

From: [Shawn Davies](#)
To: [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Jennifer Johnston](#); [Rep. Daniel Ortiz](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Gary Knopp](#); [Rep. Bart LeBon](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Kelly Merrick](#); [Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard](#); [Rep. Ben Carpenter](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#)
Subject: Letter of support for House Bill 79
Date: Monday, May 6, 2019 8:50:30 AM

May 4, 2019

To: House Finance Committee Members

Subject: Police and Fire Retirement Legislation, House Bill 79

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

My name is Shawn Davies and I am a detective with a Anchorage Police Department, Crimes Against Children Unit. My current assignment has me working to protect the most vulnerable children from sexual abuse and serious physical injury. I have worked in law enforcement in Alaska for almost twenty year years. I am writing to express my concerns for recruitment and retention for the future of law enforcement and first responders.

As a member of a large law enforcement agency in Alaska, I have witnessed first hand the departure of trained and qualified police officers and detectives for other police departments with a defined benefit retirement system or for other professions entirely because of the problems with the Tier IV retirement system in the State of Alaska. These officers have told me about their reason to leave and their concerns that focus around the financial future for themselves and their families related to their retirement uncertainty in the Tier IV system.

Every time our police department loses staff, that employee takes with them their training and experience. It is that training and experience that takes time and resources to replace with the concern that it will inevitably be a repeating cycle. This week I learned of an officer who will leave for another police department that has a defined benefit retirement system outside of Alaska. Last year, a valued detective in my unit left the police department with close to ten years experience for a profession not related to law enforcement because of the Tier IV retirement plan. This is a something that I have watched occur since my hiring at the Anchorage Police Department in 2007 to include seeing members of my own academy leave to protect their future.

With the inability to recruit and retain long term first responder employees with a defined benefit retirement system the burden falls on our communities. The constant costs to public safety that can not maintain a consistently growing department with a mix of long term and

incoming employees is unacceptable. First responders have shown a willingness protect their communities through sacrifice when the call arises. However, first responders have also shown the ability to work with elected officials to address the problems with the Tier IV retirement system. House Bill 79 is the solution that will address concerns for recruitment, retention and overall public safety for the future of Alaskans.

As I near the time where I will be considering retirement, I want to leave this profession knowing that the members of public safety in the future will not only be financially protected but will be the most qualified and trained professionals so that they can serve their communities for an entire career as I have. And in my current job as a detective who protects children from some of the worst crimes imaginable, I want to know that there will be qualified detectives to protect the true future of Alaska, our youth.

I want to thank all of you for taking the time to read this letter and I encourage you all to move forward with House Bill 79 as the solution to address the concerns with the Tier IV retirement in public safety.

Shawn Davies
Detective

18581 Jude Island Circle
Eagle River, Alaska