

From: Patrick Gregg <prgregg@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:13 PM
To: Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support of House Bill 79

Dear Representative Kopp,

First and foremost, thank you for all your hard work and support in getting House Bill 79 this far!!!

My name is Patrick Gregg. I live in Anchorage with my wife Devin and we have raised 3 children here. I've been a firefighter with the Anchorage Fire Department for over 20 years; the last 12 of which have been as a Fire Captain.

I'm writing to you today to express my grave concern about the inadequacies of the current Tier IV retirement system that all Public Safety employees, hired since 2007, are members of. The Tier IV plan is incredibly flawed. As a result, recruitment and retainment of Public Safety Employees is down. House Bill 79 goes a long way towards fixing that.

I'm "one of the lucky ones" that hired on in 1999 so I am a member of Tier III which provides at least some level of financial security for my wife and I when I retire one day. My 2 oldest sons are not so lucky. One is a firefighter here with AFD. The other is a firefighter with the FFD in Fairbanks. Both are members of Tier IV which provides absolutely no financial security for their retirement futures. They are both hard working, disciplined young men who are aggressively contributing, on their own, to other retirement account options but even with that, they WILL NOT have enough to live on and provide for their families in retirement. As a result, there is a high likelihood that they will both eventually seek positions with other departments outside the State of Alaska. There are many fire departments in the Northwest that regularly offer "laterals" from one department to another. And many of them are still offering a defined benefit retirement plan. Since 2007 we have started losing people to these lateral transfers at an alarming rate and it will only increase unless Tier IV is replaced with something that can offer some financial security. HB 79 is a good start towards correcting that in a practical way which is good for both the State of Alaska as well as the hard working people who serve it.

The bottom line is this. When I hired on with the AFD it was not uncommon to be testing against 2000-3000 people. These days we are lucky if we receive 500 applications and the common thing that you will hear from people is that the Tier IV retirement system is to blame.

Please continue to support House Bill 79 and encourage your colleagues on the House Finance Committee to do the same. The cost to the State of Alaska in supporting this bill will be far less than if we do nothing at all.

Sincerely,

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