

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES BUNDE, Brice, Berkowitz, Dyson, Croft, Rokeberg, James, Ryan, Kemplen

Introduced: 4/18/97

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 Relating to the Alaska Council of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf/Blind.

2 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 WHEREAS Alaska has a long-standing commitment to serving its disabled citizens,
4 including the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind; and

5 WHEREAS, based on national average rates, Alaska's population probably includes
6 approximately 6,000 people who have hearing loss ranging from mild to severe; and

7 WHEREAS Alaska lifestyles include many activities that can cause hearing
8 impairment, including travel by air and operation of four-wheelers, chain saws, snow
9 machines, and other equipment; and

10 WHEREAS, although the hearing impaired represent the largest disability group in the
11 United States, they are one of the most misunderstood and least served disability groups; and

12 WHEREAS the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind require many types of services,
13 including rehabilitation, education, deaf interpretation, independent living, correctional, and
14 mental health services; and

15 WHEREAS many deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind Alaskans experience drug and
16 alcohol problems and live in communities with limited or no access to appropriate services;
17 and

1 **WHEREAS** the several agencies, offices, and councils that provide services to the
2 deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind often develop policies and programs without adequate
3 input from professional providers of these services or their consumers; and

4 **WHEREAS** coordination of services for this disability group could result in more
5 efficient and effective service delivery; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Council of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf/Blind
7 (ACDHHDB) has been operating unofficially for two years as a referral center and
8 clearinghouse of information for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind; and

9 **WHEREAS** several agencies that provide services to Alaska's deaf, hard of hearing,
10 and deaf/blind residents have expressed willingness to expand their financial support of the
11 ACDHHDB in order to extend its effectiveness; and

12 **WHEREAS** the ACDHHDB has obtained a business license and is working to obtain
13 tax-exempt status in the State of Alaska and to achieve certification as a nonprofit organization
14 under sec. 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code; and

15 **WHEREAS** additional visibility in the community of the deaf, hard of hearing, and
16 deaf/blind, and the providers of professional services to these consumers, would help the
17 ACDHHDB attract additional funding through grants, private fund raising, and donations; and

18 **WHEREAS** operation of the ACDHHDB does not require, nor is expected to require,
19 funding from state government;

20 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the Alaska Council
21 of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf/Blind (ACDHHDB) as a statewide information
22 clearinghouse and services referral center for issues affecting the deaf, hard of hearing, and
23 deaf/blind; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that private citizens, state agencies, schools, social service
25 providers, private foundations, and all other parties who deal with the deaf, hard of hearing,
26 and deaf/blind are encouraged to support the ACDHHDB and to use its services whenever
27 appropriate.

28 **A COPY** of this resolution shall be sent to the Alaska Council of Deaf, Hard of
29 Hearing, and Deaf/Blind, 731 Gambell, Suite 200, Anchorage, AK 99501-3754.