



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

April, 2026

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HB 78: RETIREMENT SYSTEMS; DEFINED BENEFIT OPTIONS

Write your Legislators about HB78 by visiting <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-your-rep-pass-the-pension-bill/>

House Bill 78, sponsored by Rep. Chuck Kopp, restores a defined benefit pension retirement for public employees. If passed, current PERS Tier IV members may convert their Defined Contribution (DC) plans to a Defined Benefit (DB) Plan. Future hires will have the choice between a DC and a DB plan.

HB 78 is currently in the Senate Finance Committee. Once passed out of committee, it will go to the Senate Floor for a vote. If passed, the House will hold a “concurrence vote” to show if they agree with the changes made in the Senate or not. If they agree, the bill goes directly to the Governor’s desk for signature. If they disagree, the Legislature must hold a “conference committee” to reconcile changes. If each body votes to concur on those changes, the bill will be sent to the Governor.

Once received, the Governor has 15 days (excluding Sundays) if they are in session and 20 days (excluding Sundays) if they are adjourned to sign or veto the bill. If vetoed while in session, the Legislature has 5 days after a veto to meet in a joint session and override the Governor’s veto (if the Legislature is still in session). If vetoed after session has adjourned, the Legislature must hold the override vote within 5 days of convening during the next session. They will need a 2/3 vote to succeed in overriding a veto.

Our members deserve a secure retirement after dedicating their career to public service. If you’d like to help, please e-mail your legislator and urge them to support HB 78 becoming law.

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Geographic Differential Study

AS 39.27.030 states that, subject to appropriation, a Geographic Differential Study should be conducted every 5 years. Yet it’s been 18 years since the last study. In that time, CPI has increased 43%, and state regional economies have shifted.

Thankfully, Rep. Josephson included \$1 million for a Geographic Differential Study in the House version of the operating budget (HB 263). However, there are still many steps left in the process before the budget is finalized.



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HB 300 State Employees: Meals/Travel Expenses

HB 300 by Rep. Hannan adjusts state employee per diem for inflation for the first time in 16 years. It has remained stagnant at \$60 for short-term and \$33 for long-term since 2010; adjusted to today's dollars, that would be \$82 and \$45. It currently sits in House State Affairs and will have its first hearing on Thursday, April 23rd.

HB 193 Unemployment Benefits; Paid Parental Leave

HB 193 by Rep. Hall increases unemployment benefits for the first time since 2009 and establishes the Alaska Parental Leave program. It will strengthen Alaska's workforce, support working families, and provide long-term economic stability for our state. It gives working families more time and security to care for newborn children, addresses inflation and rising costs, all while reducing costs for employers and keeping Alaska's business environment competitive. ASEA has authored a letter of support.

HB 193 has made it to House Finance. It was last heard on April 16, 2026. To follow its progress you can go to: [https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?](https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=hb%20193#tab6_4)

[Root=hb%20193#tab6_4](https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=hb%20193#tab6_4)

It's never too late to get involved in the process! Make sure to *contact your legislators and let them know how you feel about these bills and budget items. Find your legislator at akleg.gov

**Make sure to contact your legislators on your personal time, from your personal devices, and with your personal email or phone. Please don't use your government email or government devices.*