



STATE OF ALASKA 1985 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUEST**

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 231  
 Title: Act relating to amount of Gen. and Temp. Relief Assist.  
 Sponsor: Clocksinn & Gruenberg  
 Requestor: Senate Finance  
 Date of Request: 5/11/85

**FISCAL DETAIL**

Agency Affected: DH&SS/Div. Pub. Assistance  
 Program Category Affected: Social & Economic St. Assist. Prog. for Gen. Population  
 BRU, Program or Subprogram(s) Affected: Assistance Payments BRU-General Relief Assistance

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)**

	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90
<b>OPERATING</b>						
100 PERSONAL SERVICES						
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL						
400 SUPPLIES						
500 EQUIPMENT						
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS		80.0				
800 MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		80.0				

<b>- CAPITAL</b>						
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<b>REVENUE</b>						
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**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND		80.0				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>		80.0				

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS:** Attach a separate page if necessary

Monthly benefits reduced from \$200 to \$120.

Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Division: Jan Faiks, Co-chairman  
Senate Finance Committee

Phone: 465-4523  
 Date: 5/11/85

Approved by Commissioner: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution (by Agency preparing fiscal note):

Legislative Finance  
 Legislative Sponsor  
 Requestor  
 Office of Management and Budget  
 Impacted Agency(ies)

7/1/84

Before the Senate Finance Committee

A M E N D M E N T

Proposed by

SENATOR FALKS

TO: HOUSE BILL 231

PAGE 1, LINES 16 and 25

Delete "\$200" and insert instead "\$120."

Introduced: 2/25/85  
Referred: Health, Education &  
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY ~~GLOCKSIN AND GRUENBERG~~

2

*SOS* HOUSE BILL NO. 231 *(Finance)*

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

6

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to amount of general and temporary

7

relief assistance."

8

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

9

\* Section 1. AS 47.25.130 is amended to read:

10

Sec. 47.25.130. AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE. The amount of assistance

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for a needy person shall be determined by the department with regard

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in each case. Where possible, assistance shall be sufficient to

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dards of assistance established by the department. However, the

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amount of assistance for subsistence needs may not exceed \$200 [\$80] a

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person a calendar month.

18

\* Sec. 2. AS 47.25.250 is amended to read:

19

Sec. 47.25.250. TEMPORARY RELIEF. When a needy person is not

20

entitled to assistance under AS 47.25.120 - 47.25.300 and has no

21

relatives in the state liable for support under AS 47.25.230 and

22

47.25.240, the needy person may receive temporary assistance in the

23

form and amount which the department considers necessary. Temporary

24

assistance for needs other than transportation and medical care may

25

not exceed \$200 [\$80] per person per month.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR HB 231

An Act relating to amount of general and temporary relief assistance

Section 1

Under current law, the amount of assistance for subsistence needs may not exceed \$80. This bill increases that amount to \$200.

Section 2

Under current law, the amount of temporary assistance for needs other than transportation and medical care may not exceed \$80 per person per month. This bill increases that amount to \$200.



# REPRESENTATIVE DON CLOCKSIN

Alaska House of Representatives

MAJORITY LEADER

1024 WEST SIXTH AVENUE  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501  
(907) 274-4031

WHILE IN JUNEAU:  
POUCH V  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
(907) 465-3704

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Jan Faiks  
Co-Chair  
Finance Committee

DATE: May 8, 1985

FROM: Representative Don Clocksin  
Majority Leader

SUBJECT: HB 231

I am requesting that you schedule HB 231, entitled "An Act relating to amount of general and temporary relief assistance", for a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee. This program was established during territorial days to provide a safety net for Alaskans in emergency situations.

I introduce this bill because the maximum monthly payment of \$80 has not been raised since the 1950's. This bill would raise the \$80 limit to \$200.

General Relief serves approximately 375 needy Alaskans each month. The assistance payments are paid in the form of vendor payments directly to landlords, utility companies and others.

In order to be eligible, a single adult's monthly income may not exceed \$300, and the person must have no other personal, private or public resource available to meet their needs.

Attached are the fiscal note and other back-up information.

Thank you for the attention to this bill.

DC:NG:blg

Attachments

**STATE OF ALASKA 1985 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE**

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUEST**

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 231  
 Title: An Act Relating to Amount of General and Temp. Relief Assistance.  
 Sponsor: Reps. Clocksin & Gruenberg  
 Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

**FISCAL DETAIL**

Agency Affected: DHSS/Div. of Public Assistance  
 Program Category Affected: Social and Economic Assistance Programs for General Population  
 BRU, Program or Subprogram(s) Affected: Assistance Payments BRU - General Relief Assistance

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)**

	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90
<b>OPERATING</b>						
100 PERSONAL SERVICES			34.3	35.7	37.1	38.6
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL						
400 SUPPLIES						
500 EQUIPMENT			2.0			
500 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	399.2	439.1	461.1	479.5	498.7
800 MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		399.2	475.4	496.8	516.6	537.3
<b>CAPITAL</b>						
<b>REVENUE</b>						

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90
GENERAL FUND	0	399.2	475.4	496.8	516.6	537.3
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	399.2	475.4	496.8	516.6	537.3

**POSITIONS:**

	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90
FULL-TIME			1	1	1	1
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS:** Attach a separate page if necessary

See Attached Analysis

Prepared By: John P. Taber, Director  
 Division: Public Assistance

Phone: 465-3347  
 Date: March 6, 1985

Approved by Commissioner: John R. By  
 Agency: Health & Social Services

Date: 4-2-85 JCU

Distribution (by Agency preparing fiscal note):  
 Legislative Finance  
 Legislative Sponsor

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS - HB 231

GRA Caseload Characteristics (Burial Assistance Not Included)

<u>Service Category</u>	<u>Percent of GRA Expenditures</u>
Rental Assistance	87.6 %
Utility Assistance	4.7 %
Miscellaneous Assistance (18 yr. olds in High School, Food, and Clothing)	7.7 %

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Percentage of GRA Caseload</u>
1	55.0
2	18.5
3	11.6
4	7.3
5	5.5
6 or more	2.1

FY 1986 GRA caseload was achieved by increasing projected current year caseload (excluding burial assistance) by 8.8 percent. This projected caseload increase is based on the anticipated response to an increased benefit level. Benefits will not always equal the \$200 per person limit. Vendor payments are made for specific needs of eligible households, and will often be less than the allowable limit. (See projected payment amount by household size below).

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Annual Cases/Payment Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	1100 X 195	\$214,500
2	370 X 385	142,450
3	232 X 560	129,920
4	146 X 680	99,280
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6	42 X 775	32,550
	<u>1998</u>	<u>\$701,200</u>

FY 1986 Need With New Payment Standard	701.2
Less FY 86 Governor's Request (Rental and Misc. Assistance Only)	302.0
FY 86 Increment Increase to Fund New Standard	<u>399.2</u>

FY 1987 caseload was derived by increasing FY 1986 by 10 percent. This projected caseload growth is due to increased benefit amounts attracting more clientele, and the spreading knowledge of higher payments through agency outreach efforts. The caseload should expand considerably during the first two years as the new benefit level becomes known. At this point, one Eligibility Technician (R/S 12B Anchorage) would be needed to accommodate the larger caseload. One-time funding of 2.0 is budgeted for purchase of office equipment for 1.0 PFT new position.

FY 1988 expenditures are calculated at a 5 percent rate of growth. FY 1989-1990 are calculated at a 4 percent rate of growth.

LAW OFFICES OF  
**ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION**  
ANCHORAGE REGIONAL OFFICE  
880 WEST 8TH AVENUE, SUITE 200  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501  
TELEPHONE (907) 272-0431

May 1, 1985

Representative Don Clocksin  
Pouch V  
Juneau AK 99811

Don,

I am responding to your request to our Juneau office for information about the kinds of persons we would be referring to DPA for General Relief Assistance.

There are several classes of cases.

Many families are in emergency situations and are not eligible for categorical assistance such as families with both parents present. The emergencies are loss of housing or utilities. I'll give you a frequently recurring example: as trailer parks are converting, families are losing housing. GR might be the only way to obtain some emergency housing money. There are no other short-term family housing options available.

Another frequent GR situation is that faced by battered women. They and their children have emergency cash needs that may not be met, even assuming an expedited application process for AFDC.

We are seeing many single adults, who have been disabled, have used the last of their resources and are facing an emergency, while they are waiting for either a Social Security determination or state adult public assistance. Again, GR is the only option.

The amount of GR, \$80, which is made by the Department as a vendor payment, is often not enough to even meet the emergency needs. Limited as GR is, many times our clients are forced to literally beg for more time from landlords or to ask local churches for food or clothes.

An adequate GR amount would go a long way in these kinds of cases towards stemming more serious problems that often come when there are no emergency resources available.

May 1, 1985  
Page Two

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information.

Sincerely,

ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Gant", written over the typed name.

JOHN GANT  
Supervising Attorney

JG/tc



**ALASKA CHAPTER  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, INC.**

Box 10430  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99710

**ISSUE: GENERAL RELIEF PAYMENTS**

The maximum payment for a destitute person under Alaska's General Relief Statutes is only \$80 per month! THAT AMOUNT HAS REMAINED UNCHANGED SINCE 1957!!! Further, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services regulations provide that payments must go to a vendor on-behalf of the person and not to the person themselves. Such regulations also provide that General Relief payments cannot be paid on a regular basis, but rather are mostly restricted to a one-time payment. The result of such law and regulation is that people who are extremely poor receive virtually no assistance from a State which is so wealthy it can afford to subsidize home mortgages.

**ACTION REQUESTED**

The Alaska Chapter, National Association of Social Workers recommends legislation amending A.S.47.25 to double the General Relief maximum payment from \$80 to \$160 per month with corresponding increase in appropriation to the Division of Public Assistance to enable them to make such payments.

In addition, it is recommended that the Legislative Regulation Review Committee review the General Relief regulations to determine how they could better serve people who are poor.

Further it is recommended that the Department of Health & Social Services be directed by the Legislature to conduct a study of the distribution and adequacy of payments and make a report to the Legislature by January, 1986.

**SOME FACTS ABOUT ALASKA'S GENERAL RELIEF  
PROGRAM**

**General Relief Appropriations**

FY '82	\$530,000
FY '83	\$451,000
FY '84	\$650,000
FY '85	\$537,000

**General Relief Utilization \***

Average of 351 clients per month	Shelter & Utilities
Average of 21 burials per month	Funeral costs

**Average payment**

\$80 per client	Shelter & Utilities
\$806 per client	Burial

**Per-cent of Appropriation for Different Services**

Utilization for burial	48%
Utilization for shelter & utilities	52%

If GR appropriation were doubled, at least double the number of persons now served could be expected to apply, and more landlords would accept GR payment since it would be nearer to the actual amount of rent owed them.

\*State-wide figures, but the majority is utilized in Anchorage.  
Burial numbers have increased since BIA no longer provides burial payments

\*Figures provided by the Anchorage Office of the Division of Public Assistance  
November, 1984

Program Purpose

Alaska's General Relief Program provides assistance for obtaining the necessities of life for people who temporarily have absolutely no other personal, private, or public resources available to meet their needs.

Eligibility Criteria:

Recipients of GR must meet the following criteria:

1. They must be in financial need;
2. They must have inadequate resources to meet their basic needs;
3. They must be 18 years old or be eligible minors;
4. They must have proof of a specific unmet need for a subsistence item such as an eviction notice for overdue rent, or a utility shut-off notice;
5. They must be physically present in Alaska at the time of application;
6. They must register for work unless otherwise exempted.

**\*NEED STANDARDS (Monthly allowances) Note: Financial eligibility for GR-GRM exists only if need exceeds net income (need standard minus net income equals unmet need, which equals vendor or direct cash payment).**

Need Standards

Adult-only households:

<u>Number of Adults</u>	<u>Maximum Need Standard</u>
1	\$300
2	400
3	500
4	600
5	700

\$100 shall be added for each additional adult.

Households with children and adults:

<u>Number of Persons</u>	<u>Maximum Need Standard</u>
Adult plus 1 child	\$300
Adult plus 2 children	350
Adult plus 3 children	400
Adult plus 4 children	450
Adult plus 5 children	500
Adult plus 6 children	550
Adult plus 7 children	600

\$100 shall be added for each additional adult and \$50 for each additional child.

If income is larger than the need standard, even by \$1, the applicant is not eligible. Need standards above were in effect June, 1983.

Exception: In open APA and AFDC cases with no prior resource to provide drugs needed for medical treatment, GRM eligibility will exist.

Coverage: GR can pay up to \$80 per month, per eligible person, to vendors on behalf of needy clients, and can provide cash payments of up to \$80 per month per person for certain needy high school students and older persons who have no other resources and who have applied for regular cash assistance from other programs.

Normally, GR provides assistance for such needs as rent, heating fuel, or electrical bills in amounts not to exceed the maximum of \$80 per eligible person.

Also, under certain very limited circumstances, indigents who are recent arrivals in Alaska can be provided one-way tickets to their last place of residence.

Certain burial costs can be paid through GR for burial of indigent deceased persons who were eligible by virtue of having no resources available to meet their needs. Relatives who are unable to provide for the costs of the burial may apply for assistance.

GR applications are available at all Division of Public Assistance offices. Office addresses are listed on page 3 of this booklet.

Applications are also available from fee agents in most smaller towns.

## Anchorage Daily News



Winner, 1976 Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal for Public Service

Gerald E. Grilly  
Publisher

Howard Weaver  
Managing Editor

Steve Lindbeck  
Editorial Page Editor

Katherine Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1971 to 1983

Lawrence Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1987 to 1971

Alaska's Only Morning Newspaper • Founded in 1946 by Norman C. Brown

## Simple call to aid the not-so-wealthy

Alaska's oil wealth has brought comfort and opportunity to thousands of Alaskans, but it has not purged the Last Frontier of poverty. In fact, the maximum payment a person may receive under Alaska's general relief statutes — \$80 a month — has remained unchanged since 1957. That's why two Anchorage Democrats, Reps. Don Clocksin and Max Gruenberg, have sponsored a bill that would raise general relief to \$200 a month.

About 350 people get state emergency general relief for shelter, utilities, food, transportation and clothing each month. Another several hundred people a year receive a pauper's burial at state expense.

State regulations say general relief payments must go directly to utilities, landlords or other vendors, not the needy individuals themselves. These regulations also restrict most general relief to one time payments, which means those destitute will be on their own again after they have received general relief emergency money.

The state appropriated \$537,000 for general relief this fiscal year. If the Clocksin-Gruenberg proposal is adopted, the legislature would add another \$400,000 to the program next year. That's less than two-thirds the dollars the state has spent to find out what impact the Susitna dam might have on moose.

General relief is the last resort for Alaskans who have not shared in the wealth of recent years. The legislature, which has turned its back on the truly needy before, should not do so again whatever the talk of falling revenues. The Clocksin-Gruenberg bill is a simple call for the most fundamental kind of humanitarian aid — and legislators who told us at election time how much they care about Alaska should not ignore that call now.

STATE OF ALASKA 1985 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 2

**REQUEST**

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 231  
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 Sponsor: Reps. Clocksin & Gruenberg  
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PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS:** Attach a separate page if necessary

See Attached Analysis

Prepared By: John R. Taber, Director  
 Division: Public Assistance

Phone: 465-3347

Date: March 6, 1985

Approved by Commissioner: John R. Coy  
 Agency: Health & Social Services

Date: 4-2-85 *fcc*

Distribution (by Agency preparing fiscal note):  
 Legislative Finance  
 Legislative Sponsor

GRA Caseload Characteristics (Burial Assistance Not Included)

<u>Service Category</u>	<u>Percent of GRA Expenditures</u>
Rental Assistance	87.6 %
Utility Assistance	4.7 %
Miscellaneous Assistance (18 yr. olds in High School, Food, and Clothing)	7.7 %

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Percentage of GRA Caseload</u>
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FY 1988 expenditures are calculated at a 5 percent rate of growth.  
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de  
4/8

POSITION PAPER  
HOUSE BILL NO. 231

For "An Act relating to amount of general and temporary assistance."

Legislation is proposed to increase the maximum monthly benefit amount paid to eligible applicants under the Division of Public Assistance, General Relief Assistance program (GRA) from \$80 to \$200 per person. Alaska's GRA program dates back to when federal assistance programs were not as extensive as they are today. As the major assistance programs expanded in scope, GRA became more limited in terms of its eligibility requirements and the amount of financial aid available. The GRA program remains an important part of Alaska's welfare system, providing for the specific emergency needs of clients unable to meet those needs through other programs. Those basic needs include shelter, utilities, transportation, food, and clothing. In addition, limited funds for dignified burial of a needy person may be provided. Benefits are paid directly to the vendor providing for the eligible client's specific need. The program is 100 percent state funded, and is used only after the applicant has exhausted all other possible resources.

The Division of Public Assistance is currently serving 1800 cases annually with a budget of \$537,000. A large percentage of these cases involve rental assistance payments. There are numerous local agencies providing support and shelter services for the needy. This public and private service agency network, along with the GRA program, does help provide for the basic needs of the indigent.

Enactment of HB 231 would have significant impact on the General Relief Assistance Program. The major effect would be the increase in the GRA caseload due to the attractiveness of the increased payment standard. It is estimated that the GRA caseload would increase by at least 20 percent in two years as a result of this Act. This caseload increase will result in the need for additional staff to meet the service demand. Clients must apply for assistance each month they experience a specific emergency need. GRA cases are therefore, very labor intensive compared to other assistance programs where client cases are merely maintained once opened. The division would have to dedicate more staff time to the intake and processing of these GRA applications. The fiscal note for this Act calls for the addition of one Eligibility Technician position in FY 1987. However, the true administrative impact of increased caseload would not be alleviated in the other large district offices, which would not receive any new positions. A significant caseload increase in a given area could have an adverse effect on the efficiency and eligibility decision time frames in the offices.

House Bill 231 does offer some improvement to the current GRA program. The \$80 per person monthly maximum payment now in effect is widely considered to be too low. The fact that a majority of GRA payments are for the allowable maximum indicates that clients'

specific needs often exceed the available benefit. This does not necessarily mean a higher payment amount is needed, since there are other resources available to the needy (i.e., food stamps, energy assistance, homeless shelters, charitable organizations, etc.). GRA is, however, one of the few programs offering cash rental assistance to those facing eviction. This has become the largest service component of the program, and will doubtless expand with implementation of a higher payment amount. A higher payment amount would draw more households to use GRA, and to use it repeatedly, because it would pay most or all of the overdue rent. This trend could represent a drift toward an income maintenance program, and away from the established philosophy of GRA as a program of last resort.

While increased payments for the existing program represents a beneficial change in the service delivered by the division and received by its GRA clientele, it is not viewed at this time as a priority use of additional state dollars. While this Act is consistent with the department's goals and objectives to provide all Alaskans with a reasonable level of subsistence, the department does not feel there is a serious unmet need requiring urgent change. There is not an obvious alternative to this Act which better meets the needs of the indigent. The concerted efforts of public and private agencies currently form a basic emergency service network for our most needy citizens. Increasing the State's GRA benefit amount would help strengthen this network, yet the responsibility to do so does not rest entirely upon the State. It is a good idea and a just cause, but its affordability in light of other pressing needs is the question. The language of the Act does give the Department discretion in setting the monthly benefit amount lower than \$200. This could be a cost saving option which could help meet the need at a lesser cost, but public demand and advocacy groups would push vigorously to get and keep the benefit level at the maximum of \$200.

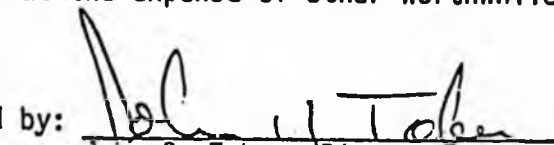
#### DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

House Bill 231 proposes an increase in the maximum monthly benefit amount available under the General Relief Assistance Program from \$80 to \$200 per person. The need for the increased benefit amount is a legitimate concern. It is consistent with the department's objectives and the program goals.

**POSITION PAPER/Department of Health & Social Services**

The Department of Health and Social Services supports this bill in concept only. Implementation of the bill would require the addition of funding to the Governor's budget request, and the Department does not urge funding of this increase at the expense of other worthwhile programs already in existence.

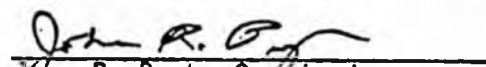
Recommended by:

  
John R. Taber, Director  
Division of Public Assistance

Date:

3-28-85

Approved by:

  
John R. Pugh, Commissioner  
Department of Health &  
Social Services

Date:

4-2-85

Introduced: 2/25/85  
Referred: Health, Education &  
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY CLOCKSIN AND GRUENBERG

2

HOUSE BILL NO. 231

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

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21 relatives in the state liable for support under AS 47.25.230 and  
22 47.25.240, the needy person may receive temporary assistance in the  
23 form and amount which the department considers necessary. Temporary  
24 assistance for needs other than transportation and medical care may  
25 not exceed \$200 [\$80] per person per month.

.. COMMITTEE REPORT

SENATE

FURTHER: FINANCE

5/1/85

Date

5-7-85

Mr. President

The Committee on HESS considered HB 231

relating to amount of general and temporary relief assistance.

and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass
- do pass with attached amendment(s)
- replace with/or adopt CS for \_\_\_\_\_
- new title \_\_\_\_\_
- same title and recommends \_\_\_\_\_
- and attached a "LETTER OF INTENT" [ ] NEW FISCAL NOTE
- reports it back without recommendation
- recommends referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING  
DO PASS

MEMBERS HAVING  
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Joe Josephson

2 Edwin DeWitt No Rec

1 Arthur Stupelanski

2 Paul Fisher - No Rec

1 DeWitt Schenk

Chairman

Do Pass

Chairman recommendation