

From: Barnes, Patrick L. <patrick.barnes@anchorageak.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 8:03 AM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Tammie Wilson <Rep.Tammie.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jennifer Johnston <Rep.Jennifer.Johnston@akleg.gov>; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Gary Knopp <Rep.Gary.Knopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bart LeBon <Rep.Bart.Lebon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard <Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ben Carpenter <Rep.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB 79 is a must!

Representatives of Alaska,

Hi my name is Patrick Barnes, I am a firefighter in Anchorage, Alaska. I have lived in Alaska my entire life and couldn't imagine living anywhere else. If you recognize the last name that because I watch my grandmother Rep. Ramona Barnes serve this state and its people for over 20 years. I saw what it takes for someone in your shoes to make tough decisions for the people you serve as my grandmother work extremely hard for the people of this state. I have done many things in this state. I worked for a decade on the north slope wearing many different hats. I began volunteering for the fire department on the north slope when I found my true calling, to be a firefighter. I'm not first in my family to become a firefighter, my grandfather hired on with Anchorage in 1979 after a full career in the Air Force and served Anchorage for 20 years.

I know what being a public servant is all about and like many that I hired on with that sometimes doesn't happen until a little later in life. I was 28 when I hired on with Anchorage in 2011. I have a true passion for this job and have definitely found my career path. I am a father of two young kiddos, ages 3 and 5. After having kids I really started paying more attention to what our retirement really meant. As I have learned more and more about Tier IV and how grossly underperforming it is, it has me doing some very hard thinking. I truly love this job and love this department. However, this job takes a toll on your body and mind. Watching my kids grow up and enjoy all the things about Alaska as I have, I have been forced to start looking elsewhere to ensure I will be able to retire someday and still have a body and mind left to enjoy some of it. With Tier IV I won't have that luxury. This is why I am writing in support for House Bill 79. We need something to change.

Since I have been on here at Anchorage, I have been a part of every new hire test and academy. Both as a test proctor and as an instructor in the academy. The last couple years we couldn't even fill a room that used to be overflowing with test takers. People eager to be a part of this amazing department. Last year we were trying to hire around 20 people and we only had 22 show up for the

written test. That's pretty good odds for them but bad for us. The written tests used to bring in anywhere from a thousand to two thousand test takers. These people are not showing up anymore because there is nothing to keep them here. Not to mention we have people leaving at an alarming rate after just 5 to 10 years on to departments that offer a better retirement. One that actually has a possibility to sustain you after your career. When these people leave that means we have to hire again and train new people. It takes about a year to get a brand new person through all of their testing. It's expensive and the more people leave the more we have to hire.

In my 8 years on I have seen and experienced some of the most amazing people do some of the most amazing things. There's also a flip side to that, because we show up on people worse times and their life and they don't always get better. This job is taxing on the mind and body, this is why we need your help to support us when we are down. We need to push this bill thru to ensure we are taking care of the ones who show up when no one else will and take care of anything and everything. I urge you to fight for the public servants who help and protect the people of Alaska. Support HB 79.

I would like to thank you for your time and please don't hesitate to respond with any questions or comments.

Thank you,

Patrick Barnes