



CITY OF FAIRBANKS

Jim Matherly, Mayor

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March 2, 2017

The Honorable John Coghill
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: Support for municipal option in SB48 - Insurance for Dependents of Deceased Fire/Police

Dear Senator Coghill:

The City of Fairbanks wishes to extend its appreciation to you for introducing SB48. Specifically, we applaud the provision giving municipalities the option of participating in the State's proposed program while avoiding the possibility of another unfunded state mandate.

In October 2016, the City of Fairbanks lost hero Sgt. Allen Brandt who was shot in the line of duty and later died from his injuries. Sgt. Brandt left behind a wife and four children ranging in age from two to eight years old.

The City supports extending health insurance coverage to the survivors of police and firefighters who die from work-related injuries, and has made it a priority to cover the health care costs for Sgt. Brandt's family. However, the City does not support the state imposing a one-size-fits-all premium payment requirement on all municipalities. Unilaterally usurping local control removes flexibility and prevents local officials from determining the most appropriate course of action to meet the needs of their communities.

We appreciate your attention to this sensitive and emotional issue. Your continued support for SB48's optional provision will allow the City of Fairbanks to consider this program alongside other programs that could be more advantageous to the families of our fallen heroes.

Sincerely,

Jim Matherly, Mayor
City of Fairbanks