From:	Jason Jeffers
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:	HB 79
Date:	Sunday, May 5, 2019 12:05:19 AM

Representatives,

First, I want to say thank you for the many, many hours that you invest in Alaska. I have lived in Alaska for 33 years, and I love this state! Thank you for your effort to make Alaska even better.

I am writing to ask you to support HB 79. I am a fire fighter with the Anchorage Fire Department where I have worked for the past 11 years. It has been a privilege and an honor to have a job that allows me to help other people for a living. I was never a kid who dreamed of one day being a firefighter, but I am very grateful that I have had the opportunity to work as a firefighter. It has been an outstanding fit for my personality and for my family.

As I continue to progress in my career with the fire department, I have had the opportunity to work with most of the newer fire fighters. Each of them is very excited to be a fire fighter. However, since I have been with the fire department, there has been an ever increasing number of fire fighters that are beginning to look outside of Alaska for other opportunities to work as a firefighter. The trend has increased so significantly that I would say the majority of the newly hired firefighters with the Anchorage Fire Department entertain the idea of moving to another department. In almost every one of these cases, a better retirement program is a major (if not THE major) reason they are looking for employment outside the state of Alaska.

Already, we have seen several of our most promising employees take positions in other departments. The Anchorage Fire Department prides itself on providing excellent service to the public. The department is dedicated to investing time and money necessary for training to achieve that high level of service and competency. Generally, after a firefighter has been trained with the Anchorage Fire Department, they find it very easy to find another job out of state.

We need these young, promising future leaders of the fire department to stay in Alaska. If they continue to leave, the level of service and care will inevitably decline as our most promising future leaders continue to leave state.

By nature, I am a very practical and conservative person. I firmly believe that we as a state should not spend money that we do not have. I understand that there is a cost associated with changing the Tier IV retirement system. However, I believe it will be money well spent that will help Alaska to keep our most promising future leaders of the fire department in Alaska. Consequently, this will reduce the money that would otherwise need to be spent to train the replacements for the people that are leaving. It will also

improve the level of service and care provided by retaining the experience of progressing fire fighters instead of losing those personnel and their experience and expertise to another state.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I urge you to support HB 79. Thank you again for your work!

Best regards,

Jason Jeffers