

ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT



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Justin Doll
Chief

Representative Andy Josephson
Alaska State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

February 22, 2021

RE: Alaska Public Employee Retirement System

Dear Representative Josephson,

As Chief of Alaska's largest law enforcement agency, I am writing in strong support of amending the Alaska Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) to return public safety employees to a defined-benefit pension system. The return will help recruit new applicants and retain officers which will ensure Alaska residents have adequately staffed law enforcement agencies to mitigate their concerns for public safety.

Over the past three years the Anchorage Police Department (APD) has been fortunate to run consecutive police academies to rebuild the force after years of understaffing. I remain concerned that the current system does not provide enough incentive for officers to stay with the agency long-term.

We have seen examples of our highly trained, qualified, and experienced officers leave APD to work out-of-state for other law enforcement agencies offering competitive defined-benefit retirement systems. We are paying the high cost of training these officers just to see them leave after a few years of valuable experience is gained.

The high degree of portability of the defined contribution system is a potential crisis for Alaska's public safety organizations, making it very easy for employees to leave after just a few years of service. Making this change is a step in the right direction to help agencies retain law enforcement officers. The Anchorage Police Department strongly supports this legislation and a return to a defined-benefit retirement system for Alaska's public safety employees.

I thank you for your support of law enforcement and public safety officials across the State of Alaska, especially here in Anchorage, and I urge you to present this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Chief Justin Doll
Anchorage Police Department