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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:32 PM

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**From:** Anthony Reishus <Tony\_Reishus@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:10 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>; Anthony Reishus <tony\_reishus@hotmail.com>; 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>; Anthony Reishus <tony\_reishus@hotmail.com>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** HB55

Dear Senators,

I know that by this point, you have received many similar emails to this one that I am now sending. I am sure that all the letters share a similar format and message, and unfortunately I can't guarantee that mine is in any way unique. After saying that, if you have read up to this point I would like to say "Thank You" and would encourage you to continue and I will do my best to keep it short.

I am writing this letter because I am new member of the Anchorage Fire Department. Although I am very blessed to be apart of an amazing organization and I feel that the compensation is fair; I still can't help but feel uneasy about my outlook for retirement. House HB55 would erase my concerns as well as be an answer to many obstacles that our current state retirement system faces under Tier IV. The state and municipal governments have been bleeding money over the past 15 years under the Tier IV system. Countless dollars are spent and then lost when Alaska trained employees leave for "greener pastures" within other states that have more competitive retirement systems. The waste is not only seen in the cost of training their replacement, but there is the unmeasurable hit to the state, not only do they lose that one employee, but in most cases, an entire productive family leaves with them, which delivers a devastating blow to the economic health and future of the community in which they reside. There are many additional benefits to HB55, but in an effort to live up to my previous promise to keep it short, I will stop here and leave you with this one last reminder. HB55 will save the state and local governments MONEY in the long run. Tier IV requires a solution and that solution is HB55. I urge you to take action on this bill and that you would continue to move it through the legislative process. Lastly, I want to thank you for your service to Alaska's government and I appreciate that you took the time to read my letter.

Regards,

Tony Reishus

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:25 PM

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**From:** Ryan Staten <faultlessreligion@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:08 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 Sarah Staten, I am a spouse to an Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because I believe it to be a sustainable and viable option for our public safety employees. Alaska is constantly losing valuable employees with tremendous experience as they are actively recruited by the lower 48th. This is negative in the short term and long term as the employees that choose to stay will have to work longer and be a larger liability in increased workers comp claims. HB 55 is a reasonable solution. HB 55 has reasonable costs in line with what the private sector and other states offer (less than other states in many cases). Very promising funded status projections from not only an independent actuary, but the State's actuary who testified that in order to model the plan funded status dropping below 90% to trigger the safeguard mechanisms, they had to create "a rather draconian scenario and it's probably not very likely to materialize but we have to create a very poor asset return scenario .... so we chose a 0% return for 5 years, then a 2% return for the next 5 years..." (average 1% return over 10 years). Shared Risk - employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability. Please consider this viable option and lets keep Alaska's public safety workers in our State. Thank you for you time.

Respectfully,

Sarah Staten  
907-223-6855

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:21 PM

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**From:** Ryan Staten <[ryanstaten@msn.com](mailto:ryanstaten@msn.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:06 PM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop <[Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Bert Stedman <[Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <[Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <[Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov)>; Sen. David Wilson <[Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Donny Olson <[Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <[Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support for HB55

My name is Ryan Staten, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because I believe it to be a sustainable and viable option for our public safety employees. Alaska is constantly losing valuable employees with tremendous experience as they are actively recruited by the lower 48th. This is negative in the short term and long term as the employees that choose to stay will have to work longer and be a larger liability in increased workers comp claims. HB 55 is a reasonable solution. HB 55 has reasonable costs in line with what the private sector and other states offer (less than other states in many cases). Very promising funded status projections from not only an independent actuary, but the State's actuary who testified that in order to model the plan funded status dropping below 90% to trigger the safeguard mechanisms, they had to create "a rather draconian scenario and it's probably not very likely to materialize but we have to create a very poor asset return scenario .... so we chose a 0% return for 5 years, then a 2% return for the next 5 years..." (average 1% return over 10 years). Shared Risk - employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability. Please consider this viable option and lets keep Alaska's public safety workers in our State. Thank you for you time.

Respectfully,

Ryan Staten  
907-240-7665

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:18 PM

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

From: Murphy <merfe@gci.net>  
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:49 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

Senators,

I'm writing this letter in support of HB55. As long time Anchorage firefighter, I saw first-hand the devastating effects that Tier 4 had on the retention of fire fighters. By the time a fire fighter has 5 years on the job, they are well trained and experienced and add immense value to the mission of protecting the lives and property of the public that they serve. Unfortunately, 5 years is also the time at which they can leave while maximizing the benefits they can receive from Tier 4. Out of true concern for their financial well-being when they're older, many of them leave Alaska for other employers where they'll be able to earn a pension that will help to provide financial some security for them.

I feel strongly about this issue and urge you to pass HB55. I believe it's passage would strongly bolster the retention rates of public safety employees in Alaska. The revolving door of training employees who then leave 5 years after being hired is a very expensive issue and it's a dis-service to our communities to lose these highly trained and experienced personnel.

Thank you,

Mike Murphy

Eagle River, AK

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:14 PM

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**From:** Tyler Greensfelder <tyler.greensfelder@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:41 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

Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Tyler Greensfelder, and I am a lifelong resident of Alaska, a Tier 4 member, and a Captain with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing you today to ask for your support of House Bill 55. I was hired in 2013 with the Anchorage Fire Department and have seen firsthand the effect this lack of defined benefit retirement system is having on retention. We are losing exemplary firefighters, primarily to Washington, every year due to their defined benefit package and in fact just lost an academy-mate just last month to Bellingham Fire Department. These are firefighters that our department and state has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars training just to see them leave due to the uncertainty of Alaska's retirement. Three independent projections have shown that public safety employees are highly likely to run out of money during retirement. We literally can't afford to not act; we are bleeding out money to other states who are offering accelerated academies and pay grades for already trained firefighters.

This bill just makes sense. It is modeled off Washington State's system, (which is overfunded), and one of the best in the country. There are multiple safeguard mechanisms in place to prevent unfunded liability by sharing the risk with the employees and the state so that no one group is left holding the liability, and the benefits have been drastically reduced from previous defined benefit tiers.

Time is of the essence. Many workers who have a 401k have the physical ability to keep working if the market crashes unexpectedly as they approach retirement. After 25 long years of lifting people off the ground, fighting fires, and getting in and out of the trucks most bodies are physically unable to continue. Tier 4 is creating an environment for substantial workers compensation claims to grow as the average firefighter is forced to work longer and longer due to the lack of financial stability. If your house is on fire, do you want a 65 year

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old firefighter to be coming?

During the last session I testified in the House that I myself, a lifelong Alaskan, and product of the Alaska university system was looking to uproot my family from here to go work for the Everett Fire Department in Washington. I had one lawmaker ask me to just "hold on" and told me he believed in this bill and our sponsor, which was Rep. Kopp at the time. While ultimately, I did receive an offer of employment, I did turn down the job. I am still here holding on, waiting for the state to do the right thing and support public safety. Public safety members face risk in their jobs every day, we measure it and deal with it appropriately, and we are asking the legislator to do the same.

Thank you for your time and please pass HB55 out of the committee today.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Greensfelder

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:14 PM

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**From:** Tyler Greensfelder <tyler.greensfelder@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:41 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

Senate Finance Committee,

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Thank you for your time and please pass HB55 out of the committee today.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Greensfelder



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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:11 PM

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**From:** Margaret Keene <margaretkeene84@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:25 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

My name is Margaret Keene, I am the wife of a retired Anchorage Firefighter and the mother of a current Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because the Alaska is losing valuable employees and money.

The tier 4 retirement does not set up the set our employees up for success. My husband was able to work a full career knowing that the state had his best interest in mind. Now my son does not have that same stability. In this current system many studies show that he will run out of money at some point in retirement. Without a pension and that safety knowing him and his family can live happily after serving for many years they have considered to look at employment outside of the state.

I would like to thank you all for your commitment to serve our great state and I hope that you too will support HB55.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Keene

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**From:** Sen. Click Bishop  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB 55 Support  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:08 PM

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**From:** Tompkins, Katherine A. <tompkins.60@buckeyemail.osu.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:22 PM  
**To:** Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@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:** HB 55 Support

Good evening,

My name is Katherine McDonald. I am a financial auditor for the State of Alaska, but am writing on my own behalf as a sister-in-law to an Anchorage based paramedic. I would like to express my support for the public safety retirement bill, HB55, and implore you to review the bill, make any adjustments deemed necessary and to move the bill to a vote of the floor.

I know on a personal level, my brother-in-law, whose family completely fund their defined contribution plan to the maximum allowed per IRS guidance each year, are concerned about the Alaska retirement system for public safety officers, and has expressed he has a short window of time to decide to stay in the state he loves and grew up in.

Alaska is struggling to not only recruit public safety servants, but to retain those that we have invested resources in training. Investing in heavy upfront training costs for public safety personnel, only to lose them to the other states that offer better retirement security is a waste of Alaska's fiscal resources to the benefit of other states. Public safety officers perform physical strenuous work that makes a 35-45+ year career that individuals like myself with a desk job can sustain, difficult to maintain. This puts their ability to accrue retirement earnings under a 401(k), 403(b), or 457(b) at a disadvantage. This, coupled with the fact that they have no guaranteed retirement income since they do not pay into social security, makes staying in Alaska to serve the public a risky financial choice. Additionally, their work comes with inherent risk to their health and safety, and I think that risk should be honored with retirement security.

Alaska has lost lifelong Alaskans public safety officers in the 25-35 year age range to other states, which results in a cohort deficit of mid level public safety workers. These mid-level public safety workers are the leaders in a decades time - if they decide to stay. In the short to medium term, the fiscal impact of this bill will reduce expenditures considering the continual recruiting and training costs incurred by the state and municipalities to hire and train personnel that leave after the five years being vested in the defined contribution plan, as has occurred with many of my brother in laws' friends. Secondly, in the longer term, as the appropriating body I know that you continue to see the fiscal impact of previous defined benefit retirement tiers on the state budget. Therefore, consideration has to be made for thoughtful long-term planning. I believe those considerations were included in HB55 and trust your judgement to make any revisions necessary to ensure viability.

The move of using the high 3 to the high 5 years is a great addition to help address some of the issues that resulted in the state moving away from Tier 3 for all public employees.

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Additionally, including the lever for increased employee contribution rates if the plan is underfunded helps spread some of the risk away from the state and shares it with the employees. I strongly request that the committee swiftly schedules HB55 to be heard in front of the committee. This issue has continued to plague public safety recruitment and retention and must be addressed promptly.

Thank you,

Katherine McDonald

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:04 PM

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**From:** brett keene <brettkeene@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 10:12 PM  
**To:** Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for HB55

To whom it may concern,

My name is Brett Keene and I am with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am a third generation Anchorage Firefighter and I am very proud of that. It has been an honor for myself and my family to serve the people of Anchorage for so many years and I hope to continue to do that for as long as I can. The retirement plans that both my father and grandfather had gave them security to stay in a career that is so demanding because they knew they would be able to live happily after. As I look to carry on this tradition that my family has started it is hard not to consider looking to work elsewhere. I have tested with multiple departments outside of Alaska and have turned down interviews and other job opportunities because of the great career and people I have here at the Anchorage Fire Department.

However, in the tier 4 system it makes leaving a much more financially safe bet for me and my family. Multiple studies show that tier 4 members are highly likely to run out of money in retirement. That paired with no social security and a small match to a 401(A) does not give me the piece of mind that the state is investing as much into public safety as the public servants are giving back to the state. I have again begun to look at employment outside of Alaska if this bill is not to pass.

Lastly, I would just like to conclude this by saying thank you all for the time and effort that you put in year in and year out for our state and the people who live here. I hope to stay in Alaska serving alongside all of you for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Brett Keene  
Anchorage Fire Department.

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support HB 55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:00 PM

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**From:** Thomas Wescott <tomwescott@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 9:46 PM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@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>  
**Subject:** Support HB 55

Chairman Stedman, Chairman Bishop, and Committee members

I am writing today to encourage you to hear and support HB 55. We desperately need a fix to the current system and HB 55 strikes the correct balance. HB55 looks to provide improved benefits and at the same reduce the risk of the plan. It does this by drastically reducing the benefits compared to the old defined benefit tiers, only provides benefits to the small number of employees who work in public safety career fields, and unlike the old tiers, has mechanisms to share risk in the face of adverse market experience.

HB 55 is a reasonable plan created with the conservative palate in mind. It adopts many of the best practices used by the top plans in the country. Again, I encourage you to take the time to hear this bill and I hope that the merits will allow you to support and move this on for a floor vote.

Tom Wescott

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Thomas A. Wescott

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:29:56 PM

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**From:** Gehrig Butler <gehrigbutler@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 9:41 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>; Senator.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 Gehrig Butler, I am an Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. I am a somewhat new firefighter however I was raised my whole life in Anchorage Alaska. I have grown up with this community and my friends and my family. Learning about my retirement system as an Anchorage Firefighter has been somewhat startling. When I compare our Tier 4 system with my friends and family that I am close with, it is uncomfortable to find that I will likely not be able to retire comfortably from my career with AFD. It is uncomfortable to know that I receive 5% of my salary which is the lowest and worst retirement plan amongst my professional peers and family. It is uncomfortable to know that after 20+ years of this type of work and commitment that I will likely have to start a new career at age 50 to survive. I know that my brothers and sisters and our representatives have put years of hard work into what is now proposed as HB55 simply to help families like mine. I also know that you will receive hundreds of emails like this one. I am simply asking for your help and for your support, so that I, as an Anchorage citizen and firefighter may continue to stay with the career I love and my community while still being able to provide for my family and future children.

Thank you,  
Gehrig Butler  
Firefighter EMT @ Fire Station 4

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:29:54 PM

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**From:** John Wolcott <[john.a.wolcott@gmail.com](mailto:john.a.wolcott@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 9:14 PM  
**To:** Sen. Bert Stedman <[Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <[Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Click Bishop <[Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov)>; Sen. David Wilson <[Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Donny Olson <[Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <[Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <[Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support for HB55

Hello,

My name is John Wolcott and I'm writing to you in support of House Bill 55. I'm a firefighter with the Anchorage Fire Department and also the 176th Civil Engineering Squadron out of JBER. This bill is extremely important to me because it would help vastly in improving and maintaining our states public safety workforce.

Public safety is not an issue that should be taken lightly, and I think it is more than reasonable to take on a shared risk in order to make sure we keep the best firefighters, police officers, and other public safety workers from leaving our state to places with better systems.

Because I do not currently have access to social security OR a defined benefit retirement, I know I personally am considering moving laterally to another fire department in the lower 48 and taking my training and certifications I received here with me.

Please consider supporting this bill. Thank you for everything you do for our state.

John Wolcott

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB 55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:29:51 PM

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**From:** Mark Bundy <m11ark.mb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 9:07 PM  
**To:** 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. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** HB 55

My name is Mark Bundy and I am an Anchorage Firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55 because it is critical for public safety in Anchorage. I was hired in 2005 and have seen our recruitment numbers drop and our quality members leave for departments in other states after only a couple years due to the current retirement system. There is no other retirement system like tier 4 in the nation and it is costing AK because of it.

Please support HB55 to keep quality public safety members in AK.

Thank you,  
Mark Bundy



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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:34:06 PM

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**From:** Derrera, Aidan <Aidan.Derrera@memphistn.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 6, 2022 12:56 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 Aidan Derrera, a third generation Alaskan, born and raised in Anchorage. I am writing this email in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska to keep and hold employees in the fire department and police department. Fire and police mentally and physically, and without a defined benefit retirement, it is obvious why Alaskan Firefighters and police are leaving to other areas of the country that offer defined benefits, me included. I have applied for the Anchorage Fire Department to serve my hometown, but was unsuccessful in my efforts. After seeing that other cities in the country still offer defined benefits, I decided to leave my home state of Alaska. I am currently a firefighter/paramedic in Memphis, Tennessee, and will stay here unless HB55 is put into effect.

Thank you

Aidan Derrera

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Letter of Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:34:03 PM

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**From:** Lynn Gallagher <gallagher.lynn4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 5, 2022 2:47 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:** Letter of Support for HB55

Greetings,

My name is Lynn Gallagher, the wife of Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Gallagher. Eric has served over 10 years with the Anchorage Fire Department and continues to keep Public Safety in Alaska one of his top priorities. In return, you would expect as a dedicated state employee, for Alaska to have a top priority of employee satisfaction, as this leads to organizational success through higher productivity, more creativity and collaboration in working towards common goals, and lower turnover rates. Unfortunately, I am writing regarding employee dissatisfaction in current benefits for peace officers and firefighters that Alaska offers to our hard workers of the community. I am particularly writing in support of HB55.

As HB55 makes itself known to the public, it is clear this legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because as the Public Employees' Retirement System of Alaska stands now, it's failing our peace officers and firefighters leading to non-competitive benefits packages, vacancies within positions, higher turnover rates, and failure to provide a stable retirement plan for current employees.

With vacancies on the rise and the current challenges of finding personnel to staff such vacancies, it is safe to assume \$8-\$12 million annually is spent on recruiting and training alone. It is also safe to assume that new talent hired will train here and leave for other jurisdictions offering better benefit packages. Alaska is losing money and valuable experience with our current retirement system by limiting the abilities

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to retain current employees, attract and retain new talent, mitigate taxes, and increase morale. By passing HB55, peace officers and firefighters will have the stability in knowing they are taken care of at retirement, which will increase safety to our community by means of less department closures due to vacancies and faster response times due to fully staffed departments. This is one of numerous reasons why HB55 would positively impact our employees' lives and the lives of our community members.

Peace officers and firefighters risk their lives every day, for you and your family. Pass HB55 to ensure the safety and future of them and theirs.

Best Regards,

Lynn Gallagher

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:55 PM

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**From:** Owen Wilson <owen.p.wilson01@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:28 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 Senators,

My name is Owen Wilson, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage.

Thank you,

Owen Wilson

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB 55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:51 PM

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**From:** Patrick Coughlin <coughpj1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 2:43 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

My name is Patrick Coughlin. I am writing in support of HB55. Although the Alaska current retirement system is poor overall for public employees, this legislation is critical for Alaska public safety in Alaska for several reasons.

First, under the current retirement system, Alaska can't compete with compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees. This loses money and valuable experience for Alaska. Alaska cannot compete because no other retirement system in the US as abysmal Alaska's public safety Tier 4 retirement plan. We are struggling to fill these positions. Even when Alaska fills a position, my son-in-law, who is a fire fighter, tells me that, in several recent recruiting classes, young firefighters get trained and 1-2 years of experience and then leave for jobs in the lower 48. This leads to increased training costs, lack of experience, and increased worker's compensation for an older workforce.

Second, the Tier 4 sets our public safety employees up for failure in retirement. They have little retirement benefits and no social security. This shows the legislature doesn't value these employees.

Third, HB 55 is a reasonable solution. It is not like the previous Alaska retirement systems that cost so much to maintain. The employees and the state both share in the risk. And the independent and the state projections show that the plan can be funded without harming the state's fiscal picture.

I ask that you vote in favor of HB 55.

Sincerely,  
Patrick Coughlin



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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:48 PM

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**From:** Matt Lopes <mlopes2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 12:25 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>; Senator.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

Hi Alaska Senators,

My name is Matt Lopes, I am a Probationary Firefighter with the University Fire Department in Fairbanks. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because our current retirement plan (Tier 4) sets our public safety employees up for failure in retirement.

- There are 3 independent projections (from the DOA, the State CIO Bob Mitchell, and independent actuary) that have shown that public safety employees are highly likely to run out of money in retirement.
- Most public safety employees in AK do not receive social security benefits or SBS.
- They only receive a 5% match in a 401(A) account; which is less than a social security contribution would be anywhere in the private sector.
- This is the value that the state has placed on our first responders.

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

Thank you for your time and consideration on this bill,

Matt Lopes  
Probationary Firefighter/EMT

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:44 PM

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**From:** William Wood <gunu45@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 12:12 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

Dear Senators,

My name is William Wood, I am a Firefighter with the University Fire Department in Fairbanks. As a born and raised Alaskan, I hope to have a career at the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage. Alaskan firefighters have moved out of state for a better retirement system to support their families. I hope this bill is passed so future and current Alaskan firefighters like me will be financially stable during retirement.

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

Thank you,  
William Wood



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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Pass HB-55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:39 PM

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**From:** Ben Woods <bjwoods2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:22 AM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Senator.Natasha.vonImhof@akleg.gov; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Senator.Donald.Olsen@akleg.gov; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Pass HB-55

Hi there my name is Ben Woods, I am from Anchorage and am currently working in Fairbanks as a Firefighter. I would like to stay in Alaska but the subpar retirement is preventing me from staying in this beautiful state. Please support HB-55!

Respectfully,  
-Ben Woods

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:35 PM

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**From:** Reece Kohrmann <rakohrmann@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:51 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:** HB55

My name is Reece Kohrmann, I am a Firefighter in Fairbanks Alaska. 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.

- 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 fires, 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

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

Thank you for your support,  
Reece Kohrmann

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:29 PM

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**From:** Josh Henson <jxhenson91@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 9:57 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 Josh Henson, I am a Central Mat-Su firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because **Our current retirement plan (Tier 4) sets our public safety employees up for failure in retirement.**

- • 3 independent projections (from the DOA, the State CIO Bob Mitchell, and independent actuary) have shown that public safety employees are highly likely to run out of money in retirement
- • Most public safety employees in AK do not receive social security or SBS
- • They only receive a 5% match in a 401(A) account; which is less than a social security contribution would be anywhere in the private sector
- • This is the value that the state has placed on our first responders

**HB 55 is a reasonable solution**

- • Reasonable costs in line with what the private sector and other states offer (less than other states in many cases)
- • Benefits drastically reduced from previous defined benefit tiers
- • Well-thought out and crafted plan modeled after the most successful plans in the country
- • Safeguard mechanisms in place to prevent unfunded liability from occurring
- • Very promising funded status projections from not only an independent actuary, but the State’s actuary who testified that in order to model the plan funded status dropping below 90% to trigger the safeguard mechanisms, they had to create “a rather draconian scenario and it’s probably not very likely to materialize but we have to create a very poor asset return scenario .... so we chose a 0% return for 5 years, then a 2% return for the next 5 years...” (average 1% return over 10 years)
- • Shared Risk - employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability
- • Hybrid Plan - defined benefit with a defined contribution medical component (exact same as current Tier 4 - 3% of average PERS salary into an HRA account, NO pre-medicare healthcare plan coverage)

Thank you for your support on this important matter.

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please Support HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:26 PM

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**From:** james johnstone <jamesrjohnstone@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:34 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:** Please Support HB55

Dear Senate Finance committee,

My name is James Johnstone and I am writing to you today to urge you to support HB55. I am a Firefighter with the ANchorage Fire Department and a current tier 4 participant, and I can tell you first hand how badly this bill is needed for my family. With the current system only matching 5% my retirement is simply not enough to live on. This fact has driven many of my former colleagues to find employment elsewhere. leaving AFD to have to find, hire, and train new employees to fill their spots after we just spent all the time and money to train them in the first place. It is estimated to cost Alaska 8-12 million dollars a year in recruitment and training costs because our retention is so poor.

Please be diligent in your research because you will find there is a need, and this is the solution.

Please support HB 55 and my family.  
Firefighter Johnstone

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:20 PM

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**From:** Kelley Russell <fortisprobus@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:28 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 Dr. Kelley Russell and I am writing to you in ardent support of House Bill 55, which is focused on addressing the public safety retirement crisis we have in Alaska. I am a graduate of the University of Alaska Anchorage's Doctoral Program in Clinical-Community Psychology and am employed as a clinical psychologist, serving the mental and behavioral health needs of Alaskan Veterans. I am also married to Jayson Russell, who is a firefighter/paramedic in the Anchorage Fire Department and is very involved in several aspects of the organization, including serving on the Fallen Firefighters Committee, and being one of the mentors on the local Fire Explorers Post for youth interested in the Fire Service.

I urge you to support HB 55. I have seen so many fire service professionals leave the state, especially in the past few years, discussing how although they love Alaska, it is impossible for them to stay because almost every other state has a better retirement/benefits system for public safety professionals than Alaska. Many of the folks I have seen leave are paramedics, which are the top tier of qualifications in emergency medicine in the state, which is already a hugely understaffed position in the Anchorage Fire Department. My own husband, who has dreamed of being an Anchorage Firefighter since he was 6 years old, has had discussions with me about how we might need to consider moving within the near future if the state does not change to offer the same support that is offered to his fellow firefighters in other states.

I throw my support behind this bill for several reasons. First, as a community member, I believe the service and sacrifice of our emergency medical professionals deserves to be honored. We need to take care of the people who take care of us. Also as a community member, I am concerned about having an adequate workforce to provide care in an emergency. In a geographically isolated place that has some of the highest rates of traumatic experiences (suicide, domestic violence, etc.), we need to have good emergency response providers, and numerous ones at that. Without providing

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competitive benefits, it will be difficult if not impossible to provide the needed workforce to staff the front lines of these traumas. Beyond just losing these valuable community members, we also will lose the contributions of their family members. So many spouses of firefighters work in critical workforce sectors such as education/teaching, medical and mental health. We need these professionals to stay in our state as well.

As a mental health professional, I have heard the stories of survivors of various traumatic events whose suffering has been made easier by having rapid and quality care by emergency response teams. Everyone deserves someone who is enthusiastic about their job, well trained and focused to be there to provide care to them on one of the worst days of their lives. If we have providers who are dissatisfied and feel unsupported by the community that they offer their lives and physical and mental health for, those patients are not going to get as quality of care as they deserve. Those negative mental health effects can reverberate through generations.

Personally, as an Alaskan who loves this state, I do not want to leave but very likely will be forced to move with my husband if something is not changed in providing better retirement for public safety. I have spent almost my whole life here, and I pursued my graduate education in this state so I could receive specialized training in addressing the mental health needs of Alaska. I want to serve Alaskans as a psychologist and I want Jayson to be on the front lines here as a firefighter/paramedic. I want our son and any future children to grow up here, experiencing the vibrant individuality of Alaska, enjoying and protecting the beauty of its lands.

As a community member, mental health professional, spouse of a firefighter/paramedic and enthusiastic Alaskan, I urge and encourage you to support House Bill 55. Please take these next steps to protect our public safety professionals, our emergency medical response system and our amazing state. Thank you so much for your thoughtful consideration, and your dedication to bettering Alaska.

Thank you,  
Kelley Russell, Ph.D

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:17 PM

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**From:** Jayson Russell <jaysonak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:22 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 Jayson Russell, and I am a firefighter/paramedic with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing to you in support of House Bill 55. It is hard to write to you how important this bill is in such few words, and on an email, but please hear me out. I grew up here in Anchorage, and I knew from when I was about 6 years old I wanted to be a firefighter. I never took the time to think about what working somewhere outside of Alaska would look like, because this has always been home. I'm a third generation Alaskan, and my wife is a second, and we have a newborn son. I want to raise my family here.

But the conversation of long-term finances comes into play here - "can we really afford to live here for the next 30+ years?" It's hard to speak with my good friends - whom I went to the University Fire Department (UFD) with (in Fairbanks) - while they talk about leaving state and the good things they have going for them now. They work less (by 33%), make slightly less (with less cost of living) and have a pension!

I urge you all as the Senate Finance Committee to please move this bill forward. The tier IV system has been shown to be much less being a defined contribution opposed to a defined benefits plan, and we are wasting money right now. I see my friends moving onto other states like Washington and Idaho, and there will be an increase in even more people leaving if nothing is done. In fact, I myself have been talking to my wife about it more and more, even though I was just hired on a few years ago at the AFD. It's not that I don't love my position here in Anchorage, but I am trying to be wise about the best possible route for me and my family. For us, it's just talk as of right now. But when I get vested after five years, if the opportunity for a pension - or at least something that looks like a pension - isn't on the table, then my family and I could very much be leaving.

Please consider voting for this bill. My home and my heart is here in Alaska, and it took me nearly ten years to get on with the AFD. It's sad for me personally to think of

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a future where I'm not here, but I have to put my family first. Thank you.

- Jayson Russell



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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB 55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:14 PM

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

**From:** Arianne Wadeson <[ariannewadeson@hotmail.com](mailto:ariannewadeson@hotmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 7:58 PM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop <[Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Bert Stedman <[Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <[Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <[Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov)>; Sen. David Wilson <[Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Donny Olson <[Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <[Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov](mailto: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

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support of HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:09 PM

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**From:** Jules Carroll <jttaylor4@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 6:19 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 of HB55

My name is Jules Carroll, I am a firefighter 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. 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. Ensuring I have a good retirement plan has always been important to me, but it's especially important to me as a firefighter with Type One Diabetes. Though retirement is a long way away for me, it is still something that causes me to worry. I love working in Alaska; however, with the current retirement plans for firefighters, it makes the thought of working here seem not worth it in the long run. Since I'm just starting my career as a firefighter, I think about what decisions I need to make now so I can have a good life after I have to retire. If House Bill 55 were to be approved, I would feel a lot more compelled to continue working and eventually retire in Alaska.

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

Sincerely,  
Jules Carroll

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:05 PM

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

**From:** Ryan Cruz <racruz3@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 5:37 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

Hello, I am a student firefighter at the University Fire Department. I am send you all this email to support a defined benefit retirement. This is really important because Alaska cannot currently compete with the lower 48. Without this, Alaska will lose a lot of valuable employees which will bring the needed knowledge and experience to be successful.

Best regards,  
Ryan Cruz

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**From:** [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB55  
**Date:** Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:33:02 PM

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**From:** Austin Alvarado <ajalvarado2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 5:35 PM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; senator.berk.stedman@akleg.gov;  
senator.bill.weillechowski@akleg.gov; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>;  
senator.donald.olsen@akleg.gov; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>;  
senator.natasha.vonlmhpf@akleg.gov  
**Subject:** HB55

Hello,

I am reaching out in support of the HB 55 defined benefit. This would be such a big improvement for the Alaska retirement system. I recently got hired out of state and I'm deciding to move else where because the retirement is better. I wanted to reach out and voice my opinions so others in the future might benefit and stay within this beautiful state.

Thank you,

Austin Alvarado