

**CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 48 (HES)**

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**

**SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

**BY THE HOUSE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Offered: 2/28/92**

**Referred: Rules**

**Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES ELLIS, Gruenberg, Ulmer, Koponen, B.Davis, Donley, Parnell**

**A RESOLUTION**

**1 Relating to Medicaid options and waivers for home- and community-based services.**

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

**3 WHEREAS** disabled children and adults who currently receive institutional care under Medicaid  
**4** account for costs far beyond their proportion of the Medicaid population, including over \$18,000 a  
**5** month for each disabled child and almost \$10,000 a month for each disabled adult; and

**6 WHEREAS** the average monthly cost of nursing facility care is approximately \$7,000, and the  
**7** age group over 75, the most frequent users of this care, has more than doubled in Alaska in the last  
**8** decade; and

**9 WHEREAS** a high percentage of these people could be adequately cared for in noninstitutional  
**10** home- or community-based settings, vastly improving the quality of life for themselves and their  
**11** families; and

**12 WHEREAS** home- and community-based care is not an option open to most families because  
**13** its lower cost is still beyond the means of the typical family and private insurance often becomes  
**14** exhausted or will not cover preexisting conditions; and

**15 WHEREAS** Medicaid in Alaska will cover institutional care but does not cover home- and  
**16** community-based care, even though it can cost only one-third the price of institutionalization in many  
**17** circumstances; and

1       **WHEREAS**, even when some types of care could be covered by Medicaid, a disabled child will  
2 not be eligible for Medicaid if living outside an institution because then the whole family's income is  
3 considered while only the child's income is considered if the child remains in an institution; and

4       **WHEREAS** almost every other state has used federal options or waivers to implement home-  
5 and community-based care for its disabled and elderly populations; and

6       **WHEREAS** some states have also used federal options or waivers to allow consideration of only  
7 the child's income when the child would qualify for institutionalization but could also be cared for at  
8 home; and

9       **WHEREAS** Alaska has a growing population needing an institutional level of care who will, if  
10 not for the availability of home- and community-based alternatives, require additional investment in  
11 construction and operation of new health care facilities; and

12       **WHEREAS** in 1990 the legislature created Project CHOICE (Community and Home Options to  
13 Institutional Care for Everyone) to explore using Medicaid waivers and options to improve long-term  
14 care services in Alaska; and

15       **WHEREAS** this group, consisting of representatives of the division of medical assistance, the  
16 Governor's Council on the Handicapped and Gifted, and the Older Alaskans Commission, has  
17 recommended that the state apply for federal waivers and options that would allow Medicaid coverage  
18 of home- and community-based care for persons eligible for institutionalization and would provide for  
19 consideration of only the child's income, for purposes of Medicaid eligibility, if a child qualifies for  
20 institutionalization;

21       **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the Governor to direct  
22 the Department of Health and Social Services to implement the recommendations of Project CHOICE  
23 in order to keep families together, improve the quality of life of disabled and elderly persons who could  
24 avoid institutionalization, and decrease the growing pressure on our public resources as they are called  
25 on to finance increasingly expensive institutional care.