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HB 295\Ver. A (34-LS1376\A) **SPONSOR STATEMENT**

“An Act relating to allowable absences for eligibility for a permanent fund dividend; and providing for an effective date.”

House Bill 295 makes a targeted update to Alaska’s Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) allowable absence statute to ensure that true Alaska residents do not jeopardize their resident status, including their right to hunt and fish as residents, simply because their profession requires extended travel outside the state.

Current law allows residents to remain eligible for the PFD while absent for approved reasons such as military service, education, or medical treatment. However, certain employment-driven absences are not clearly addressed. HB 295 adds service as a pilot for a United States airline certified as an air carrier by the Federal Aviation Administration as an allowable absence.

Commercial airline pilots may spend substantial time outside Alaska for work, yet many maintain their permanent home, vote, pay taxes, raise their families, and intend to remain in this state. Their absence is occupational, not residential.

This bill does not expand eligibility or weaken residency standards. It clarifies that Alaska-based pilots who maintain domicile and intent to remain residents do not lose their status because of federally regulated flight schedules, training or other job requirements.

No Alaskan should lose their resident hunting and fishing rights because their career requires temporary travel Outside. HB 295 makes that principle clear in statute, and the dividend protection follows naturally from that clarification.

Any questions, please contact Elesheva Almeida, Staff to Representative McCabe (907) 465-2679