

# MARK BEGICH ALASKA

U.S. Senator for the State of

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## **Begich Co-Sponsors Military Service Integrity Act** *Legislation penalizes false claims of military service*

Continuing his support for military service members and veterans, U.S. Sen. Mark Begich has co-sponsored the *Military Service Integrity Act of 2012*. The bill makes it a crime for any individual to falsely claim military service or to have been awarded a military medal or decoration in order to secure a personal benefit.

“Pretending to have served in the military, or falsely claiming to have been awarded a military honor to try to advance yourself, is more than just bad form,” Begich said. “The men and women who serve our country have a special honor and stature that only they have earned and deserve. Those who try to personally gain by lying about such service deserve to be penalized, and that’s what this bill does.”

*The Military Service Integrity Act of 2012* was drafted by Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA) to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court decision which struck down the original Stolen Valor Act of 2005 because the court felt it was too broad and violated the First Amendment.

*The Military Service Integrity Act of 2012* has two key provisions:

- Provides criminal penalties for any individual who makes a false claim of having served in the military or have been awarded a military medal, decoration or other device in order to secure a tangible benefit or personal gain; and
- Reinstates 1947 criminal penalties for any individual who knowingly attempts to manufacture, sell, attempt to sell, import or export U.S. military decorations or medals authorized by Congress for the Armed Forces except when authorized by law.

Sen. Begich serves on both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs.

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