



# REPRESENTATIVE ALYSE GALVIN

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## **Sponsor Statement: House Bill 151** **Medical Assistance: Children Under Age 6**

In Alaska, ensuring that our children and families have access to the proper healthcare is crucial to their well-being. This is especially important for children under six who are in the midst of a critical developmental period. Under the current system, children under six years old who qualify for Medicaid are currently covered for one year and must reapply annually for continued coverage. This bill mitigates unnecessary disruptions in their care, disruptions that leave families with uncertainty when it comes to securing health services for their young children.

House Bill 151 aims to solve this issue of coverage gaps by guaranteeing continuous eligibility for children under six. This means that once a child is determined eligible for Medicaid, they will remain covered until they turn six years old, eliminating the need for annual reauthorization and ensuring they have uninterrupted access to the care they need.

This bill also saves state administration time and resources.

The passage of this bill is vital for supporting the healthy development of our youngest residents and ensuring that families do not face unexpected gaps in coverage. In addition to strengthening the health security of vulnerable youth in Alaska it removes possible barriers to learning as frequent care ensures early diagnosis and intervention of developmental delays.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill and take a meaningful step toward ensuring that all Alaskan children and families can count on stable, reliable health care allowing children to reach their full potential.