



To: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Alaska AFL-CIO

Date: February 24, 2026

Subject: SB 251

The Alaska AFL-CIO supporters SB 251 on the following grounds:

Saves the State of Alaska money: In a time of tight budgets, SB 251 would save the state of Alaska an estimated \$518,300 annually. These savings could be used to make the Alaska Workers' compensation system more solvent and greater benefit Alaska's workers.

Greater efficiency: By returning jurisdiction over Workers' Compensation appeals to the Superior Court, workers get a faster, more efficient resolution. The Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission has not closed cases faster than the courts; workers often have to wait 9-12 months to get a resolution. Additionally, more Commission decisions are appealed to the State Supreme Court, which extends the timeline even further. Workers have a right to have their cases heard and decided in a timely manner. SB 251 would ensure this.

Reduce needless bureaucracy: The Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission's workload has decreased over time. Each year since 2021, less than 20 cases have been filed, with just 8 cases and 3 filed decisions in 2025. It makes little sense to have an entire commission and finite funds dedicated to this workload when it could be adequately absorbed by the court system, while actually improving efficiency.