



Hello,

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Employees Association supports SB 88, the defined benefit pension bill and would appreciate your supporting it as well. Public service used to be a respected career that offered good pay and good benefits, this is however no longer the case. The individuals who work as public employees do so now because they want to serve their communities and their communities and law makers need to show the same support back.

There is a severe recruitment & retention crisis for public employees and not just at the state level; local governments are struggling through the same issues with less resources available to deal with it. The proposed new shared risk plan will save the state money in the long term and provide public employees with desperately needed retirement security. With proper pensions retirees contribute to a strong local economy by spending their money locally. With proper pensions we can start to recruit the young people from our communities to work in public service by giving them the option for stability to raise their families and know that when it is their turn they have a secure retirement to turn to and to retire with dignity.

We personally see the problems with recruitment and retention on a daily basis by taking on the huge burden of not only serving our community through the jobs we signed on for but also multiple other jobs that are empty. Whether those positions are filled or not the work must be done, or Alaskans go without the services they need. There is a huge amount of burn out from these added burdens which further contributes to the recruitment and retentions problems. My coworkers and I dedicate our lives to this state, and we deserve to retire with dignity. Please pass SB 88 for a better future for our state!

Thank you,

Stephanie Pearson
FNSBEA Vice President
Phone: (907) 459-1257

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Local 1547

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DOUG TANSY
BUSINESS MANAGER • FINANCIAL SECRETARY

VINCE BELTRAMI
PRESIDENT



March 20, 2023

Honorable Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol
Room 427
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing on behalf of the more than 4,000 IBEW members from across the state to thank you for sponsoring SB 88.

The IBEW 1547 represents workers in many diverse construction classifications including power linemen, inside wiremen, power plant workers and technicians, mechanics, warehouse workers, line clearance tree trimmers and heavy equipment operators. Traditionally, people think of IBEW members as people who work with electricity—but over the years, other classifications have joined our ranks. We represent many public sector employees who work as clerks, accounting specialists, engineers, city and municipal employees, property management workers, maintenance custodians, gardeners, librarians, plant services workers, and programmers.

In both the private and the public sector, our members know the value of defined benefit pensions both as a guarantee of a secure income when their working days are done, and as a lever available to management that encourages long term patterns of employment.

The inability of the public sector to reliably recruit and retain employees has a direct impact on the ability of the electrical industry to operate. To do our work in a timely fashion we rely on municipal and state inspectors, permitting offices, and certifications. Vacancies in these agencies hamper our ability to keep projects on track, Alaskans employed, and ultimately to keep powering Alaska.

We compete with the rest of the country for a highly sought after workforce, and the quality of our schools, community safety, and the ability of the state and local governments to provide basic services factors into our competitiveness when recruiting journeymen to Alaska.

With the infrastructure bill and defense appropriations, Alaska is at the precipice of a huge windfall of construction work. A strong public sector is essential for us to capitalize on this unprecedented opportunity to grow our workforce and economy.

We encourage the legislature to pass SB 88 and provide a defined benefit retirement for public employees.

Sincerely,

Doug Tansy
Business Manager/Financial Secretary
IBEW 1547



Supervisory Unit, Local 4900, APEA-AFT (AFL-CIO)

Honorable Cathy Giessel
State Senator District E
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Giessel,

On behalf of SU APEA/AFT Local 4900, the state supervisor's union, I wish to express our gratitude to you and your colleagues for introducing Senate Bill 88. Many of our members have decades of service at the state and have watched the decline in the state's ability to find people willing to take jobs in public service. Many of our long-term members are in defined benefit tiers, and can attest to the incentive that a defined benefit pension created for our members to stay in their positions. We have also watched our younger members, and direct reports in other bargaining units start work, stay for two to five years and leave taking their employee contribution and employer match with them.

To deliver the vital services that Alaska residents expect, the state needs to attract and keep trained staff. As managers who do recruitments our members routinely encounter smaller pools of applicants, and even fewer applicants willing to take job offers. Our members recognize the delays and disruptions to public services that are caused and exacerbated by interminable vacancy rates. The inability of the state to successfully hire and retain employees has resulted in many of us taking on additional duties caused by vacancies, and managing employees who are experiencing low morale from having to increase their workloads, with fewer resources. This has lowered the efficiency of state government overall.

We support pensions not only because of the benefit to our members, but also because restoring a pension option is a sound financial decision on the part of the state. Pensions have features unavailable to individual market accounts including longevity risk pooling, higher and professionally managed investment returns, and investment portfolios that are balanced for the highest yield to members and the system in aggregate rather than individuals trying to guess at how long they will live.

While SB 88 includes provisions that are less generous than the prior DB tiers, we appreciate that this plan balances affordability with a meaningful retirement benefit. We are committed to the success of this bill.

Respectfully,

Liam Carnahan
President
SU 4900

CC: SU Executive Board

Northern Regional Office
c/o 825 College Road
Fairbanks AK 99701

Southcentral Regional Office
c/o 3310 Arctic Blvd, Ste 200
Anchorage AK 99503

Southeast Regional Office
c/o 211 4th St, Ste 306
Juneau AK 99801

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: Please restore pension
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 10:25:15 AM

From: Scott, Sherri L (FCS) <sherri.scott@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 10:22 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please restore pension

Dear Ms. Giessel,

Please, please advocate for the restoration of the defined benefit plan. Thankfully, I am a tier 3 employee who returned to state service sacrificially as because coming in I literally took a 20 year pay cut, but did so to become vested in my pension and work toward the medical plan. Despite this, my pay again was a 20 year pay cut in my field. As a clinical supervisor, the only way I can make this work is to consider that I have loan forgiveness, however, this can occur at any nonprofit or state or government position. As an employee of the division of juvenile justice, I have gone up to a year or more without being able to secure clinicians, who are sorely needed for our youth in corrections. Once they hear about our pay and benefits coupled with working with the most difficult youth in the state, and often the nation, we have become a laughing stock. Even though they may have a passion to work with you say, cannot afford to work at DJJ because it's what they make as a case manager years earlier and this just simply is egregious. I am a 30 year career, behavioral health professional, who has now worked my way up through doctoral education, two masters degrees, and 30 years working in behavioral health with the past 20 as a clinical supervisor. In the division of juvenile justice, mental health clinicians are some of the lowest paid in the community, and I advocate hard just to keep a full team, it truly is so unfair, and such a disservice that we have to choose our passion to serve youth in such high needs, as we serve at the division of juvenile justice, and sacrifice even an equitable wage. I see it every single day with the juvenile justice officers, who get spat on, assaulted severely, and have some of the toughest jobs and again to not receive equitable pay is just not right. We work with the top one to 5% of the most difficult kids and I must say DJJ because of leadership and evidence-based programs has an exceptional astounding ability to stabilize youth that we can't even place in the best facilities in the lower 48 because they literally go out and break staff bones only to be sent back to us where we can stabilize them. However, as you know the severely mentally ill youth do not belong in correctional facilities, but we've become the place where they call home because there's no other place in or out of state that can work with them, nor stabilize them as we can. Again, please advocate for fair compensation with the restoration of the defined benefit plan, as well as equitable pay for the mental health, clinician team by advocating for a community survey to compare how low our wages in comparison and efforts to increase an equitable wage, Sincerely, Sherri

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From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: SB 88 support
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 5:42:50 PM

From: Dustin Madden <maddend_2003@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2023 5:11 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 88 support

Dear Senator Giessel,

My name is Dustin Madden I have been a State of Alaska worker for the last two and a half years proudly working at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport under tier four retirement.

Its no secret that economic times are tough across the global especially after the recent pandemic drastically changed the way everyone conducts day to day business. Everywhere you look there's a sign on the door saying help wanted. -

Everyone is aware that that attracting and just an importantly retaining quality employees is a challenge. As a state worker, I see the effects of not being able to keep quality employees in the workforce. Employees are walking away from state jobs as a result of no guarantee of retirement and low pay. I have seen comments on social media making a mockery of starting wages for state jobs.

Why is the state of Alaska facing criticism on social media about the pay and having to offer emergency pay incentives to keep the airport running when we should be seeing people flocking to work for the state? The answer is simple, there is no incentive to stay with the state. People are ditching a "dream opportunity" to work for the state because they can not survive on a paycheck alone. They need to be able to save for retirement. This is why Senate Bill 88 needs to be passed and show Alaskans that being a state employee is not a joke. Being a state employee is a worthy job and the state cares about them as a employee and citizen to keep Alaska moving towards a bright future.

I personally believe SB 88 and returning to a defined benefit for public employees is necessary to not only attract but to keep quality employees working for our great state! SB88 will keep employees working for the state instead of getting trained and heading out of a revolving door a few years after they get experience as they look for more sustainable work elsewhere.

Thank you to Senator's Giessel, Bishop, Stevens, Kiehl, Kawasaki, Tobin, Wielechowski, Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, and Senator Claman for sponsoring SB 88.

Best regards,

Dustin Madden

Anchorage, AK

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: SB 88 Testimony from Anita Evans
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 3:04:19 PM

From: anita evans <anitalcevans@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2023 2:51 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 88 Testimony from Anita Evans

Dear Senator Giessel,

I would like to offer a personal testimony in support of Senate Bill 88. On a personal note; I worked full time for the Juneau School District from January 1997 until I retired in May of 2019. As a member of the support staff, I looked forward to an eventual retirement through the PERS system with the State of Alaska. Now, as a retiree in my 70's; I am very grateful to have earned a defined benefit package, which has helped to provide financial stability and given me the courage to move forward into my senior years.

But for those who go into teaching today, why would anyone want to devote years (or decades) to the profession; when there are other more lucrative professional options available? Professional choices that would offer a defined retirement benefit, and provide a more stable future for aging seniors!

Also, I do take issue with Governor Dunleavy's proposal for issuing temporary annual bonuses to teachers throughout Alaska. First of all, this is just "putting a band aid" on the situation; and probably wouldn't affect long-term retention at all. Secondly, why not use that money towards increasing the Base Student Allocation, support our teachers by increasing salaries, and establish a viable defined benefit package for those who reach retirement age? As people who have dedicated their lives to teaching in Alaska; they should be rewarded for their loyalty and commitment.

Lastly, rather than offering outsized Permanent Fund Dividends to the Alaskan Public; I think it is time for our administration to look at how Alaska can provide incentives for all of our public workers - encouraging their long term retention, as they continue to contribute to the quality of life we enjoy in Alaska.

Respectfully,
Anita C. Evans
Juneau, AK
(907) 780-8674 Home
(907) 209-4743 Cell/Text

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: Thank you for your work on SB 88
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 8:53:08 AM

From: Sarah Nugent <mzt1999@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2023 8:49 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Thank you for your work on SB 88

Dear Senator Giessel,

As an Alaska educator, I want to thank you for prioritizing Alaska students and public education in the budget. I especially would like to thank you for your work on SB 88.

As you now know, Alaska educators have the worst retirement system in the country, and the turnover it's causing is correlated with poor student achievement.

I have taught in Alaska for the past 16 years, all of them for the Kodiak Island Borough School District. I love teaching. I love working with students and enriching their lives. However, I fall under the Alaska tier III retirement system. This is not a good system. Currently I have a defined benefit 401 account that simply will not allow me to retire with dignity. When I consider the fact that I will have zero guaranteed benefits beyond the amount in my 401 account my resolve to stay in the profession I love waivers. Not only my desire to stay in teaching, but also my desire to stay in the state of Alaska.

According to Dianne Hirshberg of the UAA Center for Education Policy Research at ISER:

The 5 school districts with the LOWEST turnover had 85.8% of students scoring proficient in reading. The 5 school districts with the HIGHEST turnover had only 46.9% of students scoring proficient in reading.

Teacher turnover is hurting our students.

SB 88 represents the possibility of a return to a real retirement system for educators and other public employees in Alaska. This change would have a positive impact on our students, our communities, and our state and local economies.

Currently, educators hired after 2006 like myself have no access to Social Security and only a defined contribution retirement option. This system means those educators will outlive their retirement savings.

I love my job, I love working with students, and I love Alaska. However, without any access to a secure income in retirement for myself, or any educator entering our system, I'm losing hope.

SB 88 represents a chance to reverse this devastating trend and provide a real retirement option to thousands of dedicated public employees like myself. I implore you to continue to review this issue, work on SB 88, and pass this bill before the end of the session.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Sarah Nugent

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: Thanks for Updates - Defined Benefits for Educators
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 7:29:22 AM

From: Kathy P <kprivratsky65@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2023 9:16 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Thanks for Updates - Defined Benefits for Educators

Please consider educators / the public sector, not just police and firemen firewomen, when looking at reinstating the Defined Benefits. We need more teachers - good teachers and we want them to stay in Alaska or come to Alaska and teach our kids. Reinstating Defined Benefit will make a big difference as will *raising the base student allocation (BSA)*. Legislatures also have to stop saying "we won't pay you more until you improve scores". How many more years will they continue to say that!! I believe this has gone on for years!

If there is any way to reinstate Social Security for teachers that would be excellent. Teachers are quite surprised when they get ready to retire and realize they do not get social security unless they have worked for a long time outside of Alaska or if they have been in another type of job. I was fortunate I had 25 years working as an educator outside of Alaska and a few years in Alaska in an organization that paid into social security. Teachers who are in Tier III and have no social security are leaving the state or leaving the education profession. They will never be able to afford to retire! Can the state legislatures for this?

Please support Defined Benefits for public education and provide more BSA to schools. Thank you again for the work you are doing and thank you for your very informative updates. They are great!

Kathy Privratsky

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: Fwd: Restore a Real Retirement for Alaska Public Employees
Date: Sunday, March 19, 2023 4:36:20 PM

Best regards,
Cathy

Senator Cathy Giessel
Majority Leader, Bipartisan Coalition

Sen.cathy.giessel@akleg.gov
907.242.5450

From: Stefanie Kondro <stefaniekondro@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2023 8:41:02 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Julia OConnor <Julia.OConnor@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>;
Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>
Subject: Restore a Real Retirement for Alaska Public Employees

Dear Honorable members,

I have been a public school educator in Alaska for over 10 years. Every year, exceptional teachers are hired and move to Alaska. There were seven new hires just in my school this year, all from out of state, some even from a foreign country. I have watched these exceptional teachers leave year after year. Every year, 20% of teachers, education support staff, and administrators leave their jobs at an annual cost to the state of \$20 million. The turnover rate is outrageous. Our students are missing out. We need to keep quality teachers in our schools. Fixing the retirement system is one crucial step we need to take action on.

As an Alaskan who wants to remain in our state, please support all legislation to restore a real retirement system for Alaska public employees.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Kondro
2267 Forest Dr Kodiak, AK 99615-7227
stefaniekondro@gmail.com

From: [marla smoothie](#)
To: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
Cc: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: HB 88
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 8:30:54 AM

Dear Cathy,

I am writing to you today in hopes you can support HB 88. I recently turned 61 with no hopes of retiring simply because Tier III does not have a sustainable retirement plan. Most teachers I have met do not stay with ASD for this very reason.

I am an Alaskan and a special education teacher. Please help us pass this bill and give some of us hopes for a day when retirement is a possibility.

Thank you,
Marla Jones

--

Peace

From: [Nicole Lyke](#)
To: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#); [Julia OConnor](#); [Rep. Craig Johnson](#)
Subject: Please support SB88
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 9:37:10 PM

Good evening,

My name is Nicole Lyke. I am originally from Michigan, but chose to leave home to begin my career as an educator here in Alaska - the Land of Opportunity. I was originally drawn to Alaska for the adventure, high salary (compared to Michigan) and the stories I had heard of pensions that promised a livable retirement after years of service.

I have been a public school educator in Alaska for 9 years now. My husband, the son of 2 Anchorage School District employees, is also an educator. While his parents have since retired, we know that we don't have the same comfort and security of a pension waiting for us. For this reason, unfortunately as much as we love living and working in Alaska, we often find ourselves exploring our options for more security with districts in the Lower 48 that do offer defined benefits.

I know at least half a dozen other families in the same boat. We all love it here, we have started our families here and now call Alaska home - but with no defined contribution plan, we are all always teetering between staying and going.

Please help to attract and retain great educators by passing SB88.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nicole Lyke
907-513-1669

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: *****SPAM***** Thank You SB88 personal letter
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 7:37:58 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

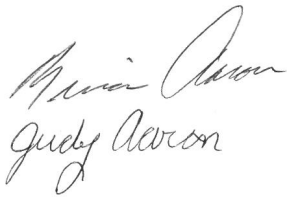
From: Judy Aaron <jbaaron44@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 9, 2023 7:50 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: *****SPAM***** Thank You SB88 personal letter

March 8, 2023

Senator Cathy Giessel,

My husband and I would like to personally thank you for introducing Senate Bill 88. We have taught in Alaska (Kodiak Island) for nine years and love our jobs. However, every month we struggle because we must save an additional \$1,200/month in our 403B account to compensate for the current retirement system. We would enjoy staying in Alaska after retirement, but the current system doesn't support living costs in this state. Thank you for helping Alaska educators.

Sincerely: Judy and Brian Aaron



Judy Aaron

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: Senate Bill 88
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:04:43 PM

From: Heidi Cabral <hcabral@pcsd.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 11:58 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 88

To Whom it May Concern,

It is time for the state to **restore a defined benefit pension for public employees**. If we do not see restoration of our retirement we will lose many good employees, especially teachers. We will also not be able to attract new employees to Alaska. **This is our future!** My husband and I are both teachers but *my family will not be able to continue to live in Alaska* if we do not do something about our retirement system!

We are happy to find jobs somewhere down south where they appreciate teachers by showing it in their retirement systems. Please consider restoring a defined benefit pension for public employees and teachers to ensure Alaska can continue to function appropriately and be able to serve students with the quality education they deserve. Thank you!

--

"Live & Learn"
Heidi Cabral
Special Education Teacher
Rae C. Stedman Elementary
Petersburg School District
877-526-7656

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From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: This is a good thing
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:05:15 PM

From: kenneth hoff <kenneth_hoff2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 11:49 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Andi Story <Rep.Andi.Story@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Hannan <Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov>; Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>
Subject: This is a good thing

This is great to see this bill
I would like to give my testimony
I am a retired Correctional supervisor from lemon creek corrections
Thank you for your service and I will continue following this bill
I will be back in Juneau on Monday 3/27/2023
If there's a time that I can have a minute to talk about this with you or staff I would be grateful for that
Kenneth M Hoff

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Sen. Cathy Giessel](#)
To: [Julia OConnor](#)
Subject: FW: SB 88 SUPPORT
Date: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:13:11 PM

From: Chandra McGee <chandra.mcgee@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:12 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 88 SUPPORT

Good morning,

My name is Chandra McGee, I am from Fairbanks and I would like to submit written support of SB 88 to restore a retirement with dignity for public service employees.

I grew up in Fairbanks and two of my uncles retired from public service with the State of Alaska - one from Fish and Game and the other from Environmental Conservation. Both retired under the Tier 1 system with respect and honorable careers.

I have continued in the same career path and have been with the Department of Environmental Conservation for over 10 years. However, I am a Tier 4 employee and my future retirement is uncertain at best. Our department sees frequent loss of highly qualified staff who move to federal jobs with a better retirement system. Frequent turnover makes our already lower paid jobs even harder. To top that off we are opted out of social security. In the past 10 years the state has continued to whittle away at benefits for state employees and those starting now earn less leave than when I started. If I remain with the state, I will retire at a much lower quality of life than either of my uncles.

I support SB 88 because I love my job with the state and love my work. The state needs to give its public employees the same support they give to Alaska - and a chance for a secure future.

Thank you.
Chandra McGee
2011 Weston Dr.
Fairbanks, AK 99709