

HB

445

Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives

Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Ak 99801-1182
1-907-465-3438 (phone)
1-888-478-3438 (toll free)
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Interim Address
716 West Fourth Avenue
Anchorage, Ak 99501-2133
(phone) 1-907-269-0100
(fax) 1-907-269-0105

Representative Harry Crawford District 22

Memorandum

TO: Representative John Coghill,
Chair House State Affairs

FROM: Representative Harry T. Crawford, Jr.

DATE: February 21, 2002

RE: HB 445 Fish and Wildlife Officers retirement

I respectfully request that this bill be scheduled for a hearing in your committee. All the pertinent backup materials requested are attached.

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Representative Harry Crawford
District 22

**REPRESENTATIVE HARRY CRAWFORD
SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR HB 445**

HB 445 is the product of a request by the Public Safety Employees Association.

HB 445 Allows former Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officers (FWEO's) to convert the non peace officer PERS service earned as a FWEO into peace officer service *if* vested in PERS as a current peace officer. If a Former FWEO never becomes vested in PERS as a peace officer (in another job class) before retirement, the person cannot convert their FWEO time to peace officer status. In order to convert the Service time, the employee must, from their own pocket, make up for the lower rate of PERS contribution while the employee was a FWEO.

I urge your support for this necessary change in the law.

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

February 20, 2002

SUBJECT: Sectional Summary of (HB 445 (Work Order No. 22-LS1411\A))

TO: Representative Harry Crawford
Attn: Dave D'Amato

FROM: Barbara R. Craver *BRC*
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

Section 1. Allows former fish and wildlife enforcement officers (FWEO) to convert the non-peace officer PERS service earned as a FWEO into peace officer service if vested in PERS as a peace officer. If a former FWEO never becomes vested as a peace officer (in another job class) before retirement, the person cannot convert their FWEO time to peace officer service. In order to convert the service time the employee must make up for the lower rate of PERS contribution from the employee's salary while a FWEO, this is the "indebtedness" which is established. This subsection defines a FWEO as the specific job class that once existed in the Department of Public Safety, it is not a general description of a type of job.

Section 2. Makes it clear that the employees of the Department of Fish and Game who had been included in the definition of peace officer prior to 1983 are not considered to have vested peace officer experience for purposes of subsection (i).

Section 3. Makes July 1, 2002 the effective date of this Act.

BRC:med
02-181.med

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Representative Harry Crawford
District 22

Memorandum

TO: Representative John Coghill, Chair
FROM: Representative Harry Crawford
DATE: April 9, 2002
RE: HB 445 Fish and Wildlife Officer Retirement

I respectfully request that House Bill 445 "An Act allowing peace officers with previous service as fish and wildlife enforcement officers in the Department of Public Safety to claim credit for service as peace officer service" be scheduled for a hearing in the House State Affairs Committee.

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Representative Harry Crawford
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**REPRESENTATIVE HARRY CRAWFORD
SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR HB 445**

HB 445 is the product of a request by the Public Safety Employees Association.

HB 445 allows former Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officers (FWEO's) to convert the non peace officer PERS service earned as a FWEO into peace officer service *if* vested in PERS as a current peace officer. If a former FWEO never becomes vested in PERS as a peace officer (in another job class) before retirement, the person cannot convert their FWEO time to peace officer status. In order to convert the service time, the employee must, from their own pocket, make up for the lower rate of PERS contribution while the employee was a FWEO.

This measure will cost the state *absolutely nothing*; and will show peace officers of all walks that we in the Alaska Legislature appreciate the difficult jobs which they do.

I urge your support for this necessary change in the law.

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BRC:med
02-181.med

Subject: HB 445

Date: Tue, 05 Mar 2002 14:54:12 -0900

From: Gregory_Garcia <gregory_garcia@dps.state.ak.us>

Organization: Department of Public Safety

To: Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Harry_Crawford@legis.state.ak.us

Mr. Coghill,

My name is Greg Garcia I am a State Trooper for the Division of Wildlife Protection, currently stationed in Hoonah, Alaska for the last three years. Next month I am transferring to Cantwell, Ak. I was a FWEO in Palmer from 1992 to the date when the State discontinued with the FWEO program. There are several, possibly dozens of Troopers who were FWEO's in the past that this bill could effect. I can speak for myself when I was a FWEO in Palmer. I did police work in enforcing 5AAC regs. and Alaska Statute #16. I worked the same cases as did the FWP Troopers, also on many occasions served as back up for patrol Troopers. Even though our job only entitled enforcing 5AAC and AS 16, we basically performed as the same function as other Troopers. This is where the liability issue came in. Some might say we were not cops. But for those of us who were FWEO's and other Troopers who worked around FWEO's would say the FWEO's performed his or her duties for the State as Law enforcement officers, an arrest is an arrest. All in all I feel I am doing the same job as I were as a FWEO but with the training received at the Academy.

This HB445 would in my mine eventually save money for the State in my situation. I would definitely retire when I reach 20 years.

Sincerely,
Trooper Greg Garcia

Fwd:

Subject: Fwd:

Date: Tue, 05 Mar 2002 15:06:18 -0900

From: Andy M Savland <andy_savland@dps.state.ak.us>

To: Representative_Harry_Crawford@legis.state.ak.us

Rep. Crawford.

Thank you for introducing HB 445!

Several of us worked hard for many years, and really didn't get the credit we deserved. Our acronym was FREEO's instead of FWEO. Basically we did close to the same job for half the price and training. When I look back on those years, I think the State was lucky none of us were seriously hurt while doing our job.

Andy Savland

Subject:

Date: Tue, 05 Mar 2002 14:55:02 -0900

From: Andy M Savland <andy_savland@dps.state.ak.us>

To: representative_john_coghill@legis.state.ak.us

Rep. Coghill

I'm writing to let you know I support HB 445, currently in your committee. I was a Fish & Wildlife Protection Officer for 4.5 years and have now been a Fish & Wildlife Trooper for just over 7 years. During my time as a FWEO, I did almost the same job as a Fish & Wildlife Trooper. The difference was that I did not have the authority to enforce other state laws besides AS 16. This however did not stop the few of us who were FWEO's, from getting mixed up in the enforcement of the other laws pertaining to public safety. Several times I can remember making warrant arrests and handing the prisoners off to the local Police Dept. to book at the local jail. We also acted as back up officers to the Troopers and the local Police Departments. And in most cases, were the only law enforcement for many miles. For the most part, we worked alone, were uniformed, armed, and were certainly viewed by the public as "Peach Officers".

As a side note, only recently have the Fish & Game biologists lost their 20 year retirement. When I started most of the biologists were commissioned, and were on the 20 year retirement system. While working with Public Safety for over 10 years, as a FWEO and a Trooper, I have yet to see a Fish & Game employee who carries a badge, be armed, write citations, or arrest people.

Please do your best to support HB 445.

Andy Savland

(907)755-2291