

SJR

31



Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR JIM DUNCAN

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COMMITTEES:
FINANCE
RESOURCES
BUDGET AND AUDIT

MEMORANDUM

APR 10 1987

April 8, 1987

TO: Senator Paul Fischer, Chairman
Senate Health Education & Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator Jim Duncan

SUBJECT: Hearing SJR 31

Senate Joint Resolution 31, relating to Federal Funds for Job Training and Vocational Education has been assigned to your committee as it's first committee of referral. I would like to request that you schedule this legislation for a hearing before your committee at the earliest convenience.

I have attached some backup material for your review.

A New Direction:

**Preparing Alaskans
to
Revitalize
Alaska's
Economy**



Governor's Council on Vocational and Career Education
March, 1987

This report was prepared under the direction of the Governor's Council on Vocational and Career Education by Rosie Peterson, Executive Director. Additional copies of the report may be requested from:

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tutions have strong representation from the private sector. Or putting it more simply, public education would benefit by having employers—representatives from business, labor and industry—on its educational governing boards.

NOTE: If a separate system of community colleges and vocational/technical centers is created, it is imperative the Governor appoint to the governing board of the new system representatives of business, industry and labor who are knowledgeable about the integral role vocational education plays in economic development.

That the Governor encourage and the Fifteenth Alaska State Legislature support development and implementation of programs addressing the vocational needs of the incarcerated.

Rationale: While the State of Alaska currently spends a considerable amount of money each fiscal year to house and care for the incarcerated, not much has been done to date to equip inmates with the vocational skills to seek gainful employment upon release. The Governor's Council holds a belief that undeveloped human resources, including those of Alaska's inmates, generally lead to a greater burden on a state's social services network through expensive treatment programs, welfare assistance, aide to dependent children, medical assistance and various support programs. To decrease recidivism and dependency on Alaska's social services network the Governor's Council believes it would be in the best interest of the state to develop and implement programs to address the vocational needs of the incarcerated.

This opportunity for inmates need not be expensive or burdensome to the state.

Currently the state pays \$82.50/day to house an inmate in a correctional facility. Yet it only costs \$45.00 for one day's furlough keep. If the Department of Corrections would fully utilize its furlough capabilities, soon-to-be-released inmates could take advantage of already existing vocational programs and facilities to gain vocational skills allowing them to become employed upon release. Obvious advantages for the state include: decreased corrections expenditures; a good-faith effort to decrease recidivism; fewer inmates in Alaska's overcrowded correctional facilities; and elimination of unnecessary capital expenditures to build and equip vocational facilities in each correctional center.

That the Governor and the Fifteenth Alaska State Legislature encourage Alaska's Congressional Delegation to support federal funding for vocational education and job training.

Rationale: Under acceptance by the state of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, Alaska receives federal funds to "expand, im-

prove, modernize and develop quality vocational education programs that will improve productivity and promote economic growth." Among other requirements, the Act specifically requires the state to serve underserved populations (the handicapped, disadvantaged, men or women entering non-traditional occupations, single parents or homemakers, limited English speakers and criminal offenders) and assure their access to vocational education programs.

In the current fiscal year Alaska is receiving \$1.7 million in vocational education dollars from the federal government. In action last session Congress allotted \$2.4 million to Alaska for Fiscal Year 1988.

Just recently President Reagan and Secretary of Education Bennett transmitted to Congress a budget calling for a fifty percent rescission of FY 1988 vocational education dollars, and total elimination of federal vocational education funding for Fiscal Year 1989.

Federal vocational education dollars have been a catalyst for program development and planning in Alaska since 1968. In fact, the only source of revenue for program improvement and innovation of vocational education programs comes from those provided under the Carl Perkins Act.

With this background, the Governor's Council recommends the Governor and Fifteenth Alaska State Legislature encourage Alaska's Congressional Delegation to oppose the Administration's proposed rescission of vocational education funds and join in strongly supporting federal funding for vocational education and job training.

That the Governor designate and the Fifteenth Alaska State Legislature support the JTPA / Education Coordinating Committee as the State Apprenticeship/Vocational Education Steering Committee.

Rationale: Under mandate of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act the U.S. Secretaries of Labor and Education, in an attempt to plan for greater coordination between vocational education and apprenticeship training programs, developed and appointed the National Apprenticeship/Vocational Education Coordinating Steering Committee.

In turn, the Secretaries have called upon the Nation's Governors to establish similar committees to be responsible for promoting linkages between the vocational education and apprenticeship training in each state.

The JTPA/Education Coordinating Committee, which is approved by the Alaska State Board of Education and funded through federal

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