

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 42

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE GREEN

Introduced: 2/19/02

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services, Finance

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the Congress to enact legislation that would temporarily increase the federal**
2 **share of Medicaid costs.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** the Medicaid program was designed to help counteract the effects of an
5 economic downturn by providing temporary health care coverage for unemployed workers
6 and their families; and

7 **WHEREAS** there has been a significant downturn in our nation's economy; and

8 **WHEREAS** states are experiencing significant losses in their revenue due, in part, to
9 the economic downturn and, in part, to the costs associated with homeland security measures;
10 and

11 **WHEREAS** it is estimated that the total budget shortfall for the states will be between
12 \$20,000,000,000 and \$30,000,000,000 by the end of March 2002; and

13 **WHEREAS**, if a state facing a budget shortfall is forced to reduce its Medicaid
14 expenditures, the state will also lose the corresponding federal matching dollars that help
15 finance the Medicaid program in that state, thereby losing the economic benefits of federal
16 investment and increasing the budget shortfall in the state; and

1 **WHEREAS**, without additional federal money, the ability of the states and the federal
2 government to work together to minimize the effect of this economic downturn on working
3 families will be severely compromised; and

4 **WHEREAS** Section 604 of H.R. 3090, as reported in the United States Senate on
5 November 9, 2001, included the following provisions related to the federal share of Medicaid
6 under 42 U.S.C. 1396d(b), known as the FMAP: a hold harmless provision, a one-and-one-
7 half percentage point increase, and a further increase for states with an unemployment rate
8 higher than the national average; and

9 **WHEREAS** these three FMAP provisions would assist the states in carrying out the
10 intent of the Medicaid program -- to assist unemployed workers and their families;

11 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature

12 (1) appreciates and understands the difficult task the Congress faces in
13 negotiating the final economic stimulus package; and

14 (2) strongly urges the Congress to include these three FMAP provisions in any
15 final economic stimulus package enacted by the Congress.

16 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Thomas Daschle, Majority
17 Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Trent Lott, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
18 Honorable J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
19 Richard A. Gephardt, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
20 Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don
21 Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.