

HOUSE BILL NO. 167

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
 THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES FIELDS, Dibert, Armstrong

Introduced: 4/20/23

Referred: Health and Social Services, Judiciary

A BILL**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 "An Act relating to the care of children in state custody placed in nonprofit institutions
 2 outside the state."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 47.14.100(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) Subject to (e), (f), and (i) - (m) of this section, the department shall arrange
 6 for the care of every child committed to its custody by placing the child in a foster
 7 home, [OR] in the care of an agency or institution providing care for children inside
 8 [OR OUTSIDE] the state, **or in the care of a nonprofit institution providing care**
 9 **for children outside the state.** The department may place a child in a suitable family
 10 home, with or without compensation, and may place a child released to it, in writing
 11 verified by the parent, or guardian or other person having legal custody, for adoptive
 12 purposes, in a home for adoption in accordance with existing law. For a child 16 years
 13 of age or older, the department may authorize another transitional living arrangement,
 14 including student dormitory residence at a postsecondary educational institution, that

1 adequately meets the child's needs and is designed to assist the child's transition to
 2 independent living.

3 * **Sec. 2.** AS 47.14.112(d) is amended to read:

4 (d) The division of the department with responsibility over the custody of
 5 children shall prepare and make available to the legislature an annual report on
 6 employee recruitment and retention, including a five-year plan, for the division. Not
 7 later than November 15 of each year, the department shall deliver the report to the
 8 senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives and notify the
 9 legislature that the report is available. The report prepared under this subsection is
 10 separate from the annual report to the legislature required under AS 18.05.020 and
 11 must include, for the previous 12 months,

12 (1) the number of frontline social workers employed by the division,
 13 the annual average turnover rate of the workers, and the average caseload of the
 14 workers on January 1 and July 1 of that year;

15 (2) the number of children removed from their homes;

16 (3) the achievement of success measured by the following:

17 (A) rate of family reunification;

18 (B) average length of time children spent in custody of the
 19 department;

20 (C) rate of placement with an adult family member or family
 21 friend;

22 (D) number of children placed in a permanent living
 23 arrangement with a guardian or biological or adoptive parent;

24 (E) number of children released from the custody of the
 25 department;

26 (4) if the department has met or exceeded the caseload standards under
 27 this chapter and, if the standards were exceeded, the number of caseworker positions
 28 in the division that could be eliminated and the amount of funding that could be
 29 reduced while continuing to meet but not routinely exceed the caseload standards;

30 (5) the performance of the department on federal benchmarks focused
 31 on the safety, well-being, and permanent placements of foster children compared with

1 the previous five years;

2 (6) the number of children placed in nonprofit institutions
3 providing care for children outside the state.