

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE

April 15, 2005

2:18 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Fred Dyson, Chair
Senator Gary Wilken, Vice Chair
Senator Lyda Green
Senator Kim Elton
Senator Donny Olson

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 150

"An Act repealing the limits on grants awarded from the Alaska children's trust fund."

MOVED CSSB 150 (HES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 150

SHORT TITLE: ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND GRANTS

SPONSOR(S): HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

03/21/05	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/21/05	(S)	HES, FIN
04/06/05	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/06/05	(S)	Heard & Held
04/06/05	(S)	MINUTE(HES)
04/15/05	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

JOEL GILBERTSON, Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services
PO Box 110601
Juneau, AK 99801-0601

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 150

MARGO MCCABE
Alaska Children's Trust Fund

550 W. 8th St. Suite 304
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 150.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CHAIR FRED DYSON called the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee meeting to order at [2:18:37 PM](#). Present were Senators Donny Olson, Kim Elton, Gary Wilken, Lyda Green and Chair Fred Dyson.

SB 150-ALASKA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND GRANTS

[2:18:37 PM](#)

CHAIR DYSON announced SB 150 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR GREEN moved to adopt a committee substitute (CS) for SB 150, Version \F, as the working document before the committee.

CHAIR DYSON objected for the purpose of discussion.

[2:19:56 PM](#)

JOEL GILBERSTON, commissioner, Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) said:

The committee substitute bill before you changes the original so that the children's trust grants have a four-year term. One of the reasons that the trustees have been interested in this is that the trust does not generate a large amount of income.

Because of ongoing commitments to existing grants, we have been able to do no new grant making and for just about two years we have not issued a new grant. We want to move towards a system where there will be a natural process for grantees when they apply to develop a self-sufficiency plan in their original application for how they plan on funding their programs after Children's Trust Fund Dollars are no longer available. We want a system in which the board makes funding determinations based on data from performance measures and phases out grants after funding them for four years.

[2:22:48 PM](#)

SENATOR GREEN asked whether it is possible to create a system in which the trust can determine whether or not an organization is meeting its objectives.

COMMISSIONER GILBERTSON said it is a goal of the department to have performance measures for all of its grant projects. In some cases the department has been moving away from performance grants in favor of performance contracts in which it awards compensation to contractors on the basis of measurable outcomes of their work.

Performance measures would be developed through the Alaska Children's Trust with support from the Office of Children's Services (OCS). The trustees would develop the plan and the Trust would receive assistance from the OCS in developing performance measures. The goals would be incorporated into the Requests For Proposals (RFPs) that go to the grantees. The grantees would be required to make quarterly reports on progress towards the goals.

[2:24:19 PM](#)

SENATOR GREEN noted when the Senate worked on the Alaska Children's Fund; it never intended the grant projects would extend beyond four years. She expressed concern with the Fund's history of issuing multiple grants to the same entity in different locations throughout the state. She asked whether the language of the CS would allow that to happen.

COMMISSIONER GILBERTSON responded by requiring grantees to submit a sustainability plan during the RFP process and by having explicit performance measures and a fair selection process guided by a desire for measurable outcomes, the CS would ensure the competition that would allow better results from the grantees.

SENATOR GREEN wanted assurance that no one entity becomes the recipient of the preponderance of any one-year's grant.

COMMISSIONER GILBERTSON said it is not the intention of the board that that should occur. The board has a broad selection of individual entities that receive grants.

[2:26:25 PM](#)

MARGOT MCCABE, Alaska Children's Trust Fund, agreed with Commissioner Gilbertson's comments.

CHAIR DYSON asked the amount the fund distributed in the last budget year.

MS. MCCABE informed the committee they distributed approximately \$270,000 in the previous year.

CHAIR DYSON remarked the CS would eliminate the current \$50,000 cap on grants. He asked whether the board has considered a future practical working cap.

MS. MCCABE replied:

I think that we will and think that they will be established for each RFP depending on what the need is in that cycle.

CHAIR DYSON asked whether the list of recipients listed in the brochure is exhaustive and, if the trust uses any particular paradigms or philosophies to guide it in its selection of grantees.

MS. MCCABE responded:

We evaluate each program on a case-by-case basis where we look at whether it really supports our mission of preventing child abuse and neglect. The RFP process delineated in the committee substitute will give us more data about the communities in need, other program offerings in those communities, the type of program offered and how effective it has been in other parts of Alaska, which are the things that we consider.

[2:30:16 PM](#)

CHAIR DYSON asked how an elementary school with school funding got on the Trust list.

MARGOT said the school is a transitional preschool that initially started out as a mentoring program.

CHAIR DYSON asked whether it is fair to infer that preschools or elementary schools are not going to be major recipients in the future.

MS. MCCABE responded that is a fair assumption unless the school is able to demonstrate the program they are implementing is aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect. There are many programs in a position to carry out the mission of the Trust.

CHAIR DYSON remarked there does not appear to be any faith-based recipients on the list and asked whether this reflects a policy on the part of the Trust.

MS. MCCABE said the Board welcomes proposals from faith-based initiatives for consideration.

COMMISSIONER GILBERTSON added there are no prohibitions on providing funding to faith-based organizations.

SENATOR GREEN moved CSSB 150(HES) from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal notes. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Dyson adjourned the meeting at [2:36:29 PM](#).