

Original sponsor(s): SEN. PEARCE, Sturgulewski, Eliason, Zharoff, Faiks,
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Halford, Rodey; REP. COLLINS, C. Davis

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE HESS COMMITTEE
2 HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 38 (HESS)
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, teenaged mother or pregnant teenager, school
2 classroom teacher, representative of a Native health organization, rep-
3 resentative of a religious organization, and health care provider; and be
4 it

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

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

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

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