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State Director

To the Alaska Legislature:

Quite simply, HB184 & SB87 will save lives. According to the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services it is estimated 1 in 100 babies will be born in the state with a congenital heart defect. For those infants, death can be prevented if the CCHD is detected and treated earlier.

Congenital heart disease is the number one cause of infant deaths from birth defects. CCHD is a subgroup of congenital heart disease that affects approximately 4,800 babies born in the United States each year. Babies with CCHD have a heart defect that requires intervention, such as surgery, in the first few hours, days, or months of life. In September 2011, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services added screening for CCHD to the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP). CCHD screening is done through a simple, non-invasive test called “pulse oximetry” that can detect CCHD before a baby shows signs of the condition, allowing for the proper treatment to be given to prevent disability or death.

Sincerely,

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