

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 31
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATORS UEHLING, Rodey

Introduced: 2/14/92
Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Governor to direct the Department of Health and Social Services to proceed
2 without delay to gain federal approval of Medicaid waivers for home and community-based
3 services.

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

5 WHEREAS, in response to ch. 26, SLA 1990, the Governor's Council for the Gifted and
6 Handicapped and the Older Alaskans Commission have submitted their respective reports to the
7 legislature and the Department of Health and Social Services indicating a high and increasing need for
8 long-term care and recommending strong support for home and community-based services as a preferred
9 alternative for meeting that need; and

10 WHEREAS the use of Medicaid waivers to expand home and community-based alternatives to
11 institutional care has broad support from the public and the medical community in the state; and

12 WHEREAS Alaskans have long stated their desire for a home and community-based care system
13 that allows families and friends to stay together within culturally familiar surroundings, especially during
14 times of distressing and long-term health needs; and

15 WHEREAS Alaska has a growing population needing an institutional level care that would, if
16 not for the home and community-based alternatives available under Medicaid waivers, require additional

1 investment in construction and operation of additional health care facilities; and

2 **WHEREAS** the cost of long-term care in an institutional setting averages about \$7,000 a month
3 or more, and many Alaskans needing long-term care could be served within their own homes and
4 communities for the same or less cost; and

5 **WHEREAS** several children in Alaska must now live within a hospital due to their fragile
6 medical condition, but would be able to afford the care they need while living at home with their
7 families if the state had what is known as a Medicaid "TEFRA" waiver; and

8 **WHEREAS** waivers allow state home care programs to be augmented with federal Medicaid
9 dollars, thereby decreasing the pressure to expand general fund requirements during times of decreasing
10 state resources; and

11 **WHEREAS** the legislature recognizes that Alaska's hospitals and nursing homes are an essential
12 part of the state's total health care system, but home and community-based care is needed to provide a
13 choice for those who can benefit from it;

14 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the Governor to direct
15 the Department of Health and Social Services to proceed without delay to gain approval from the Federal
16 Health Care Financing Administration for Medicaid waivers to support home and community-based care
17 services for children who are medically fragile, children and adults with developmental disabilities,
18 elderly Alaskans, and physically disabled Alaskans who, were it not for the availability of home and
19 community-based services, would have to live in an institution to receive the care they need.

20 **A COPY** of this resolution shall be sent to Dr. Theodore Mala, commissioner of health and social
21 services.