



ALASKA CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

"Walking Alaska's toughest beat."

February 15, 2022

Re: Letter of Support for HB 30

Representative Josephson,

Thank you for working diligently to fix some of the outdated aspects of the Workers' Compensation system. Correctional Officers work in a dangerous profession. They put their lives and limbs on the line every day when they walk into our facilities. The added protections in HB30 for Officers and, in case they lose their life in the line of duty, for Officers' families, is important.

The Permanent Partial Impairment index has not been adjusted for 22 years. Increasing the base value of the Permanent Partial Impairment (PPI) shows Officers that they are valued and protected by their employer, the State of Alaska. It is extremely difficult to live disabled and this adjustment would help Officers survive after sacrificing their bodies to ensure public safety through state service.

HB 30 also increases the benefits for financially dependent parents, grandchildren, brothers and sisters of the deceased. When an Officer puts his or her life on the line for public safety, he or she cannot hesitate to run to the fight, riot, hostage situation, etc., but when the Officer is in doubt that their dependent family members will be taken care of after their death, it could make them think twice. This benefit has not been adjusted for inflation in 55 years; it is time to bring it in line with today's dollars, instead of 1960's dollars.

Additionally, in the event of a line of duty death, HB 30 ensures notification to the Officer's family that they are eligible for this program. It will help guide them through the legal process, which can be difficult when grieving a lost loved one.

Thank you for prioritizing the protection of Alaska Correctional Officers and their families.

Randy McLellan
President, Alaska Correctional Officers Association