



## SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

### SB 77: Dividend Division Cleanup

#### Sponsor Statement

Our Permanent Fund Dividend laws let Alaskans be out of state extra days for medical care, military service, and education. Senate Bill 77 fixes broken parts of the 'allowable absences' for education, merchant marines, and medical care. The bill also helps the Dividend Division run the program more safely and cost-effectively.

#### **Absences:**

Today the law allows absences for merchant mariners when they're at sea but doesn't include merchant mariner training. The bill will treat time at an academy like college.

Today, college students who can't afford to fly home for winter or spring break can have a hard time keeping qualified for their PFD. The bill lets college students treat breaks during the academic year as an allowable absence. (This does not include summer vacation.)

Today, the extremely complex rules for getting medical care that's not available in state mean an Alaskan who has an unexpected medical issue late in the year might lose eligibility. The bill stops making Alaskans plan their medical emergencies in advance.

#### **Security and Efficiency:**

PFD Division staff deal with sensitive personal data for most Alaskans. The bill requires the division to fingerprint their workers.

To reduce opportunities for fraudsters to file phony applications, it makes the list of PFD applicants confidential.

The bill also lets the division send electronic levy notices to Alaskans who opt-in to get them, reducing printing and postage costs.

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