

Chairman Schauer and Members of the Government and Veteran Affairs Committee,
For the record, my name is Kathy Frelich, and I am honored to be here representing District 15.

The idea for HB 1148 was brought to me by a constituent and he'll be up here shortly to share his own testimony but let me first walk you through this very short and sweet Bill.

HB 1148 designates the Month of May as Military Appreciation Month. Each year, the Governor will issue a proclamation on May 1st in honor of our Military men and women.

When I first approached Legislative Council regarding this Bill, it was to draft a Resolution, however in learning that resolutions are only binding for one year, I decided to move this in a different direction. As a Resolution, the legislative assembly would be required to pass a similar resolution each session if they wanted to maintain it. This Bill will codify Military Appreciation Month in North Dakota's Century Code. The wording is similar to Women Veterans' Month, which is in March.

I believe we cannot do enough to show appreciation to our Military members who serve to protect our freedom and our families, and I hope you will concur.

I will stand for questions, but before that I would like to tell you about my constituent.

Jason Pierce is the Commander of VFW Post 756 in Devils Lake ND. He is a retired veteran with 20 years of service to this great nation and 11 years to this great state. He joined the Active-Duty Air Force in 1993 and was stationed at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. He served on active duty for 3 years and after his honorable discharge, he moved back home and joined the Pennsylvania Air national guard in 1996. In 2005 Jason enlisted in the ND army National Guard and served for 11 years. He served all over the world including, Japan, England, France, Italy, Abu Dhabbi, and a year in Baghdad Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Thank you for welcoming Jason Pierce, but before he takes the podium, I will stand for questions.