



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rep. Josephson and ASCHR seek to close Anti-Discrimination Loophole with House Bill 13

February 16, 2023 (Juneau, Alaska) – Legislation by Representative Andy Josephson expanding the coverage of anti-discrimination statutes within the state is in the House Labor and Commerce Committee.

The Alaska State Commission for Human Rights (ASCHR) exists to assist in the remediation of complaints involving discrimination in employment, places of public accommodation, sale or rental of property, financing and credit, and practices by the State or its political subdivisions.

However, statutes encompassing the ASCHR have remained largely unchanged since its establishment by the Alaska Legislature in 1963. In that time, jurisdictional gaps in coverage have emerged specifically in Alaska's non-profit sector.

"The Commission passed Resolution 2022-4 in July last year, reaffirming its long-standing position that non-profit employers should not get a pass when it comes to discrimination violations under state law," said ACSCHR Chairperson Zackary Gottshall. "I appreciate Rep. Sumner's immediate uptake of HB 13 as chair of the House Labor and Commerce Committee and look forward to seeing the bill continue moving in the Alaska Legislature. It is my hope that this bill will assist the tens of thousands of workers employed by non-profit employers across Alaska."

Current statute only gives jurisdiction over for-profit companies hindering the commission's ability to serve a significant portion of Alaska's workforce. House Bill 13 updates statutes to include non-profit organizations within ASCHR jurisdiction.

"The commission has informed us that dozens of complaints were summarily rejected because a lack of jurisdiction by ASCHR, and yet, no one can identify why non-profits are not covered by the commission's jurisdiction," said Rep. Andy Josephson (D-Anchorage). "I appreciate the committee's quick attention and expediting of the bill."

For more information about the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, please visit <https://humanrights.alaska.gov>. To talk about discrimination experiences directly to an investigator, call (800)-478-4692 or (907)-274-4692.

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