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President

LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION of NORTH AMERICA LOCAL 942

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April 4, 2018

The Honorable Mia Costello
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HB 142

Dear Senator Costello,

On behalf of the nearly 1000 members of Laborers International Union of North America (LiUNA), Local 942, I am writing in support of HB 142. LiUNA Local 942 represents workers and their families in a wide variety of industries in the Northern Region and Southeast of Alaska. Of these industries some are very cyclical in nature. This is an important fact when considering changes to Unemployment Insurance (UI) availability and the levels of assistance it provides.

As you are aware, Alaska is recovering from a recent recession. Though our economy is not fully repaired and has a long way to go, we are on the upswing and hopefully on the way to more prosperous times. Throughout this difficult process we have experienced shortened seasonal work in construction, fewer jobs and less access to meaningful UI benefits. We have experienced members who have exhausted their benefits due to the lack of available jobs.

A small increase in the UI benefits should not be considered a tax to small businesses. The facts are, this is a shared cost by both employer and employee. Workers have a vested interest in these benefits, and they are willing to pay into the benefit knowing they can continue to provide for their families during tough times without the fear of losing homes, or choosing between bills and food on the table.

Local 942 believes HB 142 appropriately addresses a much needed and long overdue increase to the UI benefits our members rely on. We encourage you to take swift action to schedule HB 142 in the Senate Labor and Commerce committee.

Respecfully,

Scott C. Eickholt
Business Manager

Cc: Senator Kevin Meyer
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Berta Gardner
Senator Peter Micciche



SCOTT EICKHOLT
Business Manager
Secretary-Treasurer