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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

January 17, 2018

The Honorable Bryce Edgmon
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Edgmon,

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to the Alaska Police Standards Council and national criminal background checks for prospective police officers.

The Alaska Police Standards Council (Council) is within the Department of Public Safety, and is tasked with overseeing professional standards for employment as a police officer and other law enforcement officials. Further, the Council is statutorily authorized to establish police training programs. A person may not be certified as a police officer without going through the required training and meeting other requirements the Council has established for the employment of police officers.

This bill adds to the Council's powers the ability for the Department of Public Safety to request a national criminal history record check from the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a person who applies to attend a training program established by the Council or who seeks employment as a police officer by an employer that lacks the ability to request a national criminal history record check. This bill would give the Council the ability to assure that only qualified candidates become police officers by making sure that a thorough national background check is completed on all potential police officers. Currently, most employers authorized to submit requests for national criminal background checks from the Federal Bureau of Investigation already do, and would continue to do so. This bill would allow the Council to do the same in the situation where a person is applying to a training program established by the Council or where a potential employer does not have the ability to request a national criminal history record check.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Walker".

Bill Walker
Governor

Enclosure