

From: swaal@gci.net
To: [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Jennifer Johnston](#); [Rep. Daniel Ortiz](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Gary Knopp](#); [Rep. Bart LeBon](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Kelly Merrick](#); [Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard](#); [Rep. Ben Carpenter](#); [Rep. Chuck Kopp](#)
Subject: HB79
Date: Saturday, May 4, 2019 10:33:59 AM

To House Finance Committee,

My name is Steve Walters, I am a 12 year firefighter with Anchorage Fire Dept. I was the first academy to be hired under Tier IV and was very fortunate as I competed against over one thousand others. Since that class the numbers of applicants has steadily declined in large part because of Tier IV retirement. Those interested in fire service work are seeking employment with departments that have defined benefit and/or better retirements. The Anchorage Fire dept has lost several quality individuals seeking better retirements. So the Muni of Anchorage spends large sums to train these people so they can take that education and lateral to other departments. Anchorage Police Dept has seen this as well in even higher numbers than AFD.

Being in public safety as a first responder is very stressful occupation, we are put into dangerous sometimes life threatening situations. The time spent away from family with limited sleep takes its toll. I got into the service later in life and although I am shooting for a 20 year career, barring illness/ injury, there is no way i could save enough on my own to retire above poverty level. I am already wondering what my "Retirement" job will be.

I am urging you to support HB79 as Tier IV needs to be fixed.

Thank you for your time.

Steve Walters
AFD station 7