



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Matt Claman

Session: State Capitol, Rm 118 Juneau, AK 99801 Phone: 465-4919
Interim: 1500 W. Benson Blvd., Anch, AK 99503 Phone: 269-0130

House Bill 25 Sponsor Statement

"An Act relating to insurance coverage for contraceptives and related services; relating to medical assistance coverage for contraceptives and related services; and providing for an effective date."

Unintended pregnancies have significant and negative consequences for individual women, their families, and society as a whole. Research links births resulting from unintended or closely spaced pregnancy to adverse maternal and child health outcomes and other social and economic challenges. With Alaska's fiscal challenges, we should look for ways to reduce costs in the short-term and long-term. House Bill 25 will reduce costs associated with unintended pregnancies by making prescriptive contraceptives more easily available to Alaskan women.

In 2010, 48% of all pregnancies in Alaska were unintended. Alaska's unintended pregnancy rate in 2010 was 54 per 1,000 women aged 15-44. Of those unintended pregnancies, 60% resulted in births, 26% resulted in abortions, and the remainder resulted in miscarriages. Most unintended pregnancies are associated with significant public costs. In 2010, 64.3% of unplanned births in Alaska were publically funded, which resulted in a \$42.9 million cost to the state.

House Bill 25 seeks to reduce the costs of unintended pregnancies by making prescriptive contraceptives more easily available to Alaskan women. A research study shows that women who were dispensed a 12-month supply of oral contraceptives had 30% less odds of having an unintended pregnancy than women who received a 1- or 3-month prescription. The study concluded that health insurance programs and public health programs may avert costly unintended pregnancies by increasing dispensing limits on oral contraceptives to a 1-year supply.

House Bill 25 requires health care insurers, including Medicaid services, to dispense 12 months of prescriptive contraceptives at a time. Alaskan women often face challenges while trying to access prescription contraceptives. Women living in rural Alaska have less access to healthcare services and therefore less reliable access to prescriptive contraceptives. Fisherwomen working on a boat for two or three months at a time need longer supplies of prescription oral contraceptives. This bill looks to reduce health care costs in Alaska by preventing unintended pregnancies and providing Alaskan women greater access to family planning options.