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HB.351  
Version A

Rec'd  
4-3-12  
435 p

Re: SB 198/HB 351

As Chief of Police of the Fairbanks Police Department, I ask for this moment of your attention to express my opposition to the above-cited legislation.

I read the concerns that Mr. David Sexton, Executive Director of the Alaska Police Standards Council, provided in testimony, and find my concerns directly overlay his. At point here is the capacity to effectively provide the citizens of Alaska with genuine, effective "quality control" of police applicants through enforcing standards. The degradation of that core function that would come with the passage of this legislation puts in question how seriously we value that level of professionalism. The policing profession inherently calls for certain sacrifices from its members, but the degree of intrusion under current practices is minimal, while the value gained from those same practices has proven great—too great to abandon.

For what worth it might have, let me add this. Over a six year period, I was privileged to represent the United States in various roles generally referred to as international police advising. During that time, I saw and lived the consequences of corruption and compromised standards with the police in many countries. I left that experience nearly phobic of acts that could trigger movement down that proverbial slippery slope. That might help explain my passion in resisting what I see as an unwarranted, rather wholesale degradation of our State's efforts to maintain the highest competence of law enforcement standards that would follow passage of this legislation.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Laren J Zager  
Chief of Police