

From: adam bell <rudy\_a13@hotmail.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2019 9:41 PM  
To: Rep. Ben Carpenter <Rep.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov>  
Cc: Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>; Ken Truitt <Ken.Truitt@akleg.gov>  
Subject: House Bill 79

Dear Representative Ben Carpenter,

I am a firefighter in Sterling and would like to see the states recruitment and retention issues improved . As you are aware the state has a large turnover of public safety workers. One of the challenges Alaska needs to address is our current retirement plan offered to public safety employees. Under the current retirement plan, people are fully vested after 5 years with no obligation or incentive to stay in Alaska. This retirement plan is portable and can be transferred to any other job that offers a 401k plan.

I have worked at my fire department for the past 14 years and have seen plenty of costly trained firefighters leave employment here. People quit earlier than the normal retirement age for this job for one with better security. I have seen firefighters move to Anchorage for higher pay working at Anchorage Fire Department. Even though they are going to work for another department with the same retirement they are being paid higher in Anchorage and ultimately can save more money for retirement while working there. If the state offered a defined benefit plan, Anchorage Fire Department would not have the turnover they have seen in the past few years. This is the same situation many of the smaller fire/police departments are facing in Alaska too. With the cost to train and recruit skilled police officers and firefighters reaching over \$100,000, many smaller departments cannot afford to train new employees every year.

The state can make it better by offering a defined benefit retirement plan for public safety employees. I am asking for your support with House bill 79 not only for all public safety employees, but especially ones effected by the retention of firefighters on the Kenai Peninsula. Thank you for taking the time to review my email and the work you do in Juneau.

Sincerely,

Adam Bell

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Adam Bell