

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE HERRON

Introduced: 2/26/14

Referred: Health and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 **Supporting the Disability Law Center of Alaska's inquiry into the United States Social**
2 **Security Administration's disproportionate denial of social security disability insurance**
3 **and supplemental security income claims in the state.**

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

5 **WHEREAS** the United States Social Security Administration provides social security
6 disability insurance and supplemental security income benefits to qualifying individuals; and

7 **WHEREAS** many hard-working Alaskans and their families rely on social security
8 disability insurance and supplemental security income benefits to meet their basic financial
9 and health care needs; and

10 **WHEREAS** the United States Social Security Administration has established a
11 process through which individuals in every state may apply for benefits and appeal denial of
12 those benefits; and

13 **WHEREAS** the initial approval rate for social security disability insurance and
14 supplemental security income benefits in this state is similar to that of other states, but appeals
15 in this state are routinely denied at a significantly higher statistical rate than are appeals in

1 other states; and

2 **WHEREAS**, in recent year, the gap between the percentage of appeals denied in this
3 state and those denied in comparable states has grown at an alarming rate; and

4 **WHEREAS** individual appeal denials negatively affect children with disabilities,
5 adults with disabilities, veterans, the elderly, and their families; and

6 **WHEREAS** the high rate of denials also affects the overall financial and social well-
7 being of communities and the state as a whole; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Disability Law Center of Alaska is examining what appears to be an
9 inexplicably low rate of hearing approvals for social security disability insurance and
10 supplemental security income appeals over the past several years;

11 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the commitment of the
12 Disability Law Center of Alaska to investigate and assess the integrity of the social security
13 disability insurance and supplemental security income appeal process in the state and to
14 ensure that Alaskans with disabilities receive the benefits to which they are legally entitled.

15 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
16 the United States; the Honorable Carolyn W. Colvin, Acting Commissioner of the United
17 States Social Security Administration; the Disability Law Center of Alaska; and the
18 Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the
19 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.