



# Representative Scott Jiu Wo Kawasaki

Alaska State Legislature

District 1 Fairbanks

## **HB 127 Version D.A Sponsor Statement**

*An Act relating to a permanent fund dividend for an individual whose conviction has been vacated or reversed and dismissed or overturned via retrial; and relating to the calculation of the value of the Permanent Fund Dividend by including payment to individuals eligible for a Permanent Fund Dividend because of a conviction that has been vacated or reversed and dismissed or overturned via retrial.*

The State of Alaska Department of Law Criminal Division's mission is to "assure safe and healthy communities by prosecuting and convicting criminal offenders throughout Alaska." Likewise, the State has a responsibility to ensure that those convicted of crimes are prosecuted fairly and justly, and in the event that a mistake is made, do right by those who have had their convictions overturned.

Incarcerated Alaskans forgo their Permanent Fund Dividends to the State. HB 127 seeks to pay Permanent Fund Dividends to Alaskans whose convictions were vacated or reversed and dismissed, provided that a dismissal was not obtained through a Rule 11 plea agreement in another criminal case, as defined under the Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure. If passed, those eligible must apply for the PFD within 1 year following the new judgment or within 1 year of the effective date of the bill.

Providing the PFD to those Alaskans who have had lost this privilege on account of a conviction and then have had their convictions vacated or reversed and dismissed or overturned is one of the few things the State of Alaska can do to help them reestablish a normal life while providing a means to find housing, food and education.

The transition back to civilian life for these individuals can be difficult due to the loss of time with loved ones, let alone the loss of income otherwise earned. I ask your support for this bill that would help victims of injustice with their transition back into society as the State looks to ensure justice and fairness for all Alaskans.

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