



ELECTRONIC MAIL

February 5, 2024

Representative George Rauscher  
Senator Bill Wielechowski  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 63 & SB 60 – Repeal Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission

Dear Representative Rauscher and Senator Wielechowski:

As the primary trade organization representing the residential construction industry in Alaska, the Alaska State Home Building Association (ASHBA) writes to express its support for HB 63 and SB 60 to repeal the Alaska Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission (Commission) and return jurisdiction over appeals of Workers' Compensation Board decisions to the Superior Court.

The construction industry, by its very nature, is one that involves inherent risks and challenges. Despite stringent safety protocols and preventive measures, accidents can and do occur. When such incidents happen, it is vital that workers have access to a fair and efficient process for seeking recourse and receiving the compensation they rightly deserve.

Since 2005, the Commission has carried out its mission of providing an impartial forum for resolving disputes over workers' compensation. However, given the Commission's decreased workload, the state's current fiscal challenges, and the need to prioritize state spending in a responsible manner, it makes sense to consider opportunities to streamline government processes and eliminate inefficiencies wherever possible. And evidence shows that the Alaska Court System possesses the capacity to absorb the relatively small caseload associated with workers' compensation appeals across its jurisdictions without necessitating additional resources.

Thank you for your service to the State of Alaska,

  
David Bunts, President  
Alaska State Home Building Association