

ALASKA AFL-CIO

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For Immediate Release

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New Data Released Shows Alaska Ranks 50th for Death on the Job

Alaska AFL-CIO and working families remember local workers who have lost their lives at work and renew the fight for worker safety

April 25th – Anchorage: The AFL-CIO’s annual Death on the Job report was released today ahead of Workers’ Memorial Day on April 28th. Using Bureau of Labor Statistics data, this report highlights the fact that Alaska is the deadliest state to work in the United States. In 2017 alone, 33 Alaskans were killed on the job while many more suffered from occupational diseases. On Workers’ Memorial Day, we take time to remember and mourn for our fellow Alaskans who didn’t make it home from work.

“Nearly 50 years ago, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, promising every worker the right to a safe job,” said Vince Beltrami, President of the Alaska AFL-CIO. “Unions and our allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality – winning important protections that have made jobs safer and saved lives. But the statistics show that our work is clearly not done.”

Workers are now calling for something to be done about violence in the workplace. Violence is the third-leading cause of workplace death in the United States, accounting for 807 fatalities, including 458 homicides nationwide. For the third year in a row, workplace violence increased, with nearly 29,000 workers suffering serious injuries due to assault on the job.

Last year in Alaska, we were proud to support Representative Matt Claman’s bill HB 312, in response to Alaska hospitals reporting an increase in workplace violence over the years. Violence in our hospitals includes patient-on-caregiver assault or visitor-on-caregiver assault. This bill allows law enforcement to remove those who endanger the safety of our health care professionals so that they can do their job.

This year, we are happy to support HB 125 from Representative Matt Claman which allows employers to seek protective orders against former employees who threaten the safety of current employees at the workplace.

“Every Alaskan has the right to a safe and healthy workplace,” said Beltrami. “Hardworking men and women

putting in long hours deserve to know that they're going to make it home at the end of the day. Unfortunately, in Alaska, families are also mourning their loved ones that didn't make it home. We're working to end that."

Attachments:

- *Alaska Profile*
- *Full Death on the Jobs Report*