



Alaska State Legislature

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House OKs Probationary Period Extension Bill **Hudson's HB 458 Improves Flexibility for Public Employees**

(JUNEAU) – The state of Alaska would have the flexibility to extend probationary employment periods of public employees past the current 12-month limit, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Bill Hudson (R-Juneau) and passed unanimously by the House today.

“House Bill 458 is primarily a bill to allow some flexibility to extend probationary periods as needed,” Hudson said. “This bill is necessary to avoid the courts coming down and putting trooper recruits and others outside the law, so we need to provide for a little more discretion and flexibility in the process.”

As laid out in most collective bargaining agreements, state employees have six- or 12-month probationary periods that provide ample time for agencies to evaluate the work of new hires and decide whether to make the hiring arrangement permanent, Hudson said.

But some employees must be on probationary status beyond that limit. State trooper recruit trainees and corrections officers attending the state's public safety academy, for example are technically on probation throughout the 14-month course of training, under a collective bargaining agreement with the state. A recent court decision has said that the state's 12-month limit is explicit and unyielding, even if both the state and the unions approve longer extensions.

HB 458 would maintain the standard 12-month probationary period limit except where extensions were allowed under collective bargaining agreements, Hudson said.

[HB 458](#) moves next to the Senate for consideration.

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