
From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:36 PM

From: Taylor Willing <taylorjwilling@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 9:53 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Taylor Willing,

I am an Anchorage firefighter and I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because Alaska is losing money and valuable experience with our current retirement system. Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees and we are at a clear disadvantage. You can not find a public safety retirement plan like Tier 4 anywhere else in the country. We currently only receive a 5% match in a 401(A) account; which is less than a social security contribution would be anywhere else in the private sector. HB 55 is a well-thought out and crafted plan modeled after the most successful plans in the country. We should expect to see additional costs to the state such as increased workers compensation costs as our departments become staffed with an older workforce that lacks the financial security to retire. It is vital that we pass HB55 to keep responders local and to support the health and safety of the people of Alaska. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Taylor Willing
Anchorage Fire Department
Station 6C

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:24:40 PM

From: Brady Deal <bradyedeal@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 7:07 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

Hello,

My name is Brady Deal. I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because HB55 is reasonable, it will keep our employees in AK, and help support us and our families after we work a long, hard, strenuous career.

It is fiscally responsible, costing 10% less than Tier IV after unfunded liability is paid off, and will be equal to or less than what other public safety retirement systems report; we know that Washington state has an overfunded retirement system because it works!

In our current system we will be spending millions on recruiting and training new employees after others have left for pensions elsewhere; we will likely and projected have a retention of employees after this bill (hopefully) passes. These are several small points in a much bigger picture that I believe will be extremely beneficial for Alaskans in public safety.

Thank you for reading and for your consideration.

Regards,
Brady Deal

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:24:45 PM

From: Brian Kneaper <kneaper.brian@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 7:18 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Brian Kneaper, I am a firefighter with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is so important for Public Safety in Alaska. We are seeing multiple of our public safety officers and firefighters gain valuable experience here in Alaska and then leave for a retirement with a defined benefit somewhere else. We can no longer compete with the lower 48 in trying to recruit employees because of the tier IV retirement, and we are at a clear disadvantage. You also can't find another retirement system like our tier IV system anywhere else in the country. We lose valuable experience everytime one of our trained employees leaves Alaska. I believe HB55 offers a reasonable solution to help provide a retirement for our first responders and has safeguards in place to prevent unfunded liability from occurring.

Please pass HB55, help give our first responders a retirement after the many years of service they will provide to the public.

Thank you for your time,
Brian Kneaper
Firefighter
Anchorage Fire Department

Date: 4/29/2022

Dear Senators,

I am writing in support of House Bill No. 55 (HB55). I work for the Anchorage Fire Department and have been in the PERS Tier 4 system for 16 years.

I am not eligible for Social Security benefits, however with the well-thought out and crafted plan like HB55, there's a chance I can have something in it's place.

If we continue to maintain the status quo, we can conservatively assume an \$8-\$12 million cost per year just in recruitment and training costs alone.

HB55 is the solution that the public safety community needs. Recruitment and retention for public safety positions is at an all-time low. If we continue to maintain how things are, we can conservatively assume an \$8-\$12 million cost per year just in recruitment and training costs alone; I believe HB55 can reverse this trend.

Please consider what improvements House Bill No. 55 offers. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dustin Huf

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:24:55 PM

From: les gum13@mtaonline.net <les gum13@mtaonline.net>

Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 9:28 PM

To: Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>

Subject: Support for HB55

Greetings to you all,

My name is David Robertson and I am an Anchorage Fire Captain writing in support of HB55. I have called Alaska home for about thirty years and have been in the state retirement system for twenty-one years. I feel that passing this bill is critical for the future of Alaska and the safety of those who live here.

Communities across the state struggle to fill public safety positions, this is substantiated by testimony from chief officers of multiple different fire, police, and correctional agencies across the state. After five years on the job in Alaska, I considered moving my family to Washington. One of the primary reasons I stayed was the Tier 3 retirement system. I had received multiple certifications and experience though my agency here in Alaska, and was strongly considering taking it with me. I am glad I decided to stay and raise my family here. My oldest is now a junior at UAA.

The current retention issue is not just anecdotal. Chief officers have testified about the substantial increase in retention problems with Tier 4 employees, this is evidenced by not only testimony but also documents like the DPS Recruitment & Retention Plan Overview 2018-2023. I know of 5 Anchorage firefighters that have left the state, taking their experience and training with them, specifically due to the current state of the Tier 4 retirement system.

HB 55 is a reasonable solution. Costs in line with what the private sector and other states offer (and is actually less than other states in many cases).

When unfunded liability is paid off, this bill costs 10% less than current cost of Tier IV (12% vs. 22%).

I encourage you to support this bill and support the future of Alaskans; attracting quality employees to the state and providing a retirement for those who already call Alaska home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Robertson
An Alaskan serving other Alaskans

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:00 PM

From: Ashley Farrell <ashleydawnfarrell@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 9:29 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Ashley Farrell, I am a wife of an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because the current retirement plan (Tier 4) is set up for failure in retirement for safety employees and is also costing Alaska money and valuable experience.

Our 401(A) account is only matched by 5% which is less than a social security contribution in the private sector. Most of the public safety employees in Alaska don't receive social security or SBS as it is and according to 3 independent projections; it was shown that public safety employees are highly likely to run out of money into retirement.

Retention problems with tier 4 employees have increased through testimony and in documents like the DPS Recruitment & Retention Plan Over View 2018-2023. Recruiting public safety employees in Alaska is proving to no longer be competitive with the lower 48 which is a clear disadvantage.

HB 55 is a reasonable solution in that it is a well-thought out and crafted plan modeled after the most successful plans in the country. Costs are in line with what the private sector offer in which are reasonable and in many cases, less than what other states offer. And lastly, employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability.

Thank you for your time,

Ashley Farrell

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:04 PM

From: Trever Ferrin <treverferrin@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 9:34 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 55

My name is Trever Ferrin. I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because of the retention problem we are facing. Tier 4 members receive a 5 percent match in our 401a. This is a ridiculously low number. We aren't able to contribute to social security so that poses another problem. I have had coworkers and friends leave the anchorage fire department for a better retirement situation. This is one of the worst retirement programs in the country. It's frustrating that tier 4 is caught funding the unfunded liability of the previous tiers. HB 55 is a step in the right direction to do the right thing and "fix" the tier 4 program. Aside from doing "the right thing" it's cheaper to retain the personnel that the state pays training for. As previously stated, plenty of people are leaving this state for better retirement programs after being trained. HB 55 is a super reasonable solution. "Reasonable" being the key word. I feel like it's not asking too much. And in the end it's a cheaper option for the state. Please consider hb55, thanks for your time.

Trever Ferrin
Anchorage Fire

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Hb55 support
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:09 PM

From: Matt Fellman <matthew.fellman7@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 9:43 PM

To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>

Subject: Hb55 support

I'm writing to you today to provide a testimony for HB 55 and its importance. As someone who has worked as an Alaskan firefighter over the last several years, I have become very familiar and therefore concerned regarding my future. Alaska is where I was born, raised, and a place that I love to call home. However, even though Alaska is dear to my heart I would be lying if I said that I haven't actively been searching and putting applications into departments within the lower 48 to work for the extended future. The fact is that Alaska's public safety retirement in comparison to much of America's Northwest is essentially non-existent. Although I hate thinking about it, there will come a day that my body, mind, and ability to perform as a firefighter/paramedic will come to an end sooner than my ability to retire will. The statistics speak for themselves as public safety employees are abandoning Alaska's retirement to greener pastures and I have seen this firsthand during my career in Alaska. Unless something is changed in the near future, I will be forced to look out for my best interest and hop on that same wagon out of town. I hope that you will consider placing your support into the passing of HB55 and make an enormous step in giving back to the public safety employees of Alaska.

Thank you,

Matt Fellman- Anchorage Resident
(907) 953-4515

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:13 PM

From: Steven Butts <stevenmbutts47@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 10:29 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB 55

Hello,

My name is Steven Butts and I am an Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing you in support of HB 55. We are losing good and experienced people to out of state agencies due to the lack of certainty in retirement for Alaskan first responders. We are unable to compete with what other states are offering and until that is addressed, we will continue to bleed highly trained personnel to the lower 48. This costs us in the loss of experienced personnel and in the financial costs of replacing them.

HB 55 is a solution to that problem. It is more in line with what the private sector and lower 48 offer their employees. It is cheaper than the previous defined benefits program the state has used (tiers 1-3).

The current system used for tier 4 has employees putting in 8 percent and getting matched 5 percent. This is less than a social security contribution in most private sector settings. Pair that with the fact that our tier 4 employees are not considered eligible for social security even though they do not receive a pension and you can see why we are losing people left and right.

It is obvious that tier 4 is a bare bones plan. It was created to pay off the unfunded liability from previous tiers. Once the liability is paid off, the cost of HB 55 is 10% less than the current tier 4 (22% vs 12%).

HB 55 is also safe. The state's actuary and an independent actuary both show that it is safe. It would take a draconian situation for the plan to drop below 90% funding and trigger its safeguards.

It is for these reasons that I am writing you in support of HB 55.

Thank you for your time,

Steven Butts

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:18 PM

From: kyle fox <bbkyleceltics@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 10:46 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 55

To whom this may concern,

My name is Kyle Fox and I am a Firefighter with The Anchorage Fire Department. I am providing this written testimony in support of HB 55. This a very important bill for my future and the future of many first responders around the state. It is important to me because Tier IV has been proven time and time again to be an inadequate retirement system for public safety. We lose good people to out of state departments and it makes it a challenge to recruit quality candidates because they seek employment elsewhere with better retirement plans. The state and municipalities are losing money by training public safety employees and then seeing them leave the state. We again are no longer competitive in recruiting. I recognise that there will be a cost to this bill, but the cost of doing nothing will be much greater in the long run. Tier IV requires a solution for public safety employees and HB 55 is just that. HB55 is a plan built with reasonable costs and reasonable risks, that incorporates the best practices of the most successful pension plans in the country. HB 55 will make my retirement future more secure and I would be optimistic in retirement. After all the efforts first responders go to, to provide excellent and top-quality public service, please show us thanks in return by making this HB 55 a reality.

Sincerely,
Kyle Fox

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:25:24 PM

From: Andres, Ryan J. <ryan.andres@anchorageak.gov>
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 4:03 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

Good Morning,

My name is Ryan Andres, I work at the Anchorage Fire Department. I have been in the fire service for 6 years, and hope to have a long and impactful career with the Anchorage Fire Department.

I am writing in support of HB55. This Legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska. Our current retirement plan (Tier 4) sets employees up for failure. Most public Safety employees in the state do not receive social security, and we only receive a 5% match in a 401A account, which is actually less than social security. It should be clear that Tier 4 is a problem, when even Tier 3 employees who are not affected are trying to fight for a better future for us. I am extremely passionate about my job, I feel like I was born to do this and cant imagine working any other career. At some point in my life it just became a part of who I am, it is truly hard to explain and there is not anything I wouldn't sacrifice to continue to serve my community and make a positive impact during my time at the Anchorage Fire Department. We have lost numerous, incredible employees who have transferred to other departments that offer a defined retirement plan or pension for hopes of a brighter future. It is a shame that safety officers will continue to get valuable training and experience here, then move to another state offering better benefits. As a member of public safety we sacrifice a great deal for our community, sometimes even our lives. It is disheartening to be willing to sacrifice so much for a community and a state, that does not see the value in a fair defined retirement plan (HB55) for our future. Considering the cost of HB55 is only 12% of payroll and after unfunded liability is paid off, this bill costs 10% less than the current Tier IV this is a reasonable cost. There is a shared risk between employer, employees and retirees. HB53 is a well thought and crafted plan modeled after the most successful plans in the country, and is reasonable costs in line with what the private sector and other states offer.

As mentioned above, public safety members face risk in their jobs every day, they measure it and deal with it appropriately; I would like to ask you do the same. Thank you for taking the time to read my email, covering some of my concerns with the current retirement plan I appreciate the time you have taken.

Respectfully,

Ryan Andres

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:24:29 PM

From: Aaron Schrage <arschrage@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 6:25 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

Hello,

My name is Aaron Schrage, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because it will secure our retirement. Currently, we are given a 5% match into a 401(A) account. This is less than the social security contribution would be anywhere in the private sector.

While I love the work that I do and the state that I'm in, not knowing what my retirement is going to look like is very scary for me. With my current plan, I will have to work until I am 65 years old to retire with health insurance covered by medicare. Retiring before that time would be too great of a risk for how expensive medical bills can be. Especially since the job of a firefighter is very hard on the body and I don't know how well my health will be at the time. This is a double negative because this job will be very difficult at an old age. I have been in the fire service for 10 years, and I can only count the number of firefighters I have met over the age of 60 on one hand.

This is not something I feel that I should have to worry about. Firefighters in Alaska deserve better. Any other state in America provides better retirement than what we currently have. I would like to ask that you please consider passing this bill to support all firefighters in Alaska.

Thank you,

Aaron Schrage

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:24:23 PM

From: Adam Farrell <adamdfarrell88@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 6:12 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Adam Farrell, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because HB55 is a reasonable solution to keep Alaska competitive and retain our workforce. Chief officers have testified about the substantial increase in retention problems with Tier 4 employees, this is evidenced by not only testimony but also documents like the DPS Recruitment & Retention Plan Overview 2018-2023. The risk is shared between the employees, the state, and retirees and no one group is left holding the liability. Not only will this help retain the current workforce but it will make Alaska competitive again instead of just the training ground.

Thank you,

Adam Farrell
Local 1264

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:23:03 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Arianne Wadson <ariannewadson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 55

Hello,

My name is Arianne and I live in Fairbanks. I wanted to take the time to let you know how important HB 55 is to our community/state, and I hope that you are all in support of passing this bill. First responders are a necessary resource and we should be giving them the benefits they deserve. Also, the firefighters that are hired and trained right here in my community quickly move on to other out-of-state opportunities once they have the skill set because the benefits far exceed what they can receive here. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,
Arianne Bean
907-388-6258

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:21:46 PM

From: Jerrett Kindred <Jerrett.Kindred@matsugov.us>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:31 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; senator.natasha.vonlmhof@akleg.gov; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 55

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my opinion on HB 55. This bill is very important to myself and many other people in my life. I am a firefighter currently with Central Mat-Su Fire Department. I have also worked at University Fire Department. Throughout my two year career in emergency services, I personally have seen over ten of my coworkers leave Alaska to take firefighter positions in other states. The retirement program was a major choice considered when these people left Alaska.

Alaska is my home as I was born and raised here. I do not want to leave the state but if a change in the retirement system does not happen, I may have to consider what is best for my own future. If leaving Alaska is the best option I will have to do that, just as many of my coworkers have.

Help us to keep Alaska's first responders in Alaska. Not train them and send them to another state.

Thank you for your time.

Jerrett Kindred

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:21:05 PM

From: Eli Lamb <elias.lamb@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 2:35 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB 55

Hello,

My name is Elias Lamb, I am a Firefighter paramedic for Fairbanks Fire Department. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is very important to me for a number of reasons. I am from Alaska and want to remain here, but lack of any sort of defined benefit retirement is making prospects elsewhere more attractive. I do not want to leave the state with such grim retirement prospects I am currently applying to other jobs. Please pass this bill out of Senate Finance Committee for a vote on the Senate floor and allow people from Alaska to remain here.

Thank you,

Elias Lamb

Nick Clark
PO Box 80151
Fairbanks, AK 99708
aknickclark@gmail.com
907-750-1053

Members of Senate Finance,

I am writing today in support of HB 55, Peace Officer/Firefighter Retire Benefits and am urging you to pass this out of Senate Finance and to the Senate floor for a vote.

I am a 9-year Firefighter/Paramedic with the City of Fairbanks Fire Department. I have now wrote a letter(s) for each year of my service in Alaska requesting we move forward with a new system. I have seen first hand the struggles that tier 4 has caused to public servants. FFD has turned into a short-term training department for good people to work their resumes and move on. We hire some amazing people that would spend their career at FFD if we had a retirement system that provided some dignity when it came time to retire. The DC Tier 4 system is not going to meet the satisfactory mark for our members.

FFD is currently short 8 employees and we can't find or hire anyone willing to come here. I have been forced at work and away from my family for 96 hours in the last week alone. I had a stretch of 6 -24 hour days where I could not leave work. In the first quarter of this year, I have had to work an extra 363 hours. This is 45 normal working days for most people. I can't be away from home and my family this much anymore.

Last I checked, on average, our members have a 27% chance of meeting the bar for income in retirement with DC system. I am afraid the FFD members are going to be well below this mark. There is not a better time to act than now as we come out of some of the hardest times our members have seen.

HB 55 is a proven plan that will get us closer to the dignity deserved in retirement. Though I am not pleased it leaves out important aspects such as healthcare, I understand this is the sacrifice we must make so this plan will survive generations to come. I support HB 55 and I urge the legislature to move this bill out of Senate Finance and to the floor for passage by the end of this session.

With respect,

Nick Clark
Fairbanks Firefighter

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:59 PM

From: Dean Pacheco <deanpacheco18@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 3:46 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Dean Pacheco. I am a firefighter at the University Fire Department. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because it will attract more people. One of the problems in the FNSB is that people do not want to come to Fairbank for their career as a firefighter because the current retirement system is unappealing. If HB55 is passed, it will attract more people to come to Fairbanks for their public safety careers, and there will be no more shortages of firefighters. I myself would want to stay in Fairbanks if this retirement system, HB55, is passed.

Please pass this bill out of the Senate Finance committee for a vote on the Senate floor.

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:54 PM

From: Christine Woll <christine.l.woll@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 2:14 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

Senate Finance committee:

My name is Christine Woll and I am writing in support of HB55. I am personally invested in this issue as a spouse of a professional first responder and as a municipal leader in Juneau. Recruiting and retaining our first responders in Alaska and certainly in Juneau is a challenge, and we need to do everything we can to keep ourselves competitive. Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 on this front, and it is heartbreaking to see colleagues of my husbands at the fire department and others I know in the police department leave because it is no longer worth it for them to invest in Juneau. Our first responders are one of the most important assets to having healthy and vibrant communities, and I hope you will do what you can to support them.

Thank you,
Christine Woll

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:50 PM

From: Russ Dennis <russ.e.dennis@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 2:09 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support HB55

Senator,

My name is Russ Dennis, Alaskan Firefighter/Paramedic. I am writing to you and the Finance Committee to urge your support for HB55. Alaska's Fire and Police Departments are struggling to attract recruits and retain employees. Tier 4 retirement does not compete with the lower 48, so we bleed experience and work overtime to fill the gaps. After building experience in the state, young firefighters and police are upgrading their resume and moving to greener pastures south at an unsustainable rate. Those left are faced with a slim chance of having enough money to retire. With this bill we are willing to sacrifice benefits, share risk, and compromise on cost to gain staying-power for future first responders.

I clocked out at 8:00am this morning, 312 hours after I clocked in. The City paid me for 13 days solid because there are not enough firefighters going on shift for me (and sometimes up to 5 other firefighters) to go home. Our ambulances are empirically overutilized, our department perpetually understaffed, and our run numbers steadily increasing. Simultaneously, our responders are getting tired and sloppy from overwork. Training is reduced, sleep is rarer, and the quality of the critical services we provide is foundering. The effects on our spouses, our children, and our lives outside of work are becoming increasingly obvious.

Please pass HB55 out of the Senate Finance Committee and on to the Senate Floor to rebuild public safety for Alaskans.

Russ Dennis
907-987-4660

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB55 Support
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:47 PM

From: Angela Johnstone <adjohnstone9@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB55 Support

Good Afternoon,

My name is Angela Johnstone, and I am the spouse of an Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55 because of the huge impact it would have for my family, and my community.

My husband and I are both born and raised in Anchorage, and despite leaving for college came back to work, live, and grow our family here. The current retirement system for Alaska Public Safety Employees is making that dream less and less sustainable. The Anchorage Fire Department is getting younger because they cannot retain employees as soon as the reality of planning for retirement becomes apparent.

This leaves AFD with the expensive task of hiring young, green firefighters and pouring resources into making them assets for their department and their community - just to watch them leave for departments in the lower 48 with decent retirement plans. This revolving door is estimated to cost us between \$8-12 million dollars, aside from the dollar amount, I worry what that inexperience might one day cost my family.

Our public safety employees are asked to put so much on the line everyday, most of these jobs are hard on their bodies, and harder on their minds. The current retirement system creates hardship while they're on the job, and can't provide a dignified life when we've tossed them aside. While discussing this bill at family dinner we learned that my sister in law has a better retirement through the brewery she serves at then my husband does at Anchorage Fire Department, it was only funny for a second.

The Tier 4 program was set up to pay the unfunded liability of earlier tiers and treated employees as an afterthought. I do not expect it will be easy to keep a fully staffed, skilled workforce of afterthoughts. Every time this bill has been delayed AFD employees have chosen to test for other departments, if its delayed further we will lose more valuable knowledge, experience, and lifelong Alaskans who would have chosen to stay.

Please cast your support for HB55, for families like mine, and for communities that deserve a dedicated public safety workforce.

If you have any questions I can answer, or if I can point you towards firefighters to speak with please let me know.

Angela Johnstone
907-350-7664

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Please Support HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:42 PM

From: Kris & Alan <ashpic907@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 10:46 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please Support HB55

Dear Senators,

I'm writing to urge you to support the passage of House Bill 55.

Public safety officers (and all state employees, really) should have a true pension plan. This would encourage employees to remain in the state for their entire careers, rather than receiving very costly training at Alaska's expense and then taking their expertise to other states. The current Tier 4 system is a double whammy, as employees don't receive a pension, but also don't participate in Social Security. Once the employee is vested in tier 4 after five years, they would be short-sighted to continue to work under the Tier 4 retirement system.

The plan proposed in HB55 would be in line with what the private sector and other states offer, and would be at a reasonable cost to the state. Employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability. In fact, once the, this bill costs less than current cost of Tier IV (12% of payroll vs. 22%.)

Sincerely,

Kristine Ashley
22113 Anthem Pl
Chugiak, AK 99567

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Commlltee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:39 PM

From: Evan Olson <evanolson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

Greetings,

My name is Evan Olson and I am a firefighter with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing to you today to express my support for HB55. As I'm sure you will be receiving many emails on this subject and you are already well versed in many of the details of this bill and the discussion surrounding it, I'd like to get straight to the point. The retirement currently offered by AFD and through the State of Alaska lags significantly behind the industry standard. As a result many talented folks continue to receive valuable training through our organization and then leave for other agencies with better retirement benefits. This is incredibly costly to our organization and the state. HB55 is a solid solution to help combat this problem. I hope that you can support this bill to create a pathway to a meaningful retirement for firefighters and other public safety officers in Alaska.

Respectfully,
Evan Olson

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:29 PM

From: Melissa Glorioso <melissam@gci.net>

Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:46 PM

To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>

Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Melissa Glorioso and I am an Anchorage resident. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because of the following reasons.

Alaska is losing money and valuable experience with our current retirement system

- AK can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage
- You cannot find a public safety retirement plan like Tier 4 anywhere else in the country
- Communities across the state struggle to fill public safety positions, this is substantiated by testimony from chief officers of multiple different fire, police, and correctional agencies across the state
- Chief officers have testified about the substantial increase in retention problems with Tier 4 employees, this is evidenced by not only testimony but also documents like the DPS Recruitment & Retention Plan Overview 2018-2023
- We should expect to see additional costs to the state such as increased worker's compensation costs as our departments become staffed with an older workforce that lacks the financial security to retire

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Thank you,
Melissa Glorioso

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From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55 - Please help Alaska's first responders
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:25 PM

From: Eric Tuott <rec.iaff1264@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:59 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 55 - Please help Alaska's first responders

Honorable members of the Senate Finance Committee

My name is Eric Tuott and I am a 20 year member of the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing to you to urge you to pass House Bill 55 as it appears before you today.

With 20 years on the job, I feel fortunate and grateful that I am a member of PERS Tier 3. At 46 years old, my body is feeling the effects of responding to nearly 15,000 incidents to help Anchorage residents. I am hoping to work for another 5-8 years before my body cannot handle the rigors of the job and I walk away from the career that I love.

Every day when I come to work I see the firefighters under my supervision staff Anchorage's busiest fire engines and ambulances. 75% of them are Tier IV members, and do not have a Defined Benefit pension like I do. This affects them in two ways: first, they are not tied to Anchorage or Alaska like I am. If they find another job somewhere else (and they are actively looking) there is nothing financially holding them back. All of the investments in training, culture, and experience we have given them they will take to another Department outside Alaska, or maybe even use the lessons they have learned on the Fire Department in another profession. Second, because their post-employment plans are tied directly to the performance of the financial markets, they may have to work much longer in their lifetimes to earn enough to keep them financially secure. Because their financial security is at the whim of the market, they may find themselves working a highly physically demanding job well into their late 50's, which isn't ideal for anyone.

In his state of the State speech, Governor Dunleavy stated that the funding gap in the Alaska PERS system is virtually closed. This is the perfect time to move Alaska's first responders back into a Defined Benefit system and take a good first step in retaining our current workers and providing an incentive for more applicants to come to Alaska to serve, as opposed to going to the Lower 48 after Alaskans have invested in their

initial training.

Please pass HB 55.

Thank you for your service

--

Eric Tuott

907-250-2311

rec.iaff1264@gmail.com