



## HOUSE BILL 100: PAID FAMILY LEAVE SPONSOR STATEMENT

*"An act relating to teacher and public employee paid leave."*

For years, the State of Alaska has faced a net outmigration of young families. Simultaneously, the lack of pensions and competitive benefits for state workers has meant that the State of Alaska faces crippling vacancy rates in our public sector, exacerbated by the pandemic. The result is that we pay the same penalty thrice as our workforce ages, outmigration continues, and we are unable to recruit and retain the best and brightest in Alaska.

A common thread in retention woes and outmigration is that Alaska does not have opportunity for young families. The costs associated with raising a family are prohibitively expensive as parents seek to re-enter the workforce but struggle to find support beyond family and friends in areas such as childcare. HB100 seeks to provide one solution that has become more popular since the COVID-19 Pandemic: paid family leave. Ten other states are now offering similar benefits, and Alaska's benefits under this bill would become the best in the nation.

Under the current Alaska Family Medical Leave Act, employees can take up to 18 weeks of unpaid leave in the event of childbirth, adoption, or a significant health event related to a loved one. HB100 would ensure that such leave is paid at 100% of the worker's salary. This bill would help our public sector recruit and retain employees, as well as ensure that our state could be amongst the best in the nation to raise a family.