

From: [Jamie Burgess](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB78 - Defined Benefit for Public Employees
Date: Monday, April 20, 2026 2:54:32 PM

Greetings Finance Committee Members -

I write to you to express my support for the bill, but only if the amendment with the 2% increase is rescinded. Employers would not have the ability to choose whether or not to participate in the new retirement program, and the additional cost burden, especially for school districts who are already struggling to make do with the little they have, is a long-term additional expense we can ill afford.

The information from the actuaries is clear that this will not increase liability to the state or to the plan, and we should be clear of the existing unfunded liability very soon, which would be a good time to re-evaluate the program going forward.

The return to a defined benefit plan is an extremely valuable recruitment and retention tool. While departing staff may not indicate this as the primary reason for leaving employment, it is definitely a factor in the overall decision to move out of Alaska and to pursue employment in education in a different state.

Speaking strictly from a personal level, I love being here in Alaska and doing the work I do, but at my age and place in life, I am seriously considering returning to the lower 48 and building vesting for a defined benefit back in the state I came from, or another where I can move my contributions and have something to count upon in retirement.

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Thanks.

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