

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

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April 1, 2009

The Honorable Jay Ramras
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Ramras:

In the House Judiciary Committee hearing held on March 27, 2009, Representative Max Gruenberg asked the following questions about House Bill 141 (Interstate Compact for Juveniles):

- When did the first state adopt the new Interstate Compact for Juveniles?

We contacted Keith Scott, Director of the National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments, to answer this question; he reported that the first state to adopt the new Compact did so in March 2003 (North Dakota). The 35th state to adopt the Compact, Illinois, did so in August 2008. Adoption of the Compact by 35 states placed the Compact into "active" status, meaning that participating states are now developing the new rules that will govern interstate travel by juveniles. With the 35th state enacting the Compact, the first Interstate Commission meeting was held in December 2008. States that have not enacted the new Compact by December 2009 will not be able to transfer juveniles to and from states operating under the new Compact at that time, and will be required to develop individualized Memoranda of Agreement to transfer juveniles to and from those states.

- What are Hawaii's amendments to its bill on the Interstate Compact for Juveniles, noted in the materials provided by Rep. Coghill's office?

To answer this question we contacted Hawaii's juvenile compact administrator. She stated that Hawaii is currently considering two changes to the Compact:

- 1.) In Article III, subsection (h)(7), deleting the phrase "regulated person or entity" and replacing it with the word "juvenile." The Hawaiian compact administrator said they believed the phrase "regulated person or entity" to be confusing.

- 2.) In Article VI of the Compact (found in Section 4 of Alaska's HB 141), deleting section (f), which reads: "The existing rules governing the operation of the Interstate Compact on Juveniles shall be null and void 12 months after the first meeting of the Interstate Commission created under this compact." The Hawaiian compact administrator said they made this change to ensure that Hawaii could continue to work with states that have adopted the new compact as well as states that continue to operate under the old compact.

We consulted with Jan Rutherford and Deborah Behr at the Department of Law on these issues. Our two agencies agree that Hawaii's amendments are not needed in Alaska's bill and would only complicate what is intended to be a nationally uniform document. In the first case, we do not believe the term used in the Compact, "regulated person or entity," is confusing. It clearly refers to the individuals subject to the compact. In the second case, we believe Alaska's ability to work with other states, including those that do not adopt the new compact, is ensured in Section 12 of Alaska's HB 141, which reads:


The Department of Health and Social Services may continue to implement the provisions of former AS 47.15.010 (the old Interstate Compact on Juveniles), as it read on the day before the effective date of this Act, to certain states that are compacting states to the Uniform Interstate Compact on Juveniles, but have not yet enacted the Interstate Compact for Juveniles, set out in AS 47.15.010, as repealed and reenacted by sec. 4 of this Act, or a substantially similar form of that compact.

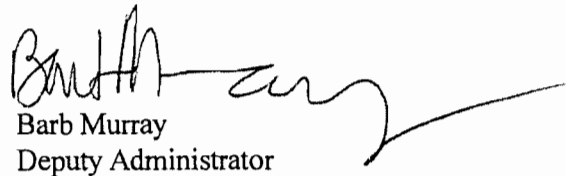
- Have other states made amendments to the Compact?

To answer this question we contacted the Keith Scott, Director of the National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments. We asked Mr. Scott if he could provide a list of other states' amendments to the Interstate Compact for Juveniles. Mr. Scott said no such list has been assembled by the Council. While he has received occasional inquiries and provided feedback on potential amendments on the Compact from various states, he has not maintained a list of these inquiries and does not know which, if any, of these potential amendments have been adopted. To fully answer this question therefore would require us to contact individual states and review their legislation that enacted the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.

At the request of Acting Chair Nancy Dahlstrom we are sending a copy of this response to the members of the House Finance Committee, the next committee of referral for HB 141.

Sincerely,


Tony Newman
Social Services Program Officer


Barb Murray
Deputy Administrator
Interstate Compact on Juveniles

Cc: The Honorable Carl Gatto, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Lindsay Holmes, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Nancy Dahlstrom, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Bob Lynn, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Max Gruenberg, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Mike Hawker, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Bill Thomas, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Bill Stoltze, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Alan Austerman, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Anna Fairclough, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Richard Foster, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Reggie Joule, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Mike Kelly, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Harry Crawford, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Les Gara, Alaska House of Representatives
The Honorable Woodie Salmon, Alaska House of Representatives
Jan Rutherford, Civil Division, Alaska Department of Law
Deborah Behr, Civil Division, Alaska Department of Law
Wilda Laughlin, Commissioner's Office, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services