



Public Safety Employees Association, Inc.
"Representing Alaska's Finest"
A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 803



April 3, 2017

Re: SB 48 and HB 23 - Medical Insurance Premiums for Surviving Dependents of Peace Officers and Firefighters Killed in the Line of Duty

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for considering legislation to provide medical insurance to spouses and survivors of peace officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty, SB 48 and HB 23. This is good and just legislation, needed in our state. Families of those that die protecting all Alaskans should not suffer an additional tragedy of losing medical insurance because their loved one made the ultimate sacrifice for all of us.

HB 23 is the better of these two bills. Specifically, HB 23 provides a mandatory benefit to all eligible peace officers and firefighters. It recognizes that families of all public safety officers, whether state or municipal employees, killed in the line of duty will receive this benefit and be treated equally.

Second, HB 23 provides medical insurance benefits to spouses of public safety officers killed in the line of duty until they are eligible to receive a major-medical insurance coverage by other means, or the spouse reaches Medicare eligibility, whichever comes first. It does not limit a spouse's medical coverage after a random 10-year period, like SB 48. HB 23 therefore recognizes that families making the ultimate sacrifice will keep this benefit unless they have other medical insurance coverage.

Finally, HB 23 is the better legislation as it has a zero-fiscal note.

Please combine these bills and pass a law that provides the best medical coverage for spouses and survivors of peace officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty.

Sincerely,

Meagan Carmichael
General Counsel
PSEA