

BY SEN. PEARCE, Sturgulewski, Eliason, Zharoff, Faiks, Uehling, Pourchot,
Binkley, Szymanski, Jones, Kelly

1 IN THE SENATE

2

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 38

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Establishing a task force on adolescent

6

pregnancy and parenthood issues.

7

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

8

WHEREAS the United States has the highest adolescent pregnancy, abor-

9

tion, and birth rates of any industrialized nation in the world; and

10

WHEREAS Alaska has the second highest adolescent pregnancy rate, the

11

sixth highest adolescent abortion rate, and the ninth highest adolescent

12

birth rate in the United States; and

13

WHEREAS the adolescent birth rate among Alaska Natives is more than

14

double the national rate for all races and is increasing while other state

15

and national rates are slowly decreasing; and

16

WHEREAS young women who have babies during adolescence are frequently

17

unable to continue with school instruction and are, therefore, not well

18

equipped with the kind of education and skills that will enable them to

19

live without public assistance; and

20

WHEREAS it costs more than \$12,000 a year to provide basic public

21

services like food, medical care, and essential living expenses to one

22

needy adolescent parent with a child; and

23

WHEREAS it costs more than \$51,000,000 annually to support needy

24

families of Alaska mothers who had their first babies when they were under

25

the age of 20; and

26

WHEREAS the public and personal costs of pregnancy and parenthood of

27

young men and women in the state should be addressed by a panel of persons

28

who have the experience and knowledge to make recommendations for effective

29

legislative and agency action to reduce those costs;

1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that an Adolescent
2 Pregnancy and Parenthood Task Force is established to

3 (1) gather additional evidence and testimony on the extent and
4 effects of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood in Alaska;

5 (2) review options and recommend a statewide plan with guide-
6 lines for implementation to reduce the rate of adolescent pregnancy in
7 Alaska;

8 (3) examine existing state and local programs and services in
9 Alaska and in other states and recommend ways to improve the delivery of
10 information and services for the prevention and medical treatment of ado-
11 lescent pregnancy in Alaska;

12 (4) examine the relationship between the issues of adolescent
13 pregnancy, alcohol and drug use by adolescents before and during pregnancy,
14 and the effects of alcohol and drug use on the health of the parents and
15 the child;

16 (5) recommend ways to inform children and young adults about the
17 consequences of early parenthood, including information about child support
18 obligations for both parents and their other rights and responsibilities;
19 and be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is immediately authorized to
21 begin work and shall consist of 15 members, as follows:

22 (1) three members of the House of Representatives appointed by
23 the Speaker of the House;

24 (2) three members of the Senate appointed by the President of
25 the Senate;

26 (3) the commissioners, or their designees, of the Departments of
27 Health and Social Services, Community and Regional Affairs, and Education;
28 and

29 (4) six members of the public appointed by the governor,

1 including a business person, public school classroom teacher, representa-
2 tive of a Native health organization, representative of a religious organi-
3 zation, and health care provider; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be co-chaired by one legis-
5 lative member from each house selected by the task force members of their
6 respective houses, and that the task force shall hold public hearings
7 related to its purposes as needed with at least one meeting held in each
8 judicial district of the state; and be it

9 FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force serve without
10 compensation but are entitled to expenses and per diem as authorized under
11 law for boards and commissions; and be it

12 FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit to the legislature
13 by January 21, 1991, its findings and recommendations on the issues sur-
14 rounding adolescent pregnancy and parenthood in Alaska, and that the task
15 force is terminated upon the convening of the First Regular Session of the
16 Seventeenth Alaska State Legislature; and be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may contract for one staff person
18 to assist it for the equivalent of seven months of full-time work.