



February 29th, 2024

Dear Representative Gray,

I am writing to express our support for House Bill 320 requested by current and former foster youth to maintain legal sibling relationships for youth adopted in Alaska. Sibling relationships are critical to the well-being of all children, especially those who experience complex trauma often compounded by the foster care system.

As of January 2024, there were 2,635 children and youth in foster care throughout the state (Office of Children's Services Statistical information retrieved Feb. 2024). The Office of Children's services and current law prioritize keeping siblings together upon placement in foster care and maintaining contact for those separated. Large siblings' groups, lack of resources and foster families often leads to separation among siblings, especially large sibling groups.

We support this bill because maintaining lifelong legal ties is imperative to their overall well-being, cultural and familial ties for all children and youth in Alaska.

Thanks for your consideration.

Kevin A. Campbell

Kevin A. Campbell

CEO

Pale Blue.



9 February 2026

Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for House Bill 157 –Effect of Adoption Decree on Siblings

Dear Representative Gray & Members of the Alaska Legislature,

The Alaska Children’s Trust (ACT) offers our support for House Bill 157, which would consider legal siblings post adoption. As the statewide lead organization focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect, ACT fully supports policies that promote strong family relationships. Sibling relationships are critical to the well-being of all children and their future success. This is especially true for those who experience complex trauma often compounded by the child welfare and foster care system.

Despite policies that prioritize keeping siblings together after placement in foster care and maintaining contact for those who are separated, a lack of system resources and limited number of foster families often lead to siblings being separated. This is especially common for large sibling groups or for youth with specialized needs. House Bill 157 ensures that courts explicitly consider and document whether ongoing sibling contact is in a child’s best interest following adoption, preserving legal recognition of sibling relationships. This policy promotes positive family relationships, reduces the impacts of trauma, and lays a foundation for life-long support and connection.

Alaska Children’s Trust fully supports House Bill 157 because maintaining lifelong legal ties to siblings supports the emotional well-being, cultural connection, and familial ties for all children and youth in Alaska. Thank you for sponsoring this bill.

Sincerely,

Trevor J. Storrs
President & CEO
Alaska Children’s Trust

Facing Foster Care in Alaska
PO Box 92644
Anchorage, AK 99509



February 16th, 2024

Dear Representative Gray,

Thank you for sponsoring House Bill 320 to consider siblings legal siblings post adoption. Siblings are often the longest relationships and strongest bonds we maintain throughout the course of our lives. As current and former foster youth, we know all too well the heartache of family separation and time away from those we love. While the goal of child welfare is to keep siblings together and maintain these connections, the unfortunate truth is that this does not always happen. Siblings may be separated into different foster homes, shelters, therapeutic programs or other alternate housing leaving them scattered among placements, especially larger sibling groups. What's worse, sibling ties may be permanently severed by adoption. Adoption is meant to be celebrated as a means to an end of a foster youth's time in the system as they have permanent legal bonds to parents.

"The circumstances that foster children go through are so difficult and siblings lean on each other to get through it. It's hard losing the only person who knows what it was like during the worst of your trauma." Deko Harbi –Foster Youth & FFCA Anchorage Youth Board Representative.

Our hope is that anyone adopted from foster care in Alaska, continues to maintain their siblings as legal siblings throughout the course of their lives. House Bill 320 allows this. For so many of us who have experienced indescribable grief and loss over the loss of these legal ties, House Bill 320 gives us hope. Foster Youth would no longer need to choose between an adoptive family and connection to their brothers and sisters.

"When our younger siblings grow up, and come back to be a part of our lives (post adoption), we want them to know we will always be there. Adu Wassillie –Foster Youth & FFCA Western Youth Board Representative."

Facing Foster Care in Alaska

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