

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 170 (FINANCE)
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 5/17/91
Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS PEARCE, Uehling, Zharoff, Collins

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act directing the Department of Health and Social Services to develop a statewide
2 plan and conduct a statewide public awareness campaign relating to adolescent pregnancy
3 prevention and services for adolescent parents and their children; and establishing a
4 program to fund adolescent pregnancy and parenthood projects; relating to a peer
5 counselor program; and providing for an effective date."

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

7 * Section 1. AS 47 is amended by adding a new chapter to read:

8 CHAPTER 18. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
9 RELATED TO ADOLESCENTS.

10 ARTICLE 1. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING.

11 Sec. 47.18.010. DEVELOPMENT OF STATEWIDE PLAN. (a) With the advice of the
12 Alaska Commission on Children and Youth, the department shall develop a comprehensive
13 statewide plan to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of state programs that relate to the

1 prevention of adolescent pregnancy and the provision of services to adolescent parents and their
2 children under AS 47.18.100 - 47.18.140, and to peer counseling under AS 47.18.200.

3 (b) The plan developed under (a) of this section must

4 (1) review and include existing programs and services of state government;

5 (2) examine and consider the achievements and experiences of projects that are
6 similar to those authorized under AS 47.18.100 - 47.18.140 and 47.18.200;

7 (3) give priority to the consolidation and improvement of existing programs;

8 (4) make recommendations with regard to the need for new or expanded programs
9 and services within the existing level of funding;

10 (5) consider the findings and recommendations of the Alaska's Adolescent
11 Pregnancy and Parenthood Task Force; and

12 (6) make recommendations concerning the incremental implementation of the
13 plan.

14 (c) The Department of Education, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs,
15 and the Department of Labor shall assist the department in developing the plan required under
16 (a) of this section. In addition, through appropriate means, the department shall solicit advice
17 from teens, parents, educators, school administrators, taxpayers, civic groups, community
18 organizations, Native organizations, officials of local governments, religious institutions, and
19 other concerned persons about how state programs can be coordinated and operated in a manner
20 that will enhance their effectiveness and efficiency in addressing the many needs associated with
21 adolescent parenting, the prevention of adolescent pregnancies, and the provision of adolescent
22 peer counseling.

23 **ARTICLE 2. PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAMS.**

24 **Sec. 47.18.050. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.** (a) The department shall develop
25 and implement statewide a continuing public awareness campaign, including appropriate public
26 forums and workshops, radio and television public service announcements, and press releases
27 designed to

28 (1) communicate to the public the scope and magnitude of the adolescent
29 pregnancy and parenthood problem in the state;

30 (2) encourage community activities that will educate adults and adolescents about
31 the importance of reducing adolescent pregnancy;

1 (3) enlist the active support and involvement of members of the public and
2 community organizations in the development and implementation of community based programs
3 and activities to reduce adolescent pregnancy and assist adolescent parents in obtaining needed
4 educational, vocational, and parenting skills.

5 (b) A primary policy and objective of the public awareness campaign required under (a)
6 of this section shall be to encourage adolescents to abstain from premarital sexual intimacy.

7 ARTICLE 3. ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PROJECTS.

8 Sec. 47.18.100. STATE FUNDING AUTHORIZED. In order to encourage and support
9 community based initiatives to combat the many problems associated with adolescent pregnancy
10 and parenthood, the department shall, from appropriations for that purpose, give grants or award
11 contracts to fund a percentage of the cost of local projects designed to prevent adolescent
12 pregnancy and assist adolescent parents in obtaining needed educational, vocational, and
13 parenting skills.

14 Sec. 47.18.110. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS. (a) Projects funded under AS 47.18.100 shall
15 be designed with a holistic approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of adolescent
16 parenthood and a broad array of related circumstances, such as low self-esteem, domestic
17 violence, substance abuse, economic security, financial responsibilities of having a child, cultural
18 integrity, sources of adolescent stress, parenting skills, educational and vocational opportunities,
19 and access to reproductive health services.

20 (b) Projects funded under AS 47.18.100 may include one or more of the following types
21 of activities:

- 22 (1) family life education;
- 23 (2) counseling services for adolescents who are, or who may think they are,
24 pregnant or who want to avoid pregnancy;
- 25 (3) prenatal care for pregnant adolescents;
- 26 (4) job training and placement for adolescent parents;
- 27 (5) educational and support services for adolescent parents;
- 28 (6) other activities that, in the judgment of the department, are likely to have a
29 tangible effect on combating a problem associated with adolescent pregnancy or parenthood.

30 Sec. 47.18.120. APPLICATIONS FOR PROJECT FUNDING. (a) A person or group
31 seeking funding under AS 47.18.100 shall apply to the department on a form provided by the

1 department.

2 (b) When applying under (a) of this section, the applicant must demonstrate to the
3 satisfaction of the department that the proposed project

4 (1) has been designed with extensive assistance from local community members
5 who represent a variety of interests, cultures, and perspectives on adolescent pregnancy and
6 parenthood;

7 (2) is based on sound research, to the maximum extent possible;

8 (3) will maximize collaboration among all relevant agencies involved in the needs
9 being addressed by the project;

10 (4) includes an evaluation component to measure project effectiveness;

11 (5) includes a public awareness campaign component.

12 Sec. 47.18.140. PROMOTION OF PROGRAM AND PROJECTS. (a) The department
13 shall take appropriate actions to publicize the availability of funds under AS 47.18.100 -
14 47.18.140.

15 (b) The department shall annually conduct regional conferences or workshops across the
16 state to

17 (1) showcase the activities and achievements of projects funded under
18 AS 47.18.100 - 47.18.140 for which the evaluation components have shown a high level of
19 success;

20 (2) encourage and support the replication of these successful projects; and

21 (3) increase public awareness of the availability of state administered services and
22 programs to address the many problems associated with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

23 ARTICLE 4. ADOLESCENT PEER COUNSELING.

24 Sec. 47.18.200. PEER COUNSELOR PROGRAM. (a) The department shall develop
25 and implement a continuing statewide program of technical support and assistance to encourage
26 school districts, municipalities, and nonprofit corporations incorporated under AS 10.20 that
27 initiate implementation, or that are considering implementation, of adolescent peer counseling
28 groups under adult supervision for

29 (1) prevention of adolescent behavioral patterns that jeopardize physical and
30 mental health and that hamper social, educational, and personal development; and

31 (2) spreading information about services that are available to adolescents to help

1 them with their health needs.

2 (b) The program of technical support required under (a) of this section must include

3 (1) suggested methods for maintaining a high level of adolescent, parental, and
4 community support for peer counseling groups;

5 (2) workshops, seminars, or other training opportunities for adolescent peer
6 counselors and their adult leaders; this training must include sessions to

7 (A) develop interpersonal communications skills;

8 (B) teach accurate health information, emphasizing sexual development;

9 (C) provide information about services that are available in the peer
10 counselors' areas and how those services can be obtained for pregnancy prevention, and
11 prenatal care; and

12 (D) encourage adolescents to avoid major risk-taking behavior and to
13 reinforce responsible behavior and self control;

14 (3) assistance in selecting appropriate resource materials for the groups;

15 (4) recommended mechanisms for effectively monitoring and evaluating the
16 activities and accomplishments of the groups; and

17 (5) other similar services to assist and encourage school districts and
18 municipalities in establishing and administering adolescent peer counseling groups.

19 (c) In developing the program of technical support and assistance required under (a) of
20 this section, the department shall review and consider the activities and accomplishments in other
21 states that have developed peer counseling networks. The department shall solicit contributions
22 of money and expertise from the private sector that may be available for this type of program.

23 ARTICLE 5. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

24 Sec. 47.18.900. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "department" means the Department of
25 Health and Social Services.

26 * Sec. 2. AS 47.18.050 - 47.18.200, as added by sec. 1 of this Act, take effect on the date the
27 Department of Health and Social Services completes the plan required under AS 47.18.010(a), as added
28 by sec. 1 of this Act. The commissioner of health and social services shall certify to the revisor of
29 statutes and the lieutenant governor the date the plan is completed.