

3/24/12

Dear Legislator:

I, Michael S. Ingram, am writing you in reference to SB 211 (Military / Medical Buyback). I have served my country in the military and proudly serve the people of Alaska now as an Alaska State Trooper. This bill would provide a retirement option for approximately 180 to 200 current Alaska law enforcement employees, who are military veterans and are vested in Alaska's Tier II and Tier III PERS.

I believe this option would actually save the State of Alaska money in the long run. The bill would allow law enforcement employees to retire between their twentieth and twenty-fifth years with full medical coverage, depending on how many military service years they are eligible to buy, and would only fill the gap until they are eligible for Medicare at age of 65. Because these law enforcement employees are in the later years of their careers, they are some of the highest paid law enforcement employees in Alaska. Due to their age, the duties often associated with their position tend to lead to severe injuries, which often times results in lengthy periods of recovery (i.e., a gap in productive services to the citizens of Alaska). Law Enforcement is a young person's line of work and has the propensity to become more dangerous and expensive towards the end of their career.

As written, I will take advantage of this benefit if passed. This bill is a great way to show support for our veterans, increase morale and possibly assist with bolstering recruitment / retention issues that has historically plagued law enforcement departments statewide, particularly if the State reinstates a defined contribution plan such as the fairly newly proposed Tier V. Above all, I fully see this as a way for the State to save money.

Thank you for your service and time.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Ingram
Public Safety Employees Association
Member Since 2001
Bethel, AK