

**HOUSE BILL NO. 157**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES GRAY, Frier, Costello**

**Introduced: 3/26/25**

**Referred: Health and Social Services, Judiciary**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to the effect of a decree of adoption or termination of parental rights**  
2 **on the legal relationship between a person and the person's siblings; and providing for**  
3 **an effective date."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
6 to read:

7 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

8 (1) the importance of a child's relationship with the child's siblings is well  
9 recognized in law and science;

10 (2) the bonds between siblings are often irreplaceable;

11 (3) a foster child typically has some degree of contact or visitation with the  
12 child's siblings, even when the child and the child's siblings do not reside together.

13 (b) It is the intent of the legislature

14 (1) that when a court reviews and approves a petition to adopt a child from

1 foster care, the court shall encourage the adoptive parents, birth parents, foster parents,  
 2 kinship caregivers, and the department to consider the long-term benefits to the child adoptee  
 3 and the child's siblings of facilitating post-adoption contact between the siblings that is similar  
 4 in nature and frequency to that which existed before the adoption;

5 (2) to promote a larger focus by the office of children's services and the courts  
 6 in permanency planning and adoption proceedings on the interests of the child and the child's  
 7 siblings separated by adoptive placements; and

8 (3) to encourage courts to include provisions in an adoption decree that  
 9 support ongoing postadoption contact between siblings.

10 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 25.23.125 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

11 (d) If the person to be adopted is a minor who has been committed to the  
 12 custody of the Department of Family and Community Services under AS 47.10, and  
 13 the minor has siblings as defined in AS 25.23.130(g), the court shall determine  
 14 whether post-adoption visitation with the siblings is in the best interests of the minor  
 15 to be adopted and document the finding on the final decree of adoption.

16 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 25.23.130(a) is amended to read:

17 (a) A final decree of adoption, whether issued by a court of this state or of any  
 18 other state, has the following effect as to matters within the jurisdiction or before a  
 19 court of this state:

20 (1) except with respect to a spouse of the petitioner and relatives of the  
 21 spouse, to relieve the natural parents of the adopted person of all parental rights and  
 22 responsibilities, and, except as provided in (c) of this section, to terminate all legal  
 23 relationships between the adopted person and the natural parents and other relatives of  
 24 the adopted person **who are not siblings of the adopted person**, so that the adopted  
 25 person thereafter is a stranger to **these** [THE] former relatives for all purposes,  
 26 including inheritance, unless the decree of adoption specifically provides for  
 27 continuation of inheritance rights, and the interpretation or construction of documents,  
 28 statutes, and instruments, whether executed before or after the adoption is decreed,  
 29 that do not expressly include the person by name or by some designation not based on  
 30 a parent and child or blood relationship; and

31 (2) to create the relationship of parent and child between **the** petitioner

1 and the adopted person, as if the adopted person were a legitimate blood descendant of  
2 the petitioner, for all purposes, including inheritance and applicability of statutes,  
3 documents, and instruments, whether executed before or after the adoption is decreed,  
4 that do not expressly exclude an adopted person from their operation or effect.

5 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 25.23.130 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

6 (g) In this section, "sibling" means a person who

7 (1) is related to an individual by blood, adoption, or marriage as a child  
8 of one or both parents; or

9 (2) was raised together with an individual for a period of time in the  
10 same household and in the same manner that children who are related by blood,  
11 adoption, or marriage might be.

12 \* **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).