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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2019 10:14 AM

**To:** Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Tammie Wilson <Rep.Tammie.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jennifer Johnston <Rep.Jennifer.Johnston@akleg.gov>; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Gary Knopp <Rep.Gary.Knopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bart LeBon <Rep.Bart.Lebon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard <Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ben Carpenter <Rep.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chuck Kopp <Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov>

**Subject:** PLease support HB 79

hello there,

My name is Grant Kopplin and I currently work for the Anchorage fire department. I am writing you today to ask that you please support HB 79 and help this bill move forward. Just a little background on who I am, I came to Alaska when I was 18 years old with the air force in 2014. I quickly fell in love with the state and realized that I wanted to stay here after my military service was finished. I was firefighter in the air force and knew that I wanted to continue that career on the civilian side once I was out. The anchorage fire department is a well-respected organization and I knew that this is where I wanted to work. It was the best of both worlds, I get to have my dream job in my dream state. When I got the job with AFD I had not put a lot of thought into retirement or what our tier four plan really was. Shortly after I graduated the academy and got on the line, I sat down and really thought about our retirement plan and ran some numbers to see what our benefit actually was. It did not take long for me to realize that it is going to be very difficult for me to save enough money to make it through my retirement years. Not to mention the healthcare needs for my family and I in retirement will be largely paid out of pocket due to our lack of a healthcare benefit in retirement. I started looking around at fire department jobs in other western states and realized that the vast majority of them have defined benefit plans that far outweigh our tier four plan. I do not want to leave the anchorage fire department but unfortunately it doesn't make sense for me to stay when there are better opportunities for me and my future family.

Being a firefighter and an EMS provider is hard work. I have only been on the job for about two years now, but I can already feel the stress and damage that it does to our bodies. This is not a career where a person should work over 30 years, and our current retirement plan leaves us tier four members without any income and in need to continue working after a long and hard 30 year career. Tier IV requires a solution and HB79 is just that. A defined benefit plan for Alaskan public safety employees would ensure that none of us are left without an

income to support ourselves and family members after giving so much to our communities. This does not just affect me, it effects thousands of others in our home state of Alaska. We recognize that there is a cost to this bill, but the cost of doing nothing will be much greater. that I hope that with your support we can help ensure that hard working Alaskans are taken care of and solve the retention crisis we are experiencing in our public safety careers here in Alaska. Thank you so much for your time and consideration on this important bill.

Very Respectfully, Grant A. Kopplin