

H B

242

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POSITION PAPER

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 242

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the training of foster parents."

The Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), within the Department of Health and Social Services, has primary responsibility for foster placements. On June 30, 1986, there were 738 children in foster care and 948 state licensed foster homes.

The Division is very supportive of foster parent training. Placement in out-of-home care is, unfortunately, a reality for many of Alaska's children, and if they are to receive not only the food, shelter and nurturance that they need, but an environment which will assist them in meeting their own special needs, training for foster parents is not only important, but essential.

The goal of foster parent training is to increase knowledge, and enhance skills of foster parents to work with children who usually enter foster care with a number of emotional and behavioral disturbances. These children often require specialized skills and foster parents, as significant participants in the child welfare service delivery system, are better equipped to participate as an active member of the service team when appropriately trained. In addition, national studies in other states have shown that foster parent retention is significantly lengthened when foster parents receive appropriate training.

There is no simple formula for determining who has the greatest need and the Department is supportive of a requirement of a minimal level of training which will be required of all foster parents. The Division of Family and Youth Services is presently developing foster care regulations which will be ready for public hearing by July 1, 1987. All foster parents statewide will receive a copy of the proposed regulations and will have the opportunity to comment on the appropriateness and feasibility of training requirements, especially in rural locations. Through regulations, levels of training for different types of care and different geographical areas of the State can be established.

RECOMMENDED:

*Yvonne M. Chase*  
Yvonne M. Chase, Director  
Division of Family  
and Youth Services

DATE:

*May 8, 1987*

APPROVED:

*Myra M. Munson*  
Myra M. Munson, Commissioner  
Department of Health  
and Social Services

DATE:

*May 13, 1987*

**STATE OF ALASKA 1987 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE**

**REQUEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Bill Version : CS HB 242  
Publish Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: An Act relating to the training  
of foster parents.  
Sponsor: House HESS  
Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services  
BRU: Child & Youth Custody  
Components: Foster Care

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

OPERATING	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92
PERSONAL SERVICES	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>CAPITAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>REVENUE</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

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

n/a

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Chase, Director *YMC*  
Division: Division of Family and Youth Services  
Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson, Commissioner  
Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

Phone: 465-3170  
Date: 5/8/87  
Date: 5/13/87

- Distribution (by preparer):
- Legislative Finance
  - Legislative Sponsor
  - Requestor
  - Office of Management and Budget
  - Impacted Agency(ies)
  - Senate Secretary

POSITION PAPER

HOUSE BILL NO. 242

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the training of foster parents."

The Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), within the Department of Health and Social Services, has primary responsibility for foster placements. On June 30, 1986, there were 738 children in foster care and 948 state licensed foster homes.

The Division is very supportive of foster parent training. Placement in out-of-home care is, unfortunately, a reality for many of Alaska's children, and if they are to receive not only the food, shelter and nurturance that they need, but an environment which will assist them in meeting their own special needs, training for foster parents is not only important, but essential.

The goal of foster parent training is to increase knowledge, and enhance skills of foster parents to work with children who usually enter foster care with a number of emotional and behavioral disturbances. These children often require specialized skills and foster parents, as significant participants in the child welfare service delivery system, are better equipped to participate as an active member of the service team when appropriately trained. In addition, national studies in other states have shown that foster parent retention is significantly lengthened when foster parents receive appropriate training.

There is no simple formula for determining who has the greatest need and the Department is supportive of a requirement of a minimal level of training which will be required of all foster parents. The Division of Family and Youth Services is presently developing foster care regulations which will be ready for public hearing by July 1, 1987. All foster parents statewide will receive a copy of the proposed regulations and will have the opportunity to comment on the appropriateness and feasibility of training requirements, especially in rural locations. Through regulations, levels of training for different types of care and different geographical areas of the State can be established.

The Department anticipates continuation of contractual services for foster parent training, but the present training contract reaches approximately one-half of the state's licensed foster parents in any one year. The two-year provision for foster parents to meet their initial training requirements through the availability of funds presently in the Division's FY 88 budget for foster parents training. However, the bill in its present form will require the attached fiscal note. The Department recommends deletion of line 19, "Each adult..." through line 22, "...of annual training".

On page 2, line 4, the Department also recommends including the language from the Committee Substitute for SB 169 (Section 3): "Notwithstanding the provisions of AS 47.35.035, as enacted by sec. 2 of this Act, a licensee shall be considered to have completed annual training if the licensee completes the training during either fiscal year 1988 or fiscal year 1989. The Department of Health and Social Services may schedule training so that approximately one-half of licensed foster parents receive training during each of the fiscal years 1988 and 1989."

RECOMMENDED:

Yvonne M. Chase  
Yvonne M. Chase, Director  
Division of Family  
and Youth Services

DATE:

April 13, 1987

APPROVED:

Myra M. Munson  
Myra M. Munson, Commissioner  
Department of Health  
and Social Services

DATE:

April 15, 1987

**STATE OF ALASKA 1987 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE**

**REQUEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Bill Version : HB 242  
Publish Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: An Act relating to the training  
of foster parents  
Sponsor: House HESS Committee  
Requestor : \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services  
BR: Child & Youth Custody

Components : Foster Care

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

OPERATING	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL	100,000	250,000				
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>				

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
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**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND	100,000	250,000				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>				

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS :** (Attach a separate page if necessary) The current contract with the Alaska Foster Parent Association provides training for one-half of foster parents statewide. If mandated for all foster parents, training costs would more than double. Costs would be incurred in modifying curriculum for different levels of care and in achieving a minimum standard for different areas of the state.

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Chase, Director *AMC* Phone: 465-3170  
Division: Division of Family & Youth Services Date: 4/13/87

Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson, Commissioner *Myra M. Munson* Date: 4/15/87  
Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

**Distribution (by preparer):**

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

①

## PETITION

## MANDANTORY TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS

TO ALL LEGISLATORS:

Please expedite passage of CSSB 169<sup>AND</sup> HB242 relating to training of Foster parents, with the few word changes in the last sentence as suggested by Alaska Foster Parent Association and the Division of Family & Youth Services. Thank you.

SIGNED:

NAME	ADDRESS	
Joy Lyon	5010 N. Douglas Ineav AK-99801	
PAUL KING	Box 5 GALCITA, AK. 99741	
MARY HOGANS	1214 E. 10 <sup>th</sup> Ave ANCH AK 99501	
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	A. R. ... Ketchikan 963-2231	

(8)

NAME	ADDRESS		
<i>[Handwritten Name]</i>	<i>[Handwritten Address]</i>	<i>[Handwritten]</i>	Juneau FPA 789-7070
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Carol Omban	Box 9023, Ft. TN		225-4280
Jane Anderson	Box 1209 Nome, AK		99762 443-5388
Kathy Spangler	At 2604 102 <sup>nd</sup> St Anchorage		225-2057
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[Handwritten]	2730 Burt St Anchorage		333-2323 AFPA

9

Name	ADDRESS	
James Sumner	SRB 7026 Palmer AK. 99645	745-7797
Eugene Dalton	8420th <sup>3</sup> Anchorage	self
Harold Sumner	SRB 7026 Palmer, Ak 99645	745-7797

29 self  
 12 August 1987  
 JI

4-23-87

My name is Lachy Spurgeon  
 Rt 2 Box 102  
 Ketchikan AK.

I am the President of the Alaska Foster Parent Assoc.

I cannot be present the the testimony of Bills 241 & 242. So I would like to take this time to urge to support these 2 Bills.

Gov Bill 241 - there has <sup>almost</sup> always been a conflict of interest with the policy as it is for licensing workers to ~~investigate~~ investigate foster homes.

In case of a complaint against a supervisor there diffinitely need to be a change in policy.

Bill 242 -

is of utmost importance to have quality Foster homes & keep retention - HFPA cannot stress enough the importance we feel to support this Bill.

**STATE OF ALASKA 1987 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE**

**REQUEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Bill Version : CSHB 242 (HESS)

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

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

Title: An Act relating to the training of foster parents.

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services

BRU: Child & Youth Custody

Sponsor: House HESS Committee

Components: Foster Care

Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

OPERATING	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL		0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL		0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE		0	0	0	0	0
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**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>		0	0	0	0	0

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME		0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

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

Prepared by: Randall P. Burns

Phone: 465-3030

Division: Office of the Commissioner

Date: 5/6/87

Approved by Commissioner: *Myra M. Munson*

Date: 5/6/87

Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

Distribution (by preparer):

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

*House*  
 TESTIMONY FOR ~~SENATE~~ HESS COMMITTEE  
~~MARCH 10, 1987~~

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to request your total support for ~~SB 165~~, to provide for training for foster parents.

*HB 242*  
 Alaska Foster Parent Association has been actively seeking an addition to statutes and regulations to require training of foster parents for the past 7 years. We believe that orientation and ongoing training will greatly upgrade the quality of services provided to children and youth in the foster care system.

A research project was completed in approximately 1980 through the Social Work Department of the University of Alaska, Anchorage that explored why foster parents really quit being foster parents. A high percentage of former foster parents stated that foster care was not what they thought it was going to be or they did not know how to cope with all the various aspects of foster caring, therefore they resigned. When a foster parent quits it usually results in a move of their foster children to another home, which damages the children emotionally, not to even mention the feelings of guilt, failure, and defeat of both the foster parents, their family, and foster children. Another research paper completed in 1986 in Juneau showed training to be a high priority of both foster parents and social workers.

Training for foster parents, nationwide, has been found to have the following benefits:

1. Preventing or reducing the movement of children between foster homes.
2. Retention of foster parents, therefore, more stable placements of children and more experienced foster homes available to accept placement of children.
3. Foster parents who can take more responsibility, therefore, relieving the social worker who must deal with crisis first and ongoing needs as they can find time.
4. Insuring foster parents know how to meet the needs of the children and youth placed with them--therefore providing treatment and help to those children rather than childcare.
5. Enhances the ability of foster parents to work as team members with others involved with the child, including the birth parent, social worker, psychologist, teachers, etc.

*HB 242 2/12*

6. Enables foster parents to detect potential or actual problem areas before they escalate, therefore enhancing prevention of future abuse, neglect, delinquency, or other problems that will cost the state even more to treat.

Over half of the other states in the United States have mandatory training requirements for foster homes in recognition of these benefits.

Alaska Foster Parent Association and its 10 local chapters support this bill as written. We wish to point out a few features of this bill:

It requires potential foster parents to receive initial orientation to prepare them to be foster parents and to screen out those applicants for which foster care is not what they thought it was. The many states that have this mandatory orientation have found that fewer foster parents are licensed, but those that are licensed stay longer in the system and are capable of handling more difficult children, therefore actually increasing the numbers of foster parents in a couple of years time.

This bill also requires each foster family to acquire 15 hours of ongoing training per year, with each adult to acquire a minimum of 5 hours. This will insure that all adults in the household have a good base of knowledge about issues in fostering. This requirement should be easily reached by existing and future foster families through resources already available--we are not asking for the Department to provide this training, as we feel the resources are already available in most communities and can be tapped by foster parents based on the area they feel they need more information. For example, a foster parent taking teens would find in the community workshops or classes dealing with things such as discipline, alcohol or drugs, or teen pregnancies. A foster family working with sexually abused children would look for classes on detecting or treating the sexually abused child.

This bill should not require any fiscal notes. For orientation we have licensing workers and experienced foster parents who can facilitate orientation training using prepared curriculums such as NOVA training from NOVA University or ISSUES IN FOSTERING from Eastern Michigan University. Several DFYS offices throughout the state are currently providing such training using licensing worker-foster parent co-trainers in the evening once a week and giving that licensing worker comp-time the next morning. This would require no new funding.

For ongoing training most communities have numerous training workshops, seminars, or classes each year through such places as crisis centers, sexual abuse or women's centers, native organizations, mental health, colleges, etc. Alaska Foster Parent Association has a \$105,000. contract to provide training statewide, which offers a state conference of 12-20 hours of training, a newsletter with educational

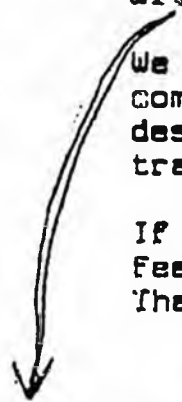
materials quarterly, local training conferences in at least 10 areas of the state, and local associations which host monthly training sessions of approximately 2 hours each. AFPA has also developed a packet of 15 training flyers to cover most aspects of foster care and has a library of books and materials for hand-out or lending. Most training on the state level has been video-taped and is available to local associations or to individuals. Numerous books, curriculums, and video and cassette tapes could be available to foster parents who cannot reach other training. AFPA has explored the idea of having videoed training put on educational television particularly to the bush communities, and also translating many materials into the various languages of Alaska.

It would be ideal if the contract amount with Alaska Foster Parent Association was increased, to better meet our goals of training, BUT we can minimumly meet mandantory training with existing funds in the DFYS budget.

HB 242

We encourage you to support SB-169 and to pass it out of committee today. The foster children and youth of Alaska deserve to have the best care possible, which is through trained, knowledgeable, and experienced foster parents.

If you have further questions I would be happy to answer or feel free to contact AFPA legislative liason Miriam Sumner. Thank you.



*Handwritten notes:*  
41 people w/ 12 agencies representing their FPA as an agency.  
It reads:  
I was signed by  
local FPA as an agency.

Your packets should include a copy of a petition signed by 41 individuals, 12 representing local FPA or agencies that we urge you to consider.

Miriam Sumner

Original sponsor: Health, Education and  
Social Services Committee

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 242 (HESS)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the training of foster parents."

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

8 \* Section 1. AS 47.35 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 Sec. 47.35.035. FOSTER PARENT TRAINING. (a) A person may not  
10 be licensed under this chapter to maintain or conduct a foster home  
11 unless the person has completed an orientation for foster parents  
12 approved by the department. An orientation required under this sub-  
13 section must provide information about foster care regulations, poli-  
14 cies, and procedures, practical instruction about the realities of  
15 caring for a child who is placed in a foster home, and other appro-  
16 priate information.

17 (b) To maintain a license issued under this chapter for the  
18 maintenance or conduct of a foster home, a licensee shall complete  
19 annual foster parent training approved by the department. Training  
20 under this subsection need not be conducted in a classroom setting,  
21 but must include methods of instruction that meet the varying needs of  
22 foster parents and the department.

23 (c) The requirements for training under this section may not be  
24 waived.

25 \* Sec. 2. AS 47.35.040(c) is amended to read:

26 (c) Except as provided in AS 47.35.035, the [THE] department may  
27 waive compliance with a standard set out in regulations adopted under  
28 AS 47.35.010 - 47.35.080 if an acceptable alternative is established  
29 that meets the purpose of the provision and reasonably assures the

1 well-being of persons in care.

2 \* Sec. 3. Notwithstanding the provisions of AS 47.35.035, as enacted by  
3 sec. 1 of this Act, and AS 47.35.040(c), as amended by sec. 2 of this Act,  
4 a licensee shall be considered to have completed annual training if the  
5 licensee completes the training during either fiscal year 1988 or fiscal  
6 year 1989. The Department of Health and Social Services may schedule  
7 training so that approximately one-half of licensees receive training  
8 during each of the fiscal years 1988 and 1989.