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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2011

No. 11-11

Licensing streamlined for military personnel, spouses

Juneau, Alaska – Two new programs will make it easier for Alaska's military families to coordinate employment with deployment. The Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing (DCBPL) unveiled two programs this week that will expedite the licensing process for spouses of active-duty military personnel and ease the licensing requirements for military personnel returning from service in a combat zone.

The new web site showcasing the licensing process is at <http://commerce.alaska.gov/occ/pmil.html>. It is part of new legislation signed by Gov. Sean Parnell on Monday. House Bill 28, sponsored by Finance Committee and Veterans Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Bill Thomas from Haines, allows a military spouse to obtain a temporary courtesy license more quickly in their field of practice as long as they meet the professional standards which are already required by law or regulation in one of the 37 professions regulated by the DCBPL. The temporary license will be valid for six months, at which time the military spouse has the option of obtaining an Alaska license or asking for a renewal of the temporary license.

"Our military families deal with enormous change and uncertainty due to deployments, transitions and relocations," said Representative Thomas. "These families face enough challenges without having the additional stress of having to deal with large gaps in employment due to the time it takes to get relicensed in each state they move to. House Bill 28 allows spouses to enter the Alaskan workforce quicker by offering temporary occupational licenses, provided they meet state standards."

The new law also exempts a service member who is already licensed in the state from having to maintain their license while they are deployed in a combat zone. The exemption expires six months after they return from deployment, which allows them time to transition back to their civilian lives. This exemption is a means for service members to serve our country without fear of penalty due to an inability to maintain licensure. To remain licensed, the licensee must pay all fees and meet all other licensing requirements after the exemption period has ended or when they return to private practice, whichever occurs first.

"We are working to eliminate barriers for Alaska businesses, while ensuring that we meet our regulatory and consumer protection responsibilities," said Susan Bell, commissioner for the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

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