

I do not support HB 379.

Loyal state employees, such as myself, are the face & backbone of all state administered services. Alaska residents, visitors to our state, and non-resident workers are affected by the quality of service, protection, and policies that we, the state employees, review, administer, and deliver.

State employees have already given up our COLA and accepted 6 hours of furlough for the next 3 years. I voted for ratification of a state employees' union contract made in good faith, which already saves millions towards the state's budget deficit. We, as loyal state employees, are doing our part in reducing the cost of government. Don't penalize us further!

As a long standing seasonal employee, merit increases are important because seasonals must work multiple seasons (2 to 8+ years) to be eligible for these small wage increases. They boost our salary to help keep up with general economic inflation. Seasonal workers are important to the state's workforce. They encompass DNR firefighters, DEC employees, DPS Public Safety Technicians, DFG Fisheries Biologists and Technicians who research/manage fish and game, and various admin staff to assist with the seasonal influx of people wanting admin type services. Please don't deny seasonals this increase.

Don't "nickle & dime" us to the point of being unable to make a living wage. Alaska is more expensive to live in. We all live, work, and play in this state! A tax or retention of some amount of our PFD will spread the burden to all residents. Reorganize revenue so the state's population can depend on stable services and aren't fearful of losing jobs and of wage uncertainties.

The state workforce makes up a fair portion of Alaska's population. Removing our ability to purchase goods & supplies will force the state into a degree of speedy economic decline. If you want to see empty buildings and foreclosed homes, then keep chopping state government and its employees, as the trickle down affect will hit soon and be severe. Fix the revenue structure of the state to keep us from a deep "bust" trough!

Revenue reform will bring a more stable future. Please do not support HB 379.

Regards,
Ivan Karic

I oppose HB 379.

My name is Kimberly Rudge-Karic and I've been a state employee for 38 years. I, along with many, many co-workers through the years have served Alaskan residents and visitors to our state. Residents and visitors deserve good quality service and fair policies that state employees review, administer, and deliver each day.

Suspending longevity wage benefits, merit increases, for state workers is completely unfair. State employees have already conceded wage changes (no COLA for three years and furlough days) in our recently ratified union contract. State employees have done their part to help reduce the cost of state government.

I know that you have many budget issues to juggle but I feel suspicious that the introduction timing of this bill, HB 379, was planned in a manner to disrupt the funding of our contract which was negotiated in good faith. Whether it was a coincidence or not, it represents a disproportionate deficit burden to state employees when compared to other industries within the state.

Other industries include, but are not limited to:

- Federal Government employees and military,
- the healthcare industry,
- fishing industry workers, including sport fish guides,
- the airline cargo industry,
- the major airline companies,
- the tourism industry,

What have employees of these industries sacrificed? Private industry workers have benefited by a recent minimum wage increase. Shrinkage of the energy industry has been expected for decades with a decline in oil supplies so it shouldn't have come a complete surprise to oil industry workers.

I strongly urge that the State of Alaska considers returning to an income tax and/or or a retained portion of the permanent fund plan. The financial burden should be shared by ALL residents in which users pay for services. The PFD is a dividend, not an entitlement. The oil industry tax credits should also continued to be examined and reconsidered for change. Please move towards changing the bigger picture for revenue instead of cuts which will lead to a serious recession in the state's economy.

Elimination of incremental merit increases:

- **will not solve** Alaska's billion dollar budget crisis and continue to degrade the infra-structure for state services,
- will cause some degree of economic collapse/recession (less spendable money from state employees to infuse into the state's economy),
- an undercurrent of low morale among employees, especially now that we have already agreed on pay cuts through elimination of COLA and furlough hours for our next three years,
- cause qualified people not to seek open state positions and/or leave for better pay in the private sector or federal system (already evident in certain departments). Who wants to enter a job where one cannot potentially obtain a pay raise for an unknown number of years?

I've had first hand experience related to the last point. Some supervisors and multiple seasonal employees I've supervised have resigned and jumped over the the Federal Fish & Wildlife agency, private industry, and self employed consultation businesses because of higher salaries & benefits and better advancement opportunities were offered. This movement caused disruption to seasonal projects and less consistency in work produced. Costs in my time and salary in finding, hiring, and training new seasonal employees is considerable. Don't let the State of Alaska be an employee training facility for other industries/agencies!

Revenue reform is the answer to Alaska's more stable future. Please do not support HB 379.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Rudge-Karic