

1 IN THE HOUSE BY ELLIS AND MENARD
2 HOUSE BILL NO. 176
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION
5 A BILL
6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing an advisory council on foster
7 care."
8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:
9 * Section 1. AS 47.10 is amended by adding a new section to read:
10 Sec. 47.10.265. ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FOSTER CARE. (a) There is
11 created in the department an advisory council on foster care consist-
12 ing of seven members as follows:
13 (1) three foster parents appointed by the governor; one of
14 the foster parents must be a member of the Alaska Foster Parents
15 Association, a nonprofit organization, chosen by the governor from a
16 list of at least five names submitted by the governing body of the
17 association;
18 (2) one person with a history of significant involvement
19 with issues related to children and youth, appointed by the governor;
20 (3) one licensed social worker who is not a state employee,
21 appointed by the governor;
22 (4) the director of the division of family and youth ser-
23 vices of the department; and
24 (5) the director of the office of public advocacy.
25 (b) Members of the council serve three-year terms except that a
26 member appointed to fill a vacancy serves the unexpired portion of a
27 term. The council members shall elect one of its members as chairper-
28 son. The council shall meet at least three times a year. Additional
29 meetings may be called by the chairperson.

1 (c) Members of the council serve without compensation but are
2 entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized by law for state
3 boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

4 (d) The council shall advise the commissioner of health and
5 social services, the director of the office of public advocacy, and
6 the judicial branch on matters relating to the state's foster care
7 system. The council shall review current practices and advise on ways
8 for the foster care system to be improved in the following areas:

- 9 (1) promotion of the best interests of foster children;
10 (2) planning for long-term permanent placement of foster
11 children in compliance with 42 U.S.C. 671-675;
12 (3) programs to reunite foster children with their fam-
13 ilies;
14 (4) increasing the role for foster parents in the placement
15 plans for foster children and in the operation and improvement of the
16 state foster care system;
17 (5) screening, recruitment, training, and respite programs
18 for foster parents;
19 (6) the grievance process and compensation system for, and
20 liability of, foster parents;
21 (7) the competency and effectiveness of social workers,
22 guardians ad litem, and other officers of the court and state employ-
23 ees involved in the foster care system.

24 (e) The council shall also gather and disseminate information on
25 foster care in the state and annually report its findings and rec-
26 ommendations to the governor, legislature, attorney general, commis-
27 sioner of health and social services, director of the office of public
28 advocacy, and administrative director of the court system.

29 * Sec. 2. Notwithstanding AS 47.10.265(b), enacted by sec. 1 of this

1 Act, and AS 39.05.055, the terms of the initial members appointed by the
2 governor to the advisory council on foster care shall be set by the gover-
3 nor so that one member serves a one-year term, two members serve two-year
4 terms, and two members serve three-year terms.