

Introduced: 1/24/86  
Referred: Rules

Original sponsor: Health, Education and  
Social Services Committee

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

1 IN THE HOUSE

2 CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 59 (HESS)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Urging the United States Congress to  
6 pass an amended form of H.R. 1279 (99th  
7 Congress), the AFDC Error Reduction and  
8 Quality Control Act, or substantially  
9 similar legislation.

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

11 WHEREAS the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program is  
12 an integral part of the social programs of the United States and critical  
13 to the health and welfare of the children who live in poverty in the United  
14 States; and

15 WHEREAS Alaska supports a system of quality control of the AFDC pro-  
16 gram if the system is equitable and cost-effective, review is timely,  
17 fiscal sanctions are reasonable, and incentives are included; and

18 WHEREAS the quality control programs instituted by the states and  
19 territories of the United States and monitored by the federal government  
20 have reduced the national rate of error on the payment of AFDC benefits by  
21 one-half during the last decade; and

22 WHEREAS experience with the quality control program for AFDC shows  
23 that many errors are based on errors in paperwork or on client errors that  
24 the states and territories cannot control and that are not necessarily  
25 related to misspent funds; and

26 WHEREAS the states and territories of the United States are facing 1.3  
27 billion dollars in fiscal sanctions for exceeding federally determined  
28 error tolerance levels; and

29 WHEREAS the states and territories of the United States are faced with

1 the necessity of either reducing the administration of their social pro-  
2 grams and thereby risking higher rates of error, or reducing benefits to  
3 clients to compensate for the fiscal sanctions imposed by the federal  
4 government; and

5 WHEREAS all programs for low income people, including the food stamp  
6 and Medicaid programs, are inextricably linked to each other, and reduc-  
7 tions or changes in one program affect the benefits available in other  
8 programs; and

9 WHEREAS all federal programs for low income persons have separate  
10 quality control and fiscal sanction components, thereby amassing billions  
11 of dollars in potential fiscal sanctions for the states and territories of  
12 the United States;

13 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the United States  
14 Congress is respectfully urged to support the passage of legislation that  
15 incorporates the substance of the AFDC Error Reduction and Quality Control  
16 Act (H.R. 1279, 99th Congress), amended to cover the Food Stamp and Medi-  
17 caid Programs as well as the AFDC program; and be it

18 FURTHER RESOLVED that this legislation should require that

19 (1) the United States Department of Health and Human Services  
20 (DHHS) shall disregard errors that have no fiscal impact when determining  
21 error rates;

22 (2) there shall be established a national error rate that is  
23 four percent for the AFDC and Medicaid programs and five percent for the  
24 food stamp program, and that allows a higher error rate on a state-by-state  
25 or territory-by-territory basis under appropriate conditions;

26 (3) DHHS shall provide positive financial incentives to states  
27 and territories with error rates less than the national error rate in the  
28 form of enhanced federal funding for the administrative costs of the AFDC,  
29 Medicaid and food stamp programs; and

1           (4) DHHS shall waive all or part of the fiscal sanctions if the  
2 secretary of the DHHS determines that a noncomplying state or territory has  
3 made a good faith effort to comply but has experienced circumstances beyond  
4 its control that make it impossible for the state or territory to comply.

5           COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald  
6 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable Dr. Otis Bowen,  
7 Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the Honor-  
8 able George Bush, Vice-President of the United States and President of the  
9 U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Speaker of the U.S.  
10 House of Representatives; to the Honorable Lowell P. Weicker, Jr., Chairman  
11 of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, U.S. Senate Com-  
12 mittee on Appropriations; to the Honorable Fortney H. Stark, Chairman of  
13 the Subcommittee on Health, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways  
14 and Means; to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski,  
15 U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of  
16 the Alaska delegation in Congress; and to the primary committee that deals  
17 with matters of health in each legislative house of each state of the  
18 United States other than Alaska.