Star Medal to the Governor for approval.

Passage of this legislation will not have a fiscal impact on the Department of Public Safety. No additional resources would be needed to perform the activities of reviewing nominations and submitting recommendations for the North Star Medal. Therefore, a zero fiscal note is being submitted.



## NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

*The Forum for America's Ideas*

### **Purple Hearts or Similar Awards for Law Enforcement or First Responders**

March 2017

#### **Idaho**

##### ***Idaho Code § 67-8801***

There is hereby established a decoration of the Idaho law enforcement, firefighting and EMS medal of honor with accompanying ribbons and appurtenances for award by the governor in the name of the state to any law enforcement officer, firefighter or EMS provider who has been killed or seriously injured in the performance of duty, or who has been distinguished by exceptionally meritorious conduct, upon nomination of the Idaho law enforcement, firefighting and EMS medal of honor commission.

#### **Illinois**

##### ***20 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 3985/2003***

When developing the standards and criteria for the Law Enforcement Medal of Honor Program, the Committee shall place an emphasis and priority upon consideration of those law enforcement officers who have been killed or seriously injured in the line of duty or who have displayed exceptional bravery or heroism while performing their duties as a law enforcement officer.

#### **Oregon**

##### ***Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 176.267***

- (1) The Law Enforcement Medal of Ultimate Sacrifice is established. Upon nomination by the Governor's Commission on the Law Enforcement Medal of Honor established under ORS 176.262, the Governor or the Governor's designee may award the medal in the name of the state to the family of a law enforcement officer who has died while performing his or her duties as a law enforcement officer or who was killed because of his or her employment as a law enforcement officer.
- (2) The medal shall be bronze and consist of a police shield overlaid by a sheriff's star with the seal of the State of Oregon in the center and the words "Law Enforcement Medal of Ultimate Sacrifice" within the design. The medal shall be suspended from a ring that is attached to a gold ribbon with a blue edge. The reverse side of the medal shall be inscribed with the words "Awarded by a grateful state for the ultimate sacrifice by a law enforcement family."

#### **Texas**

##### ***Tex. Gov't Code § 3106.004***

- (a) The Emergency Medical First Responders' Star of Texas Award shall be awarded to each emergency medical first responder who is seriously injured in the line of duty and the surviving next of kin of each emergency medical first responder who is killed or sustains a fatal injury in the line of duty.
- (b) The Emergency Medical First Responders' Star of Texas Award Advisory Committee shall advise the governor on the issuance, design, and presentation of the Emergency Medical First Responders' Star of Texas Award.
- (c) The committee consists of three current or retired emergency medical first responders appointed by the governor who have each served with distinction during a lengthy career as an emergency medical first responder.

**Tex. Gov't Code § 3106.002**

- (a) The Peace Officers' Star of Texas Award shall be awarded to:
- (1) each peace officer who is seriously injured in the line of duty;
  - (2) the surviving next of kin of each peace officer who is killed or sustains a fatal injury in the line of duty;
  - (3) each federal law enforcement officer or special agent who is seriously injured while performing duties in this state to assist a state or local law enforcement agency; and
  - (4) the surviving next of kin of each federal law enforcement officer or special agent who is killed or sustains a fatal injury while performing duties in this state to assist a state or local law enforcement agency.
- (b) The Peace Officers' Star of Texas Award Advisory Committee shall advise the governor on the issuance, design, and presentation of the Peace Officers' Star of Texas Award.
- (c) The committee consists of three current or retired peace officers appointed by the governor who have each served with distinction during a lengthy career as a peace officer.

**Tex. Gov't Code § 3106.003**

- (a) The Firefighters' Star of Texas Award shall be awarded to each firefighter who is seriously injured in the line of duty and the surviving next of kin of each firefighter who is killed or sustains a fatal injury in the line of duty.
- (b) The Firefighters' Star of Texas Award Advisory Committee shall advise the governor on the issuance, design, and presentation of the Firefighters' Star of Texas Award.
- (c) The committee consists of three current or retired firefighters appointed by the governor who have each served with distinction during a lengthy career as a firefighter.

**Washington****Wash. Rev. Code Ann. § 41.72.010**

There is established a decoration of the state law enforcement medal of honor with accompanying ribbons and appurtenances for award by the governor in the name of the state to any law enforcement officer who has been seriously injured or killed while in the performance of duty, or who has been distinguished by exceptionally meritorious conduct, upon nomination of the governor's state law enforcement medal of honor committee.

Also see:

**Iowa**

The Iowa State Police Association '*Purple Heart*' award was developed in 2013 for the purpose of honoring law enforcement officers who have been seriously wounded or killed in the line of duty as a result of a combat incident.

[http://www.ispaonline.com/en/purple\\_heart\\_award/](http://www.ispaonline.com/en/purple_heart_award/)

**New York**

New York City Police Department

Purple Shield Medals are awarded to those members of the service who have suffered extremely serious physical injury, or death, or permanent disfigurement, protracted or permanent impairment of health as determined by the Honor Board.

<http://www.echo23marines6569.org/RoccoShield.html>

Statutes & bills may be edited or summarized; full text can be retrieved through:

<http://www.ncsl.org/public/leglinks.cfm>

Information is provided for representative purposes; this may not be a complete list or analysis.

## Officer Down Memorial Page

*"When a police officer is killed, it's not an agency that loses an officer, it's an entire nation."*

*-Chris Cosgriff, ODMP Founder*

### United States > Alaska



Alakanuk Police Department  
Alakanuk, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1985)



Alaska Department of Corrections  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (2002)



Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Juneau, AK  
Fallen officers: 2 (1964, 1964)



Alaska Department of Public Safety  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1994)



Alaska State Troopers  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 11 (1964, 1974, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2013, 2014)



Alaska State Troopers - Fish and Wildlife Protection  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 3 (1983, 1998, 2001)



Alaska State Troopers - Village Public Safety Officers  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 2 (1986, 2013)



Anchorage Police Department  
Anchorage, AK  
Fallen officers: 10 (1921, 1924, 1968, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1986, 1989, 1996, 2001)



Bethel Police Department  
Bethel, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1972)



Craig Police Department  
Craig, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1966)



Dillingham Police Department  
Dillingham, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1992)



Fairbanks Police Department  
Fairbanks, AK  
Fallen officers: 3 (1908, 1998, 2016)



Hoonah Police Department  
Hoonah, AK  
Fallen officers: 2 (2010, 2010)



Juneau Police Department  
Juneau, AK  
Fallen officers: 4 (1964, 1979, 1979, 1992)



Kenai Police Department  
Kenai, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (2003)



Ketchikan Police Department  
Ketchikan, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1974)



Kodiak Police Department  
Kodiak, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1983)



Palmer Police Department  
Palmer, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1999)



Seward Police Department  
Seward, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1917)



Sitka Police Department  
Sitka, AK  
Fallen officers: 1 (1960)



**Public Safety Employees Association, Inc.**  
*"Representing Alaska's Finest"*  
**A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 803**



Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Chair, House State Affairs Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Re: Support for North Star Medal legislation

Dear Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins:

I am writing you on behalf of PSEA/AFSCME's 800 state and municipal police employee members working throughout Alaska. Our membership includes Alaska State Troopers, Anchorage and Fairbanks Airport Police Officers and Firefighters, Alaska Court Service Officers, Alaska Deputy Fire Marshalls, and Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau, Fairbanks, Soldotna, Dillingham and Unalaska police department employees. Many of our members are also trained search and rescue professionals.

In the last four years alone, PSEA tragically lost four members in acts of valor and heroism. In March 2013, Alaska State Trooper Tage Toll died in helicopter accident rescuing a stranded Alaskan. In May of 2014, Alaska State Trooper Scott Johnson and Trooper Gabe Rich were murdered protecting the people of Tanana, Alaska. In October of 2016, responding to a citizen call for help, Fairbanks Police Department Sgt. Alan Brandt was ambushed, shot multiple times and eventually died due to his injuries. Prior to 2013, we lost many other members in similar situations. These are only the most recent losses. Over time, Alaska has lost too many heroes.

The North Star Medal you propose will recognize the bravery and valor of our lost heroes. Troopers Toll, Johnson, Rich, and Officer Brandt share one important fact in common: they all ran towards danger to help and protect Alaskans. Other Alaskan peace officers, firefighters, EMTs and Search and Rescue professionals do the same every day. Their acts of bravery and valor in the service of their fellow citizens deserve recognition and honor. This award is a lasting way for Alaska to show that honor to the surviving spouse, survivors, co-workers and the citizens helped by Alaska's fallen heroes.

Thank you very much for proposing this legislation. We hope that the Alaska State Legislature passes this bill quickly. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Jake Metcalfe  
Executive Director  
PSEA/AFSCME Local 803



# ALASKA SEARCH and RESCUE ASSOCIATION

ASARA • PO Box 233276 Anchorage, Alaska 99523 • [alaskasar@gmail.com](mailto:alaskasar@gmail.com)

On the Internet: [www.alaskasar.org](http://www.alaskasar.org)

April 18, 2017

## HB 235 - Act to Create the North Star Medal

Letter of Support

Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Room 411, State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:


**On behalf of over 750 search and rescue volunteers across the state of Alaska, the Alaska Search and Rescue Association supports HB235 and the creation of the North Star Medal.**

Alaska is home to some of the world's most unforgiving and harsh environments. This week there was someone lost or missing somewhere in Alaska. Last week was the same and next week will be as well.

Whether these lost or missing individuals are hunters, trappers, fisherman, recreationists, or travelers, there are volunteers in every region of Alaska who step up and help our Alaska State Troopers and local authorities search miles and miles of waterways, wilderness areas, avalanches, and urban areas. Although safety practices and precautions are followed rigorously, these volunteers are put at additional risk of injury and harm by the nature of the activity, search and rescue.

SAR volunteers leave their families, their jobs, their lives behind when called upon and they do so without hesitation. At the same time, most SAR volunteers are not looking for recognition for their efforts or time. Yet, it seems appropriate that this award be available should the most awful event occur, and an accident or tragic event takes the life of one of our SAR volunteers. This form or recognition would help honor the sacrifice and loss of loved ones who gave their lives "*so... others may live.*"

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Corey Aist, President  
Alaska Search and Rescue Association



*Ethan Berkowitz,  
Mayor*

## ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Headquarters  
4501 Elmore Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-1599  
Telephone (907) 786-8500 / Fax (907) 786-8638



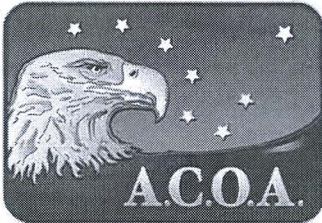
*Chris Tolley  
Chief*

Representative Kreiss-Tomkins

The Anchorage Police Department would like to voice our support for the North Star Medal. Alaska's first responders place themselves in harm's way on a daily basis, which occasionally results in injury or death. Recognizing these heroes for their courage serving their community is a meaningful show of appreciation for their sacrifice. I have the privilege to work with several officers that have been seriously injured in the line of duty - many of whom tirelessly fight to return to work where they continue placing others above themselves. In every case, these heroic officers do not expect, or even want recognition for their work. Thank you for taking the time to formally recognize these men and woman.

Sincerely,

Acting Deputy Chief Sean Case  
Anchorage Police Department



# ALASKA CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*"Walking Alaska's Toughest Beat"*

April 17, 2017

The Honorable Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
State of Alaska  
Room 411 Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Letter of Support for HB 235

Representative Kreiss-Tomkins,

The Alaska Correctional Officers Association supports your proposed amendment of AS 44.09.095, to recognize Correctional Officers, other Peace Officers, Firefighters, First Responders, or members of a volunteer search and rescue group who die or are seriously injured in the line of duty and who have displayed exceptional bravery or heroism while performing their duties. As Peace Officers, Alaska's Correctional Officers place their lives on the line 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Unfortunately, at times Correctional Officers and other Law Enforcement Officers around the State are seriously injured on duty, and in rare instances, lose their lives while performing their jobs. While nothing can replace a brave life lost or one that has been forever altered significantly by substantial on-the-job injuries, public recognition of the sacrifice that they have made will provide some consolation to surviving relatives and the injured workers who are recipients of the North Star Medal.

We appreciate the steps this legislation takes to recognize our brave and selfless women and men who work in public safety.

Sincerely,

Sgt. Randy McLellan  
ACOA President

# JUNEAU POLICE DEPARTMENT

6255 ALAWAY AVE. • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

BRYCE JOHNSON  
CHIEF OF POLICE

*Alaska's Capital City*

BUSINESS (907) 586-0600  
FAX (907) 586-4030

April 17, 2017

The Honorable Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Room 411, State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:

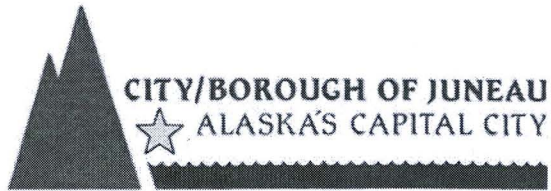
I am writing in support of the Act creating the North Star Medal. As the Chief of Police for the City and Borough of Juneau, it is my honor to interact with brave police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and search and rescue personnel. I see firsthand how these dedicated professionals risk their own lives in the service of others.

I have seen police officers move towards danger, even gunfire, to protect the innocent. I have seen police officers climb over the railing of a bridge to pull a citizen to safety. I watched a firefighter don a ballistic vest and run to assist the police officers who were in harm's way. These brave individuals show extraordinary valor, and all efforts on our part to recognize their heroic contributions to our society are appropriate and greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Bryce Johnson  
Chief of Police



**OFFICE OF THE MANAGER**

Telephone: (907) 586-5240; Fax: (907) 586-5385  
Rorie.Watt@juneau.org

April 14, 2017

The Honorable Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Room 411, State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:

I understand that you are working on legislation for an award for Alaska peace officers, firefighters, EMT, SAR and other first responders killed or injured in the line of duty, which will be called the **North Star Medal**. I understand that the idea would be that it would be an award for showing extraordinary valor.

I am wholeheartedly supportive of this idea. I am prepared to support this type of legislation. Thank you for your contributions to the citizens of Alaska, and thank you for your efforts to recognize the personal risks that our first responders face.

Sincerely,

Duncan Rorie Watt  
City and Borough Manager



# Fairbanks International Airport

AeroNexus®

Alaska International Airport System  
Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport  
Fairbanks International Airport

6450 Airport Way, Suite 1  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709  
Main: 907.474.2500  
Fax: 907.474.2513

April 15, 2017

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Room 411, Capital Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins:

Thank you for drafting legislation to create the North Star Medal for peace officers, firefighters, and other first responders killed or injured in the line of duty.

In my position as both a Police Chief and Fire Chief, I have been blessed to be able to work with so many of the professional and selfless men and women of the emergency responder family throughout Alaska. Sadly in recent years I have helped coordinate multiple processions as our wounded or fallen Alaskan heroes have traveled through the Fairbanks International Airport. There are no words to describe the enormity of the impact that these events have had on the responder's families, the responder's co-workers, and the community.

The community impact of these tragic events was never more evident as when I was the Marshal for Sergeant Allen Brandt's procession when he returned to Fairbanks after he gallantly gave his life protecting his community. Setting up for the procession, the Fairbanks Police Department officers and their vehicles were parked in such a way to allow privacy and respect their grieving process. Neighborhood residents wanting to show their respects began walking into the area. The pain and grief on the faces of the Fairbanks officers was obvious and the residents immediately realized that this was a hallowed time and place. I told them not to leave and directed them to huddle beside my patrol car, where they could pay their respects and respect the privacy of the grieving officers. Out of view, these wonderful members of the community grieved in silence with their officers. After the procession passed and the Fairbanks officers returned to their vehicles and fell in line, these families appeared from behind my vehicle walking towards me sobbing with their arms outstretched. Even though we were strangers, we all embraced and these beautiful people expressed their sincere thanks for all emergency responders in a way that will be etched in my memory forever.

I am writing this letter of support for the North Star Medal because the great people of the State of Alaska need the ability to bestow an award as a symbol of their deep respect for emergency responders injured or killed as they vigilantly and courageously protect the community in which they live and love. The North Star Medal is the perfect name.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sean J. Martines

Chief of Police and Fire, Fairbanks International Airport

*"Keep Alaska Flying and Thriving."*

Bob Lynn, 4400

TRAPLINE DIV  
~~TRAPLINE DIV~~  
BOB LYNN

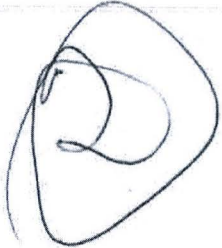
Anchorage, AK

AS/G-1538

## TESTIMONY

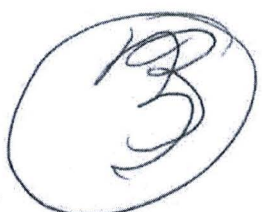
My name is Bob Lynn, and I live in south Anchorage. I want to thank the Committee Chair, and all the committee members, for hearing this bill today. I also want to congratulate the Committee for managing to convene at 3PM in the afternoon, rather than the 8AM in the morning I suffered through for fourteen years.

There's a medal Alaska needs that too many people deserve, but nobody wants. That's what this bill proposes. Our military has a medal like that. It's called a



Purple Heart. It's awarded for being wounded or killed by in action by hostile action. Our Alaska Law Enforcement heroes need a similar medal for being wounded or killed by hostile actions of opponents of law and order. I'm talking about thugs and criminals from the scum of humanity. This bill proposes such a medal to be named the North Star Honor Medal, and I think that's a very good name. But what it's called is not as important than what it is.

Yes, the budget is important. Very important. And so is this



bill, and how we honor law enforcement. Unless we survive, with the help and support of our military overseas, and our law enforcement people here at home, all the budget issues, and every other issue, is moot. When our law enforcement people are wounded or killed in our behalf, there needs to be special recognition by our State of Alaska. That's what this bill does. That's the least we can do.

Yes, I confess, I do have a special interest in this bill. I was raised by John Lynn, a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff. My

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brother Jess is a retired Hollywood detective lieutenant. I have a grandson Nathan, who is a cop, and another grandson Hunter, applying to be a cop. And I myself was a cop many years ago in Tucson, Arizona. By the Grace of God, none of our family were ever wounded or killed. But we had comrades who were. And they should have been awarded special recognition by their state, as comrades are in our military are awarded the Purple Heart by a grateful nation. I urge you to pass this bill out of committee. Thank you for your help.