



March 21, 2012

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

The Anchorage Police Department Employees Association, which represents more than 500 members of the Anchorage Police Department, supports SB 198. In the APDEA's judgment, the changes contained in SB 198 are overdue, and enactment of the Bill would bring Alaska's police regulatory system more in line with systems in other states.

Of greatest importance to the APDEA are the provisions of SB 198 dealing with deference to the decisions of arbitrators in the decertification process. Labor arbitration is a well-developed system, where both the employer and labor organizations or individual employees are able to fully litigate issues dealing with alleged misconduct by employees. Allowing the re-litigation of the same issues in the certification process only adds needless expense and uncertainty to a process that should tolerate neither. SB 198's approach of deferring to arbitration decisions has been adopted by many other states. See Revised Code of Washington §43.101.095(1)(d) (allows decertification after an officer has been terminated but only when the termination is "final").

The other changes proposed by SB 198 bring a common-sense approach to Alaska's police regulatory system. The protection from public disclosure of a police officer's home address and telephone number would be an important addition to Alaska's public records laws. Because of their roles as law enforcement officers, police officers do receive threats from those they arrest, and have been the victims of violence at the hands of criminals. The added protections for an officer and the officer's family by keeping confidential the officer's home address would be a welcome change in the law. SB 198's prohibition of compelled polygraph examinations for existing employees would bring Alaska in line with the law in most other states, including Washington (RCW 49.44.120), Oregon (ORS 659.840), and California (California Government Code, Section 3307).

The APDEA respectfully requests your support for SB 198.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Derek Hsieh".

Derek Hsieh  
President  
APDEA