



REPRESENTATIVE ANDY JOSEPHSON

HB 13: Applicability of Human Rights Commission Sponsor Statement

The commissioners on the Alaska State Commission on Human Rights (ASCHR) supports this legislation. One of the ASCHR strategic planning goals expressed in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 was to

Work with the State Legislature to add non-profits to ASCHR's jurisdiction...¹

There are three levels at which a non-discrimination claim can be filed in Alaska: municipal, state, and federal. The Anchorage Equal Rights Commission covers non-profit municipal employees in Anchorage, for example. The EEOC covers all non-profit employees who belong to an employer with 15 or more employees. A gap exists, however, in the event that a non-profit employer has under 15 employees and is located outside the jurisdiction of a municipal human rights commission.

The State commission cannot cover these cases at all. Alaska's 5,620 non-profit companies provides roughly 38,100 jobs equating to 13% of our state's employment.² Non-profits located in Alaska span a broad array of fields and include large numbers of workers in health care (17,645 jobs), education (8,517 jobs), social assistance (6,374 jobs), financial services (2,043 jobs) and more.³ House Bill 13 would extend ASCHR's non-discrimination protections to encompass this large and important state workforce.

In 2022, ASCHR estimated at least 50 cases could not be served on a respondent due non-profit statutory exclusion. Additionally, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has the power to designate cases to ASCHR, but ASCHR is required to turn down any cases involving a non-profit employer. Considering the EEOC offers the state \$800 per case, that is at least \$40,000 last year that could have contributed to the Undesignated General Fund.

¹ ASCHR, "2021 Annual Report."

² The Foraker Group, "Alaska's Nonprofit Sector: Generating Economic Impact." 2021.

³ Foraker, "Alaska's Nonprofit Sector"