

# House Bill 185: Medical Assistance Eligibility for Family Planning Services

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Representative Carolyn Hall

# Introduction

Expand Medicaid coverage by creating a Family Planning State Plan Amendment (SPA) to provide family planning services to Alaskans.

- Federal Government pays 90% of Medicaid family planning services; 10% match from the state.
  - State will save \$7 for every one dollar spent on family planning.
- The SPA will:
  - improve birth outcomes
  - empower Alaskans to decide whether to grow their families
  - reduce infant mortality and preterm birth rates.
- Additional services: preventive screenings for sexually transmitted infections, HIV, & cervical and breast cancers.

# What is a State Plan Amendment?

- An agreement between a state & the Federal government describing how the state administers its [Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs \(CHIP\)](#).
- Assures a state will abide by Federal rules & may claim matching funds.
- The state plan sets out groups of individuals to be covered, services to be provided, methodologies for providers to be reimbursed and the administrative activities that are underway in the state.

# Why do we need a Family Planning State Plan Amendment (SPA) in Alaska?

- Highest rates of infant mortality in U.S. since 2001.
- Alaska's preterm birth rate is rising among Medicaid enrollees.
- Currently, eligible Medicaid families are at 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

# What is a Federal Poverty Line?

- Indicates the minimum amount of annual income that an individual / family needs to pay for essentials.
- Based on the size of a household and where someone lives.
- Alaska and Hawaii have higher Federal Poverty Levels due to the higher cost of living.

To qualify for Medicaid pregnancy coverage Alaskans must meet 200% FPL. HB185 would expand eligibility limits to 225%.

# Where did the 225% come from?

- Model language for the 225% FPL was inspired by 2023 legislation: [HCS SB 58](#).
- HCS SB 58 extended postpartum Medicaid coverage for new mothers from 60 days to 12 months.

**Goal:** lower and eliminate Alaska's high rate of infant mortality.

# Preterm Birth Rates

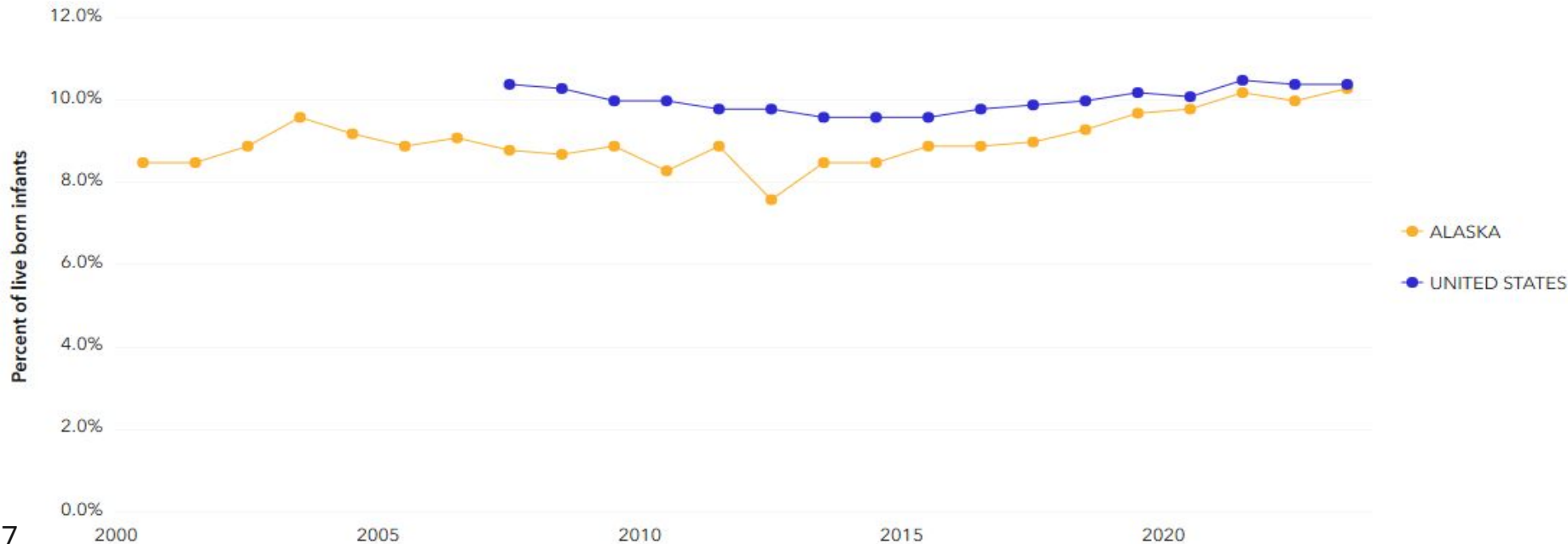
Preterm Births (2000-2023)

Alaska (2023)

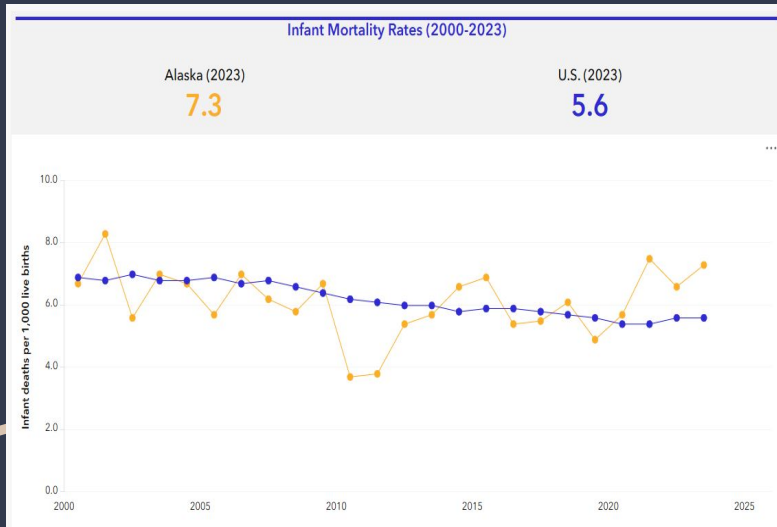
10.3%

U.S. (2023)

10.4%



# High Infant Mortality Rates



- Based on data from the Alaska Department of Health (DOH) Alaska's infant mortality rate is “43–83 deaths per year.”
- The DOH reported that deaths within 27 days (“neonatal mortality rate”) have been lower than the U.S. average and deaths from 28 days to 1 year (“postneonatal mortality rates”) have been higher than the U.S. average.
- **2022:** “Alaska's infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births: 6.6 (35th nationally); U.S. average: 5.6.”
- **2023:** “Alaska's infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births: 7.3 – U.S.: 5.6”

# The Difference Between A Family Planning SPA and a Section 1115 Waiver

- **Section 1115 waivers**
  - Allow states to experiment with new approaches & initiatives that don't meet federal standards.
  - Give states additional flexibility to design & improve their programs.
  - Time-bound & limited-scope; generally approved for an initial 5-year period, with possible 5-year extension.
- **SPAs**
  - Allow states to receive federal dollars for coverage that doesn't meet federal standards or that extends beyond federal options.
  - Permanent change
  - The state plan defines who is eligible, what services are provided, how providers are reimbursed & what administrative activities are underway in the state.

# What are other states doing?

## Wisconsin

- SPA (since 2010)
- Family Planning Only Services Program
- 306% FPL

## Oklahoma

- SPA (since 2011)
- SoonerPlan
- 133% FPL

## Indiana

- SPA (since 2012)
- Family Planning Eligibility Program
- 141% FPL

## North Carolina

- SPA (since 2013)
- Be Smart Family Planning
- 195% FPL

# Thank You

# Questions?

# References

<https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/medicaid-state-plan-amendments>

<https://mch-indicators2-alaska-dhss.hub.arcgis.com/pages/infant-mortality-1-1>

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/33?Root=SB%2058#tab14>

<https://www.healthinsurance.org/medicaid/alaska/>

<https://www.medicaidplanningassistance.org/federal-poverty-guidelines/>

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/advancing-access-to-contraception-through-section-1115-medicaid-waivers-and-state-plan-amendments/>