



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Public Safety

DIVISION OF FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY
Office of the Director

5700 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-1225
Main: 907.269.5491
Fax: 907.338.4375

March 20, 2018

The Honorable Neal Foster
The Honorable Paul Seaton
Co-Chairs, House Finance
Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Foster and Representative Seaton,

I am writing this letter in support of HB400, "An Act relating to the collection of fees by the Department of Public Safety for fire and Explosion prevention and safety services".

The mission of the Division of Fire and Life Safety is to "Reduce the loss of life and property to fire and explosion". Toward this goal, the law requires the Division of Fire and Life Safety to perform fire inspections on commercial buildings to verify compliance with fire codes and ensure that fire safety equipment is in good working order.

Regular fire inspections increase public safety and prevent the loss of life and property to fires. There are over 3,000 buildings statewide that require these fire inspections. Currently, we have adequate staffing to complete these inspections on a two-year schedule, but unfortunately we do not have adequate funding to pay for staff to travel as required to meet this goal. The result of this lack of funding is that buildings, especially in more remote locations, may go years without an inspection to identify and correct fire hazards.

In order to address this issue, the Governor's budget included a \$200,000 increment for FY19 to increase the funding for travel for fire inspections. However \$125,000 of this increase is designated general fund program receipts. Under current statute, Fire and Life Safety is only allowed to collect fees for building plan reviews. All other services provided to commercial industries are without charge. Thus, without expanded ability to collect fees, Fire and Life Safety will not be able to generate the additional needed \$125,000. HB 400 was brought forward by the House State Affairs committee on the recommendation of the Public Safety House Finance Subcommittee as a solution to this problem. HB 400 would allow F&LS to charge reasonable fees for fire inspections in order to offset costs of providing this important public safety service.

I ask for your favorable consideration on this important public safety measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Tyler".

David Tyler
State Fire Marshal