

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

BY SENATORS UEHLING, Rodey, Halford, Menard, Sturgulewski, Eliason, Collins, Kerttula, Zharoff, Craft, Jones, Pourchot, Duncan

REPRESENTATIVES Navarre, Zawacki, M.A.Miller

Amended: 5/9/92
Introduced: 2/14/92

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 and options for home and
3 community-based 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 and options to expand home and community-based
11 alternatives to institutional care has broad support from the public and the medical community in the
12 state; and

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

16 WHEREAS Alaska has a growing population needing an institutional level care that would, if

1 not for the home and community-based alternatives available under Medicaid waivers and options,
2 require additional investment in construction and operation of additional health care facilities; and

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

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

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

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

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

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the legislature respectfully urges the Governor to direct the
23 Department of Health and Social Services to do the following when the department prepares applications
24 to get federal approval of Medicaid waivers and options relating to children:

25 (1) listen to and incorporate the concerns of families in the state;

26 (2) allow parents, advocates, and professionals to be involved with the development of
27 the criteria for the definition of "at risk of institutionalization"; and

28 (3) allow the division of mental health and developmental disabilities, along with the
29 division of medical assistance, to play a key role in the service design and policy of Medicaid waivers
30 and options."

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