

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## REPRESENTATIVE PETE KOTT DISTRICT 17 – EAGLE RIVER

### Sponsor Statement For House Joint Resolution 33

### **Urging the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services to seek authority and funding from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a system of allowing Alaska veterans treatment in both public and private Alaska Facilities.**

With approximately 72,000 veterans that call our great state home, I believe that Alaska's veterans deserve top quality health care in their own communities. Currently forced to seek medical treatment with U.S. Veteran's facilities, many of these heroes have to leave their communities and even go outside of Alaska. Many millions of dollars have been spent in airfare alone in order to get Alaskan's treatment when the treatment and facilities are available in state. This policy is costly and inefficient, and it disrupts Alaskans' lives.

House Joint Resolution 33 urges the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs to authorize funding and management to establish a system whereby Veterans can seek treatment from medical facilities other than that of the U.S. Military and Veteran's Affairs doctors and hospitals, many of which are available in the State of Alaska. This would give veterans a greater choice and flexibility for healthcare and increase the interaction between the Department and Military and Veterans Affairs doctors and the public and private medical facilities in the state thus, significantly reducing medical costs and increasing efficiency for veterans' medical care. This system would support the use of a veteran's medical identification card as an insurance card for medical billing to the U.S. Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs.

The passage of HJR 33 will give veterans a choice, and will allow them local access to quality healthcare.