
From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW:
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:22 PM

From: Courtney Fremont <Courtney.Fremont@matsugov.us>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 4:49 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>; 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>; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject:

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm reaching out in regards to HB 55. I've dedicated the last 8 years developing my fire career in Alaska. I started with getting my Fire Science and Emergency Services degree at UAA which led to volunteering at Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department. I then worked 5 years for the State of Alaska Department of Forestry working as a wildland firefighter. I now am a full-time Firefighter Driver Operator at Central Mat-Su Fire Department. I love my community and am incredibly grateful that I get to serve the valley as a career firefighter now. I want nothing more to spend the rest of my career at Central Mat Su Fire Department, not only growing and learning but also helping the next generation of firefighters for Alaska. This job does not come without sacrifice and stress though. Having to consider how I'm going to make it work and dedicating an exponential amount of my paycheck to hopefully have a retirement I can scrape by on is frustrating. I have zero desire to leave Alaska or my department but I have three children. It adds stress and guilt knowing I could work somewhere where my sacrifice is appreciated enough to compensate me after 20+ years of service. The Mat-Su Valley is also one of the fastest growing communities in the nation. The last thing it needs is to lose first responders who the state has not only invested time and money in, but also have connection and roots to the area. Please strongly consider supporting HB55. Supporting it supports Alaskans.

Sincerely,
Courtney Fremont

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:18 PM

From: Penman, Spencer R <spencer.penman@anchorageak.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 3:09 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: HB55

Senators of the Finance Committee,

My name is Officer Spencer Penman, I am an Anchorage police officer. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because Alaska is losing valuable experience under the current Tier IV system. HB55 is a reasonable solution to this problem.

Approximately 39% of APD new hires are leaving within the first 8 years of their employment at APD. Nearly 4 in every 10 officers have chosen to leave the department often to work for departments in the lower 48 that offer a defined pension plan. APD is losing experienced officers and leadership due to the inability of the state to offer any kind of defined benefit plan. This also is not just affecting APD but every law enforcement agency in the state. Chiefs and officers have testified about the substantial increase in retention problems with Tier IV employees, this is evidenced by not only testimony but also documents like the DPS Recruitment & Retention Plan Overview 2018-2023.

My father retired from APD after 25 years under PERS Tier II. He is concerned that I am under the Tier IV plan and has advised me multiple times to leave APD to a different department that offers a defined benefit after I become vested in Tier IV. I understand that it may be impossible to return to a plan like Tier II. However, HB55 offers a sound compromise for a defined benefit plan. If HB55 was to pass and Tier V was created, it would offer me great incentive to stay and to develop my career further at APD. Please seriously consider this bill and the many benefits it would bring to Public Safety in Alaska.

Thank you,

Ofc. Penman

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:13 PM

From: John Harley <john.r.harley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 1:22 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

My name is John Harley, I am a citizen of Juneau Alaska. 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.

Alaska is losing money and valuable experience with our current retirement system. Our state can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage.

HB 55 is a clear solution to this, as HB 55 costs 12% of payroll. When unfunded liability is paid off, this bill costs 10% less than current cost of Tier IV (12% vs. 22%).

Please join me in supporting this bill.

John Harley

--

John Harley

Chris Pavadore - Firefighter/EMT

Support for HB55

My name is Chris Pavadore. I am an Anchorage firefighter requesting a bit of your time to consider this letter of support for HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because our current retirement plan sets our public safety employees up for failure in retirement and Alaska is losing public safety employees. To the first point, our retirement is highly volatile and not heavily vetted. In conjunction with many workers who will not receive social security benefits or SBS, we may receive at best a 5% match in a 401(A) account – as you are aware this is less than a social security contribution would be in a private sector role. If this is the value placed on the roles we are asked to endure, then it is unsurprising that the workforce in our sector is packing their lives and their families in search of something more aligned with longevity.

I have been with Anchorage Fire only a few short years. Perhaps my lens is cracked early, but I'd like to think I am not as naïve as I may have been ten years ago. I worked for higher education for a decade and switched to the fire department as a calling. My brother worked for APD for years - that the appreciation he has for our city is a function of his role in the community. Observing his growth into who he is today made me realize that the no brainer career move is to give public safety a shot. But in my short time on the department, I have watched many people depart not just the department, but the state of Alaska. Some of these men and women have more experience than I could dream to have in a lifetime and, in an instant, they are no longer serving our communities. We have already lost a few from my own class due to dissatisfaction amidst the commitment expected of us. The writing is on the wall that this trend is unsustainable and quite unsafe.

Most of us embrace it all, but at what cost? We leave exhausted from physical demand, emotional demand, and sleep deprivation. I am in the middle of finishing up my paramedic certifications so that I can be a more valuable asset to my department and more importantly the community around me. Last week my oldest daughter (6) gave me a hug and started crying because she misses me – when I'm not at work, I'm at school. When I'm not at school, I'm doing hospital rotations. When I'm at home, I am doing homework. At the end of all of that is a career of more training and more time away. I recognize there is choice in my actions; I will own that. I could strive to do no more than I must, but I challenge anyone reading this to find members in public safety who do the bare minimum. Do they exist? Yes. Will you find them very easily? Not a chance. The people in our field embrace our positions, with all the calls and all the readiness training. We have a duty to be the best we can be so that everyone goes home after every shift and every community member is met with professionalism and expertise.

This is a career that impacts the lives of those around us like no other outside of military deployments. There is enough data that shows the roles we take on as firefighters, police officers, correctional officers, and EMS employees do not stay in our stations. We witness unspeakable things that bare weight in our minds, hearts, and lives - at work and at home. We can be called at any time on or off duty to work additional hours. Despite it all, we incessantly train to be fit for duty on and off the job. The people around us deserve the best we can be.

This bill will help to keep our public safety personnel home in Alaska. The savings realized by declining this bill are quickly diminished by the amount of money the fiscal budgets will endure to continually hire new people while the experience moves elsewhere. A failure to pass this bill will simply become an invoice for the costs of reinventing the wheel. As much as we all love our jobs, we will always consider our families and longevity first. Our families, friends, and community deserve the continued commitment of our Alaskan personnel – it starts with passing this bill.

If anyone has any questions regarding my letter of support, please reach out to me: cpavadore@gmail.com

Thank you for your time,

Chris Pavadore



From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:03 PM

From: Rebekah Kopplin <rapadgett97@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 12:32 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 Rebekah Kopplin, formerly Rebekah Padgett. I am the daughter of a retired APD detective sergeant and the wife of a current AFD firefighter. I am writing in support of HB 55. I believe HB55 is critical to the continued success of the public safety system in Alaska.

Since the State transitioned to Tier IV, I have heard nothing but negative things about public-safety employee retention and training. And it's no surprise, considering no other state has a public safety retirement plan like Tier IV. Already Alaskans in public safety have to endure long cold-winters, high costs of living, and since Tier IV was implemented, a miserly retirement plan. There is no reward to balance these cons, no incentive to remain employed in Alaska, which has led to a detrimental loss of trained, experienced employees. The State needs to take some action to improve employee retention; thereby improving Alaska's overall public safety system.

Passing HB55 and implementing a pension would allow Alaska's public safety system to compete with private sectors and other state retirement systems, which would surely reduce the drain of Alaska public safety employees.

Let's not forget that Alaska Public Safety Employees are putting their lives on the line to protect the Alaskan community, providing for these employees and their families in retirement is the least we can do in return.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Rebekah Kopplin

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB-55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:32:00 PM

From: Wesley Wilber <Wesley.Wilber@matsugov.us>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:48 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: HB-55

To whom it may concern,

I writing to express my concern about HB-55. This bill is hugely important to myself and many other Emergency Services employees and it is very frustrating to know that we make the sacrifices we do for our community, both personal and professional, and we're not being taken care of the way that a huge majority of other states take care of their responders. The fact that the turnover rate for every agency in the state is so large is evidence of this. How much money have we spent training responders just for them to pack up and move somewhere with a retirement and benefit plan that's competitive with the rest of the nation? I love this state and I love my career as a first responder, however as I learn and grow I am forced to consider the unfortunate reality that as things stand currently it may be in the best interest of my future to, like many before me, look to other employment opportunities so that I can be sure that I'll be taken care of in a way that reflects the work I do for the public.

Please consider the benefit of keeping Alaska's First Responders in Alaska, and how far this bill will go in doing so.

Thank You- Wesley Wilber, Firefighter Driver/Operator

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:55 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 HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:49 PM

From: Pat Kiewik <patkiewik@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:28 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

Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Pat Kiewik and I have been an Anchorage firefighter for 11 years. I live in south Anchorage in the same neighborhood where I was born and raised. I am writing today to urge you to approve HB55.

I was hired under the Tier IV retirement system. I have always been responsible with money and fully funded my 457. I live modestly. Additionally, when I am able to save money, I invest it in an account meant to supplement my retirement. Several years ago when I began to learn more about the inadequacy of the defined contribution system, I hired a financial advisor. His most recent estimate is that I will not be able to retire until I am 60 years old.

When I was young, becoming a firefighter was always my dream. When I finally managed to get hired, I had little understanding of finance or retirement systems. I was simply thrilled to have the job. Now, having much more work, life, and financial experience, I have a very different outlook. I still love my job, but I now know it is not conducive to a 30+ year career, and it is not worth it if there is not hope for a comfortable retirement. I have never been a fan of police and firefighters being rhetorically labeled "heroes." But, I can assuredly say that working as a first responder is arduous, and it is a grind. It takes a physically healthy and energetic person, and it is not sustainable for much longer than 20-25 years. Old firefighters get hurt more, die on the job more, and suffer more chronic illness when they finally reach retirement. And with this retirement being insufficient, we will ultimately need more social services towards the end of our lives.

Right now, I am faced with working at least another 22 years. I have watched numerous coworkers leave for fire departments in western Washington over the last several years. They will now retire with a pension. Like me, they were born and raised in Alaska and were reluctant to leave, but I keep in touch with them and they are extremely happy with their decision. I recently found a job announcement for the Shoreline Washington Fire Department. They were seeking to hire lateral career firefighters, the starting pay was equal to what I make now, the work schedule was better than what I work now, and of course, Washington offers a pension. I routinely check the government jobs website for Washington, and I find similarly promising opportunities in very livable communities every several months.

My wife and I recently had our first kid. I now have the additional financial concern of figuring out how to save to provide a prosperous future for her. I had always hoped that future would be here in Alaska, but I am finding fewer and fewer logical reasons to keep my family here. I have watched in frustration as bills for a new police/fire retirement have stalled in the legislature for the past several years. I sincerely hope this year will be different, and HB55 will be signed into law. Otherwise, I will be spending my next year seeking out and testing for the next desirable outside fire department. I am running out of time to make this change in my life. I can no longer sit around and wait for a brighter future here in my home state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pat Kiewik

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:45 PM

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

From: Justin Mack <justinmack@mc.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:24 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

Senate Finance Committee Members,

My name is Justin Mack, I am a Captain with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing on behalf of the Anchorage Firefighters IAFF Local 1264. HB55 is product of years of input from public safety members and multiple legislatures, representing all sides of the aisle. Outside groups are spreading misleading information and offer no solution for the recruitment and retention crisis we currently face. HB55 is a responsible solution with shared risk between all parties. Please allow this bill to be heard in your committee and give public safety the chance to show that this plan is the product careful planning and best practices. Thank you for your service to the State of Alaska.

Justin Mack
Vice President, Anchorage Firefighters

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Please support HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:39 PM

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

From: Steve's mac <sk574@live.com>

Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:07 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: Please support HB55

Hello, I am Steven Buchta. I was a Police Officer with the Anchorage Police Department for 25 years beginning in 1994. I am fortunate to have a PERS Tier 2 retirement and having that benefit was a HUGE motivator for me to both take the job originally as well as "stick" with it for 25 years despite many difficulties and the changing environment with regard to policing.

I am writing to encourage you to support HB55 for current Tier 4 participants as well as future hires. While this plan is not as beneficial as it could be, it is significantly better than Tier 4.

I believe failing to provide a defined benefit retirement is going to continue to degrade the public safety sector by making both hiring and retention very difficult. This difficulty has many costs to include quality of life for all citizens as well as actual financial costs as public safety employees are hired and trained only to take that training to other agencies elsewhere that have better retirement plans.

Thank you for your consideration of HB55.

Best regards,
Steven Buchta

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:35 PM

From: Greg Lawton <glawton27@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:00 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 HB 55

My name is Greg Lawton and I have been a firefighter with Anchorage Fire Department for 11 years. I have lived in Alaska for the past 18 years with my wife, Amanda. I am writing to strongly encourage you to support HB 55.

I along with many others were hired under the current retirement system Tier IV. I currently fully invest into our retirement and yet still according to my financial advisor I will not be able to retire until well into my 60's, along with all the others in the Tier IV system. For several years now there have been proposed retirement fixes to the Tier IV and finally we have one that will benefit both the state of Alaska and those that put their lives on the line for its community each and everyday. HB 55 will be a shared risk between the employees, state, and those that are retired ensuring that no one entity is liable. Furthermore, the costs that are associated with HB 55 are currently in line with that majority of the private sector and more importantly in line with many other states.

Over my years at Anchorage Fire Department, I have seen and continue to see many of our extremely qualified firefighters, engineers, and captains move out of state to a defined benefit retirement. The state will continue to see this occur until a fix is put into place, HB 55 is that fix. We have an outstanding training program that is producing excellent personnel that other states are more than happy to have come aboard. Many of us keep in touch with those that have left for a better retirement, each and everyone of them tell us what a relief it is to know that the state that they work for has a defined retirement. Working as firefighter/first responder is an extremely taxing and difficult career and having the majority of its employees working into their 60's is neither sustainable nor is it safe.

My family and I truly hope to continue to live and support our community and this state, but with the retirement bills that continue to stall out and/or be rejected by our legislature we realize that this may no longer be an actual possibility. HB 55 is a bill that does benefit both its employees, the state, and more importantly will keep its community safe. I strongly urge you to sign HB 55 into law.

Thank you for your time,

Greg Lawton

Anchorage Fire Department

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support HB55 and Our Public Safety Professionals
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:28 PM

From: karl wuoti <kwuoti@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 9:49 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 HB55 and Our Public Safety Professionals

My name is Karl Wuoti, I am a Firefighter/EMT in Juneau. I am also going to be starting Paramedic School this fall. I would like to retire here in Juneau and I believe passing this bill makes it feasible for someone like me to work their entire firefighting career and retire here in Alaska.

I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska, not only for recruitment and retention, but more importantly, it will ensure that our Firefighter and Police crews have decades of experience in the communities, not just a couple years before moving down south for a better paying and better benefitted job. We do not want to be the training ground for the lower 48 to have the experienced crews. This bill will help keep our Alaskan trained crews here for their full career, and in turn we will be there 24 hours a day for decades to come for the communities of Alaska.

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

Thank you.

Firefighter Karl Wuoti

3048 Wood Duck Ave

Juneau, AK, 99801

907 723-9228

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:25 PM

From: Nolan McLeod <nolan.mcleod@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 9:24 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 HB 55

My name is Nolan McLeod, I am an Anchorage firefighter/Paramedic. I am writing in support of HB55. I was asked to talk about one or two points, but I think YOU should know all the reasons why WE (public safety- the people YOU call for when YOU need help) deserve a better retirement.

I HIGHLY DOUBT you will read through this all, so rather than explain my life at the end, ill do it now for you. I moved to Alaska from Washington one week out of high school at the age of 18. I CHOOSE to come to this state, to get my education and start my career. I CHOOSE THIS STATE. I didn't have to come here, I certainly did not have to stay, but I love Alaska and I CHOOSE to stay. I am 27 years old today, I have a wife and a family of three. I am a fireman and a paramedic, and I DON'T HAVE TO STAY, but I CHOSE to. I CHOSE to dedicate my life, my time away from my family, my body and my HEALTH to serving the great citizens and the lucky visitors of Alaska. You, you have the choice to make a statement of support for all public safety personnel in the state. CHOSE to support us, show us you value our work and us as public safety workers and please give us a retirement worth working for. If not, I will CHOSE to also leave the state eventually and go somewhere I am valued.

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

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

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)

Considering Cost

- • Both sides must be measured – cost of this bill vs. cost of maintaining the status quo
 - • Fiscal note of HB 55 is solely associated with paying down unfunded liability of legacy tiers
 - • HB 55 costs 12% of payroll
 - • When unfunded liability is paid off, this bill costs 10% less than current cost of Tier IV (12% vs. 22%)
 - • This illustrates that Tier 4 was not set up to provide adequate benefits to public safety members, it was set up to pay off the unfunded liability of legacy tiers
 - • 12% of payroll called for in HB 55 is very much in line with the private sector – social security & a 401(k) match
 - • 12% of payroll is also in line (or generally less than) what is provided across the nation for public safety retirement systems
-
- • When you offer the most frugal retirement plan in the country, there will be a cost to fix it

-
- • 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
 - • Public safety officers will continue to get valuable training and experience here, then leave the state for other jurisdictions offering better benefits
 - • This is happening at alarming rates
 - • These costs will only increase as more of our public safety workforce enters the Tier 4 system each year
 - • The state's own actuary assumes increased retention with HB 55

Considering Risk

- • Risk is shared between the employer, employees, and retirees; all parties are holding hands and no one group is left with all of the risk
- • Nothing like the previous defined benefit tiers
- • Extraordinary amount of work put in to ensure the risk to the state is mitigated as much as possible
- • Public safety members face risk in their jobs every day, they measure it and deal with it appropriately; we ask the legislature to do the same

If you made it to the end, thank you, I appreciate and value YOU.

Thank you,

Nolan McLeod.

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB-55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:21 PM

From: McLeod, Nolan M. <nolan.mcleod@anchorageak.gov>

Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 9:22 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 HB-55

My name is Nolan McLeod, I am an Anchorage firefighter/Paramedic. I am writing in support of HB55. I was asked to talk about one or two points, but I think YOU should know all the reasons why WE (public safety- the people YOU call for when YOU need help) deserve a better retirement.

I HIGHLY DOUBT you will read through this all, so rather than explain my life at the end, ill do it now for you. I moved to Alaska from Washington one week out of high school at the age of 18. I CHOOSE to come to this state, to get my education and start my career. I CHOOSE THIS STATE. I didn't have to come here, I certainly did not have to stay, but I love Alaska and I CHOOSE to stay. I am 27 years old today, I have a wife and a family of three. I am a fireman and a paramedic, and I DON'T HAVE TO STAY, but I CHOSE to. I CHOSE to dedicate my life, my time away from my family, my body and my HEALTH to serving the great citizens and the lucky visitors of Alaska. You, you have the choice to make a statement of support for all public safety personnel in the state. CHOSE to support us, show us you value our work and us as public safety workers and please give us a retirement worth working for. If not, I will CHOSE to also leave the state eventually and go somewhere I am valued.

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

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

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)

Considering Cost

- Both sides must be measured – cost of this bill vs. cost of maintaining the status quo
 - Fiscal note of HB 55 is solely associated with paying down unfunded liability of legacy tiers
 - HB 55 costs 12% of payroll
 - When unfunded liability is paid off, this bill costs 10% less than current cost of Tier IV (12% vs. 22%)
 - This illustrates that Tier 4 was not set up to provide adequate benefits to public safety members, it was set up to pay off the unfunded liability of legacy tiers
 - 12% of payroll called for in HB 55 is very much in line with the private sector – social security & a 401(k) match
 - 12% of payroll is also in line (or generally less than) what is provided across the nation for public safety retirement systems
-
- When you offer the most frugal retirement plan in the country, there will be a cost to fix it
 - 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
 - Public safety officers will continue to get valuable training and experience here, then leave the state for other jurisdictions offering better benefits

-
- This is happening at alarming rates
 - • These costs will only increase as more of our public safety workforce enters the Tier 4 system each year
 - • The state's own actuary assumes increased retention with HB 55

Considering Risk

- • Risk is shared between the employer, employees, and retirees; all parties are holding hands and no one group is left with all of the risk
- • Nothing like the previous defined benefit tiers
- • Extraordinary amount of work put in to ensure the risk to the state is mitigated as much as possible
- • Public safety members face risk in their jobs every day, they measure it and deal with it appropriately; we ask the legislature to do the same

If you made it to the end, thank you, I appreciate and value YOU.

Thank you,

Nolan McLeod.

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support of HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:16 PM

From: Garrett LaMay <garrettmlamay@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:38 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 of HB55

My name is Garrett LaMay, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because our state is losing money and valuable experience w/ our current retirement system.

We are losing valuable public safety employees to the lower 48, due to having a retirement system that we cannot compete w/. The State of Alaska owes it's residents and visitors the safety of having a sufficient sized workforce of police and fire personnel in both rural and urban areas. We need to pass HB55 to help provide a sufficient retirement plan to help retain and recruit new employees in our great state.

Thanks for your support.

Garrett LaMay

Sent from my iPad

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Please support the House Bill 55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:13 PM

From: Currier, Carin <ccurrier01@hamline.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:34 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: Please support the House Bill 55

Dear Alaska State Senators.

Thank you for all that you do. I am writing this email to you all regarding your support of the House Bill 55 and kindly urging you all to support it.

I ask that you please support our first responders who are unquestionably vital in getting us through the difficult and severely challenging pandemic. Our first responders take care of our community and are a vital part of our daily lives. They give us their unwavering support in service of our community and we, collectively, should support them the same.

Please do the right thing and support our first responders who are the heart and soul of our health, safety, and security.

Thank you,
Carin Currier

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:10 PM

From: Myles <myles.nichols1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:24 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bill Wielechowski <Sen.Bill.Wielechowski@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB55

My name is Myles Nichols, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because AK can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage. If passed this will allow us to keep lifelong Alaskans from fleeing to the lower 48 for defined benefits.

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:08 PM

From: Zachary Ritchie <zacharyritchie@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:21 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

My name is Zach Ritchie with the Anchorage Fire Department. I'm a new probationary firefighter, academy class 22-01. I'm writing today in support of HB55. Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 when trying to recruit public safety employees, we are at a clear disadvantage. I believe HB55 is a reasonable solution.

Thank you.

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:04 PM

From: Pestrikoff, Patrick R. <Patrick.Pestrikoff@anchorageak.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:15 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 Patrick Pestrikoff and I am a firefighter for the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing to you to in support of HB55. This bill is critical for Public safety employees because it will help keep employees here in Alaska that are receiving their training on the local budget and in return are leaving the state for a better benefits. Also with this bill it will help ensure my family and other public safety workers are taken care of after retirement. Thank you for your time.

Patrick Pestrikoff

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:31:00 PM

From: Joseph Casey <joeycasey92@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 7:56 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

Hello,

My name is Joey Casey, I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing in support of HB55. This legislation is critical for Public Safety in Alaska because our current retirement plan does not set our family for success in retirement. This is a disservice to our public safety employees and is hurtful to the men and women who have hearts for service and want to make and keep our State the amazing place to live that it is. The retirement currently offered (Tier 4) is a 401(A) match of only 5% which is less than any private sector company offering, public safety employees do not receive social security benefits regardless of if they worked outside public safety previously. When planning for retirement we cannot trust that this system will provide for us and leaves us to make our own safety net for retirement. Whether that is with second jobs here or with considerations of moving to a state where public safety officials are more valued.

Please support HB 55. This is a reasonable solution that will put Alaska back on par with other states' retirement offerings.

Please support the men and women who have chosen this line of work and who take such pride in their employment and their home state.

Thank you,
Joey Casey

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:54 PM

From: Lou Karlberg <loukarlberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 12:58 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 Lou Karlberg. I am an Anchorage Firefighter/Paramedic. I have had the blessing of being trained in Anchorage and believe I have the best job in the world. Recently I have been recruited by two fire departments in another state where my wife's family lives. Both of these fire departments have pensions and the state has much lower cost of living than Alaska. So far I have elected to stay here because I love Alaska and want to serve the people of Anchorage. But I also know I need to put the well-being and future of my family first. Having family in this other state and an opportunity to obtain a pension makes it tempting to think that moving there would be the best option for my family, and I do consider this frequently. HB55 is a sustainable plan to keep Alaska's public servants here. It is a plan that has been vetted and poses very low risk, but offers a great reward of keeping our well trained employees. Conversely, investing in training public servants and then losing them and their abilities to other states is not only a risk, but unfortunately a sad reality.

Please take the heaps of evidence presented to you and do what is necessary to fix this current problem. Pass HB55 and help keep our public servants home while saving our state money in the long run.

Thanks for your time.
Lou Karlberg

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:49 PM

From: adam peterson <akadam10@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:45 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 Peterson, and I am an Anchorage firefighter. I am writing you in support of HB55. I have been a firefighter in Anchorage for 18 years and have seen firsthand the detrimental effect the current Tier IV retirement system has had on recruitment and retention of public safety employees. 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. Public safety workers are getting hired, receiving valuable training and skills, then seeking employment elsewhere that provides a secure retirement.

The bill before you provides a reasonable solution to provide public safety employees with a defined benefit; where employees, the state, and retirees all share in the risk so that no one group is left holding the liability. With this hybrid plan there is a 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) .

I respectfully ask for your support for this bill. Thank you for your time and for your service to our state.

Adam Peterson
1611 Helen Drive
Anchorage Ak 99515

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: HB 55 Support
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:45 PM

From: Bryant Molle <bryantmolle@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:31 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 Support

To whom it may concern,

I have been a member of the Anchorage Fire Department for three years. I am proud to serve my community and have strong family ties to public safety. My father worked for the Anchorage Fire Department for 27 years and my grandfather served in the Saskatoon Police Department for over 30 years. Both my father and grandfather served their respective communities with peace of mind knowing that they would be taken care of in retirement. Under the current State of Alaska Tier IV retirement system I can not provide that security for myself and family.

I grew up in Anchorage and I enjoy the outdoor activities and people this state has to offer. There is no other place my wife and I would rather raise our growing family. Under the current retirement system it is very hard for me to not consider leaving Alaska. Other fire departments are offering a defined pension and medical in retirement. I am forced to choose between living in a place I love and providing certain future for myself and family. I only ask that after a long career of putting my health on the line for this community that I will be financially secure in retirement just as my father and grandfather.

Thank you for your time,

Bryant Molle

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Please support the HB 55 Bill
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:43 PM

From: Teresa Severson <tnt8862@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:29 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>
Cc: 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 the HB 55 Bill

Dear Alaska State Senators,

I am writing you all and urging your support of the House Bill 55.

I ask that you please support our first responders who are unquestionably vital in getting us through the difficult and severely challenging pandemic. Our first responders take care of our community and are a vital part of our daily lives. They give us their unwavering support in service of our community and we, collectively, should support them the same.

Please do the right thing and support our first responders who are the heart and soul of our health, safety and security.

Thank you,
Teresa Severson

From: [Sen. Click Bishop](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Support for HB55
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2022 12:30:37 PM

From: Josh Novinska <novinska@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:13 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@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

To whom it may concern,

My name is Josh Novinska, and I am a Captain with the Anchorage Fire Department. I am writing this email in support of HB55. I have been part of the Public Safety sector since I was 18 years old, and am currently 35. Alaska can no longer compete with the lower 48 states when it comes to recruitment and retention of employees. After having spent time both in Fairbanks and Anchorage I have seen time and time again, valuable people leaving the state they love because that is what is best for their families due to the lack of retirement we offer for our public safety employees. These are people who we have invested not only time, but money in to only for that investment to walk out of the door and into another department in the lower 48. These departments are the ones that are benefiting from the money we put in to train these individuals.

Tier IV employees do not receive social security benefits. Tier IV employees only receive a 5% match for our 401(A) account, which is less than a social security contribution would be anywhere in the private sector. We are asking for help in protecting us and our families in retirement the same way we have protected you and your families everyday we come to work. It is easy to see dollar signs when talking about adjusting retirement benefits for anyone, however I challenge you all to look deeper into the human aspect and the people who day in and day out sacrifice themselves to protect the people of this state. I ask you to do better for them, their families, and the communities in which they serve. I would be remiss if I did not mention that even at my current rank I have applied for departments outside of Alaska in order to make sure that myself and my future family will be taken care of in my retirement years. This means starting over from square one. Unless this system gets fixed you will see qualified, Alaska loving community members getting training here and taking that investment elsewhere without a second thought. Thank you for your time and your continued work that you do for Alaska.

Josh Novinska