

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2025

Source
SJR 16

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
12



Urging the United States Congress to pass the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act; and urging lawmakers to advocate for policies that guarantee equitable access to vital healthcare.

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

WHEREAS the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act seeks to ensure that individuals born with congenital anomalies, including cleft lip and cleft palate, have access to the medically necessary treatment and care the individuals need throughout the individuals' lives; and

WHEREAS the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act aims to require private health insurance plans to cover all medically necessary treatment, including surgery, therapy, and associated care, for congenital anomalies, without imposing a lifetime or annual limit on that coverage; and

WHEREAS an individual born with congenital anomalies often faces a lifetime of surgeries, speech therapy, dental care, and other medical needs, making access to comprehensive health care essential for the individual's well-being and quality of life; and

WHEREAS many families struggle to afford the high cost of necessary medical treatments, especially if a family's insurance plan limits coverage for congenital anomaly care

or does not cover specific procedures, resulting in financial hardship and delayed or inadequate care; and

WHEREAS the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act would provide critical protections for families by ensuring that private health insurance plans cover medically necessary treatments and services for congenital anomalies and prevent arbitrary limits on the duration of care; and

WHEREAS the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act was brought to the attention of the Anchorage Assembly by Emily Brubaker, who was an eighth grade student at Romig Middle School at the time, when she was honored by the Anchorage Assembly for her significant achievement as winner of the National Civics Bee contest; and

WHEREAS Emily Brubaker was born with a rare congenital anomaly called hypohidrotic ectodermal dysplasia, which affects the development of skin, hair, teeth, nails, and sweat glands; and

WHEREAS dental work for Emily Brubaker's condition is likely to cost her family more than \$100,000; and

WHEREAS, at the age of six, Emily Brubaker began taking trips to Washington, D.C., with her family to share her story with members of the United States Congress, encouraging members to pass the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act, which would require private health insurance plans to cover diagnosis and treatment of congenital anomalies and birth defects for which some insurance companies deny coverage as dental care; and

WHEREAS the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act was last introduced in the 117th United States Congress as H.R.1916 and S.754 and is currently being rewritten; and

WHEREAS, while the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act does not currently have a primary sponsor in the United States House of Representatives, the Act may be introduced in the 119th United States Congress by Senators Joni Ernst and Tammy Baldwin;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska Congressional delegation to support the passage of the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act to ensure comprehensive, affordable, and uninterrupted medical care for state residents with congenital anomalies; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges lawmakers to continue advocating for policies that guarantee equitable access to vital health care for all individuals.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Chuck Grassley, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 119th United States Congress.