

# ALASKA STATE SENATE

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SENATOR JOHN COGHILL

**SB 49: An Act defining “medically necessary abortion” for purposes of making payments under the state Medicaid program.**

## **SPONSOR STATEMENT**

Senate Bill 49 (“SB 49”) specifically brings clarity to the term “medically necessary abortion” for the purposes of making payments under Medicaid.

In 2001, the Alaska Supreme Court determined the state must pay for medically necessary abortions for participants in the Medicaid program.<sup>1</sup> Since 2001, the term “medically necessary abortion” has acquired a constitutional component of *unknown scope*. The relatively few Alaska cases involving abortion rights do not provide guidance as to how broadly the term “medically necessary abortion” is to be construed.

SB 49 answers that issue. SB 49, based on recommendations and expert testimony from medical professionals, reasonably provides a neutral definition for a “medically necessary abortion.”

I urge you to support SB 49.

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<sup>1</sup> See *State, Department of Health and Social Services v. Planned Parenthood of Alaska*, 28 P.3d 904 (Alaska 2001).