

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY MRS. BULLOCK, MRS. DIMOCK  
AND MISS PRIOR

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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 40

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE TERRITORY OF ALASKA

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TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

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TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR; THE COMMITTEES ON INTERIOR AND

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INDIAN AFFAIRS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; AND

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THE DELEGATE TO CONGRESS FROM ALASKA:

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Your Memorialist, the Legislature of the Territory of

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Alaska, in Twenty-first Session assembled, respectfully

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represents that:

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WHEREAS, present laws of the Territory of Alaska relating

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to public care of mentally ill or handicapped persons provide for

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commitment only after complaint and trial in the manner of a

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criminal action; and

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WHEREAS, under present conditions mentally ill and

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handicapped persons are frequently detained in jails and

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otherwise treated as criminals; and

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WHEREAS, such treatment is manifestly archaic and inhumane

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and results in further damage to the patient with consequent

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prolongation of recovery; and

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WHEREAS, trial by a jury of laymen does not afford a proper

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or competent means of determining the sanity of a person and

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whether or not confinement in a hospital is desirable;

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IT IS THEREFORE, your Memorialist urgently requests that

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necessary legislation be enacted by the Congress to provide for

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voluntary admission and admission upon the certification of a

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physician of mentally ill persons to hospitals under the Federal

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program for the care of such persons from Alaska; and to provide

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for commitment of mentally ill persons by judicial procedure

1 without jury trial, except where a jury is requested by the  
2 person being considered for commitment or his legal  
3 representative.

4 AND YOUR MEMORIALIST WILL EVER PRAY.  
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