

**SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

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REPRESENTATIVE Doll

Introduced: 3/10/08

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Relating to implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on Early**  
2 **Learning.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** Alaska was one of only 10 states awarded a prestigious grant in 2007  
5 from the National Governors Association to hold a Governor's Summit on Early Learning;  
6 and

7 **WHEREAS** over 150 legislators, other policymakers, and statewide leaders from a  
8 variety of sectors participated in the summit to ensure Alaska's future economy will be  
9 supported by an educated, productive workforce; and

10 **WHEREAS** research has documented that nearly half of Alaska children enter school  
11 unprepared to be successful learners, setting them up for failure before they even start  
12 kindergarten; and

13 **WHEREAS** experts attribute this lack of preparation in large part to the lack of  
14 preschool education available in Alaska; and

15 **WHEREAS** Alaska is one of only 10 states without a state-funded statewide  
16 preschool system; and

1           **WHEREAS** the national trend is toward voluntary early childhood education for all  
2 children; and

3           **WHEREAS** 87 percent of Alaskans think it is important for state government to  
4 provide financial support for early childhood education and child care; and

5           **WHEREAS** attendees at the governor's summit drafted recommendations to ensure  
6 that all children, especially those most in need, have access to quality early childhood  
7 education opportunities; and

8           **WHEREAS** the recommendations of the governor's summit echo the findings of the  
9 2006 Alaska Ready to Read, Ready to Learn task force, which recommended that Alaska  
10 develop a comprehensive system of affordable and voluntary early childhood education; and

11           **WHEREAS** early childhood education has shown documented results that include

- 12                   (1) significantly less grade repetition in later years;
- 13                   (2) major reductions in placement in special education programs;
- 14                   (3) substantially higher high school graduation rates;
- 15                   (4) dramatic increases in college attendance;
- 16                   (5) substantially fewer arrests;
- 17                   (6) much less reliance on public assistance; and
- 18                   (7) significantly higher employment rates; and

19           **WHEREAS** research indicates that early childhood education yields a return on  
20 investment that far exceeds the return on most public economic development projects; and

21           **WHEREAS** key workforce skills, including motivation, persistence, and self-control,  
22 are developed most cost-effectively and efficiently in preschool children;

23           **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges Governor Sarah Palin to  
24 thoroughly consider the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on Early Learning and to  
25 work closely with the legislature to implement the recommendations, as appropriate.