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REPRESENTATIVE WES KELLER
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Sponsor Statement
HB102

“An Act providing for funding of educational services for students in residential psychiatric treatment centers.”

HB 102 addresses a gap in the current way we provide education services to children admitted to residential psychiatric treatment centers (RPTCs).

Currently, the local school district where the licensed psychiatric treatment center is located is responsible for providing educational services. However, the education being provided in these facilities falls short of what districts provide in the school house. This is true for traditional students and especially for special education students who have individualized educational plans (IEP). Many times, RPTC students fail to receive the correct number of course hours to remain at grade level. Often the only instruction they receive are on-line only coursework with no personal, direct instruction. Students are falling further behind in school compounding their emotional and behavioral challenges. Districts without RPTCs receive these students back and bear the extra expense of these students repeating grade.

This bill recognizes that most students in this situation have their treatment paid by the state, it is in Alaska’s best interest to solve this problem.

Under the bill each child at a licensed residential psychiatric treatment center, the school district pays the center a prorated amount based upon the number of days the student receives educational services by the center.

The goal of this bill is to allow children to fulfill their potential.

If passed, this legislation will interconnect the state’s mental health and educational services delivery model improving student and state outcome measures.