



THE STATE  
of ALASKA  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Health

SENIOR AND DISABILITY SERVICES  
Governor's Council on Disabilities  
and Special Education

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April 3, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Alaska State Legislature  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 141 – UNIVERSAL CHANGING  
FACILITIES IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

On behalf of the Alaska Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, we are writing to express our strong support for House Bill 141, "An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings." This crucial legislation will promote accessibility, dignity, and inclusivity for individuals with disabilities and their families across Alaska.

Currently, almost all public facilities lack appropriate changing accommodations for individuals with complex disabilities who require assistance beyond standard restroom facilities. Without universal changing spaces, individuals are often forced to change on the floors of public restrooms, which is unsafe, unsanitary, and undignified. No Alaskan should have to endure such conditions. By requiring universal changing facilities in public buildings, House Bill 141 ensures that all Alaskans have access to safe, hygienic, and dignified restroom accommodations.

Providing universal changing facilities aligns with Alaska's commitment to equity, accessibility, and the Alaska Developmental Disabilities Shared Vision: "Alaskans share a vision of a flexible system in which each person directs their own supports, based on their strengths and abilities, toward a meaningful life in their home, their job and their community. Our vision includes supported families, professional staff and services available throughout the state now and into the future." House Bill 141 enhances the ability of people with disabilities to fully engage in public life, whether visiting government buildings, recreational spaces, or other public venues. Furthermore, it supports caregivers, including parents of children with disabilities and personal care assistants, by offering an appropriate and respectful environment for personal care needs.

A compelling example of the necessity of this legislation comes from Judy Edwards of Anchorage and her son, Eric Edwards. Judy was forced to change Eric on the floor of the Anchorage International Airport due to the lack of an appropriate facility. This was not only unsafe and unsanitary but also a profound indignity. Alaskans deserve more. Because of Judy's advocacy and personal story, the Anchorage International Airport has since installed a universal

changing facility in its concourse, setting a precedent for accessibility and dignity in public facilities. House Bill 141 would extend this progress statewide, ensuring that no individual or caregiver faces such an undignified situation again.

We urge the Alaska Legislature to pass House Bill 141 and remove barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from fully accessing public spaces. The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education is committed to working alongside legislators, advocates, and community members to advance policies that foster inclusion and accessibility in our state.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide further information or support as this bill progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jena Crafton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Jena Crafton, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Reinhart". The signature is written in a bold, cursive style.

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Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director



**South Central Region**  
540 W. International Airport Rd.  
Anchorage, AK 99518-1110  
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907.564.7429 fax  
[www.hopealaska.org](http://www.hopealaska.org)

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Helping Alaskans with Differing Abilities Experience Hope Since 1968

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April 5, 2025

Dear Representative Carrick,

I am writing to offer Hope Community Resources full support of HB No. 141- "An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings."

Hope Community Resources is a non-profit organization based in Anchorage, supporting Alaskans with disabilities and mental health challenges in six regions of Alaska. We have operated for over 56 years and have worked diligently through those years to advocate for full accessibility, equality, and self-determination for not only the people we support but for all Alaskans with disabilities.

Most of us have had an occasional experience of limiting water intake if we are unclear when we would have access to safe or hygienic place to relieve ourselves. However, for an adult with a significant physical disability and the person supporting them, access to appropriate places to provide hygienic care becomes a daily challenge, limiting access to the community and desired activities as well as impacting health if hydration is compromised.

Requiring public buildings in which a restroom is constructed, or one that undergoes a remodel, to have at least one publicly available restroom with a universal changing facility, creates parity and dignity with those who are ambulatory- and enhances the opportunities for community access and participation. We look forward to the day where all Alaskans can access their community without concern, and this bill takes a huge step forward toward that goal.

Sincerely,

Michele Girault  
Executive Director  
Hope Community Resources, Inc.

**Key Coalition of Alaska**

3705 Arctic Blvd, #1866  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
907-433-4705

**Fairbanks Chapter**

805 Airport Way  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
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[keycoalitionofalaska.org](http://keycoalitionofalaska.org)



Equity



Partnership



Advocacy



Inclusion



Support

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April 3, 2025

Dear Representative Carrick,

Key Coalition of Alaska submits this letter of support for House Bill No. 141 – “An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings.”

Key Coalition of Alaska is a non-profit, statewide advocacy organization comprised of people with disabilities, their families, friends, and other supporters. Key Coalition advocates for independent living, equality and disability civil rights, and access to quality physical health care services in the community of their choosing.

Statewide, Key Coalition represents many thousands of individuals and families whose lives have been touched by intellectual/developmental and physical disabilities, including mothers, fathers, siblings, friends, and other non-paid caregiving support. Key Coalition also represents the agencies that provide direct support to individuals in their homes and communities.

Universal changing facilities in public buildings addresses a key component of Key Coalition’s decades-long fight for equity and inclusion in Alaska communities. Every person, regardless of ability, belongs in public spaces.

Many individuals with IDD and other physical disabilities experience incontinence as a part of their life-long disability. A caregiver tasked with changing incontinence underwear in a public restroom is abruptly faced with the realization that public spaces are not designed to accommodate anyone larger than a toddler who needs to be laid down to be changed. The indignity of an adult lying on the floor of a public restroom during the process of being changed, while the public walks by, cannot be overstated. Restroom floors are at minimum unsanitary, and certainly not intended for the task of providing personal care for an adult.

Requiring public buildings in which a restroom is constructed, or that undergoes a remodel of the building, to contain at least one publicly available restroom with a universal changing facility provides equity and inclusion for individuals, families and caregivers. Key Coalition of Alaska supports HB141, “An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings.”

On Behalf of Key Coalition Board of Directors,

Wendy Cloyd

Board Member - Key Coalition of Alaska