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Representative Lesil McGuire

Chair, Judiciary Committee

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McGuire Renews Push for PFD Eligibility to Peace Corps Volunteers **Helping Others Should Not Mean Losing State Support**

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska House of Representatives approved House Bill 205 by a vote of 27 to eight on Friday. Sponsored by House Judiciary Committee Chair Rep. Lesil McGuire (R-Anchorage), HB 205 makes Peace Corps volunteers once again eligible to receive the Permanent Fund Dividend.

“We must remember an Alaskan who serves abroad is still an Alaskan,” McGuire said. “Peace Corps volunteers honor the State of Alaska with their service to others.”

From 1983 to 1998, the Permanent Fund Dividend Act included Peace Corps volunteers among the Alaskans who can live outside of the state for more than 180 days and remain eligible for the Dividend. Other Alaskans living outside the state who remain eligible for the Dividend include full-time college students, active-duty military personnel, Alaska’s Congressional Delegation and their staff, those receiving ongoing medical treatment, those who are providing care to a terminally ill family member, and Merchant Marines. McGuire says Alaska has about 30 Peace Corps volunteers each year who deserve to be included on this list.

“We should not penalize Alaskans who volunteer to serve our country and the greater interests of humanity,” McGuire said. “This small allowance by the state will make a big difference in the lives of fellow Alaskans who dedicate time to the less fortunate of the world.”

HB 205 also provides a new tool to cut down on fraudulent PFD claims. The Department of Revenue can prosecute fraudulent claims on PFD applications as felonies.

“As we open the door for the Alaskans who have always deserved the fund, we must actively discourage people who try to claim what isn’t theirs,” McGuire said. “This is about more than who gets a PFD; it’s about ensuring the state is as fair as possible when it distributes the wealth that belongs to its citizens.”

[HB 205](#) moves to the Senate.

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