

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA

HB 151 Brief Explanation of Changes (HHS CS version N to version I)

Several changes were made between HHS CS version N of HB 151 (3/24/17) and version I (to be introduced 4/12/17).

In section 2, the extension of funding for adoptions and guardianships for youth over age 18 was amended in several ways. These changes were made to reduce costs and to limit the applicability of this section to youth age 18 and older. Section 2 directs the department to implement adoption and guardianship stipends for older youth using the same approach that is used for foster care subsidies (described in existing regulation). In version I, the word “stipend” is now used (rather than “subsidy”) to differentiate from federal language. Section 9 from version N was removed as part of the overall change to the adoption and guardianship stipends.

Language was added to version I section 12 (page 10, lines 2-4), to specify in greater detail the employees to whom the training and workload standards will apply. Language was added to include employees who work with families to prevent the removal of a child from a home, and who investigate reports of harm.

In section 18, the timeline for implementation of certain sections has been updated. Hiring of staff to meet the requirements in section 12 shall occur within three years (versus the two years specified in version N). Several other aspects of the bill will now be implemented in year one. In addition to increased training for new workers, these elements include: supervisor certification that relative searches have been carried out, use of the prudent parent standard for foster families, and involvement of youth 14 years of age and older in case planning.