

HJR

24

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred: February 8, 1989

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 3/10/89

The HEALTH, EDUCATION, & SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

HJR 24

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

[SUPPORTING FEDERAL ABC CHILD CARE ACT]

Supporting the federal Act for Better Child Care Services.

RECOMMENDS:

- replacing with CS HJR 24 (HESS)  the same title
- the attached amendment(s)  a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- fiscal impact
- zero fiscal note
- zero with analysis

APPROVES PREVIOUS:

- fiscal note(s) published: \_\_\_\_\_
- zero fiscal notes(s) published: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING DO PASS:

Peter J. Lee

Cheri Davis

J. Ellis

SIGNING OTHER THAN DO PASS:  
(Do Not Pass, No Recommendation, Amend)

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J. Ellis  
Chairman's signature



Official Business

# Alaska State Legislature

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Ann M. Spohnholz  
District 13 Seat A

P.O. Box V  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

465-2435

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House HESS Committee

FROM: Ann M. Spohnholz *AMS*

DATE: March 6, 1989

RE: HJR24 - Supporting the federal "Act for Better Child Care Services"

I introduced HJR24 in support of the federal Act for Better Childcare, also known as the "ABC Bill," because I believe that this legislation is a first step in terms of national leadership toward making a number one priority of this nation the caring, nurture, and education of children under six.

The "ABC Bill" was introduced by Senator Christopher Dodd on January 25th of this year, and a comparable bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives. A summary of the provisions of the bill is attached.

Passage of the "ABC Bill" in Congress is expected to bring approximately \$400,000 in federal funds to Alaska, with 70% of those funds earmarked for assistance to low and moderate-income families in paying the costs of child care. The attached summary gives further details of how the money will be spent.

I urge your support for this resolution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attachments: "Some Facts About Children"  
Fiscal Note  
Summary of ABC Bill

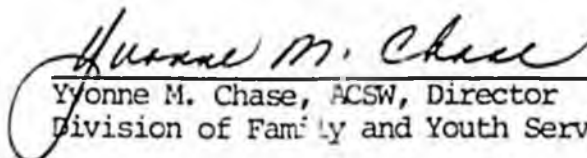
Position Paper  
House Joint Resolution No. 24

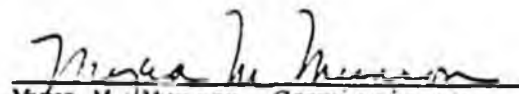
Supporting the Federal Act for Better Child Care Services

This resolution supports an increased federal role in the provision of child care services and specifically supports the two federal bills that have the backing of the majority of professionals in the early childhood field. In a time of dwindling state funds, passage of one of these federal bills could be beneficial to low and moderate income families eligible under Alaska's Day Care Assistance Program as well as families affected by Welfare Reform. A few features in the federal legislation that have particular appeal include:

- development of local resource and referral agencies to assist families in locating appropriate child care for their child;
- education and training for child care providers;
- a requirement that a state plan be developed; and
- promotional features for employer related child care.

The Department supports this resolution.

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

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

March 9, 1989



Official business

# Alaska State Legislature

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Ann M. Spohnholz  
District 13 Seat A

P.O. Box V  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
465-2435

### SOME FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES

THERE ARE 45.8 MILLION CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES UNDER AGE 13.

\* 56% (25.5 MILLION) HAVE PARENTS WHO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME.

12.9 million are between the ages of 6 and 13. They are in school most of the time that their parents are at work. Before and after school, these children are in the care of neighbors, relatives, or extended-day childcare programs, or they are at home alone.

12.6 million are under the age of 6. These children are in full time care. The vast majority of them are cared for outside their family home, in childcare centers, nurseries, and family daycare homes.

\* 57% OF ALL MOTHERS OF CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME.

\* 53% OF ALL MOTHERS OF CHILDREN UNDER 1 YEAR WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME.

\* These figures include both single parent families and two-parent families with both parents in the labor force.

A M E N D M E N T

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: HJR 24

BY SPOHNHOLZ

Page 1, line 9:

After "work(s)" insert outside the home in both occurrences

02/14/89

S 1895 - 10/50  
12/5/89

SUMMARY OF THE ACT FOR BETTER CHILD CARE SERVICES OF 1989

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS: \$2.5 billion is authorized for fiscal year 1990, with such sums as may be necessary for FYs 1991-1994. In addition, \$100 million is authorized in FY 1990 only to fund the new Child Care Liability Risk Retention Fund.

FUNDS FOR DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES: States must allocate 70 percent of ABC funds to provide direct assistance to low-income working families on a sliding fee scale. Eligible children are those up to age 15 whose family income does not exceed 100 percent of state median income (\$32,777 nationwide for a family of four); priority for funds is given to families of very low income. Parents have complete discretion to choose from a wide range of child care services, including nonprofit and for-profit child care centers, family day care homes, school-based care, and nonsectarian church-based care.

FUNDS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE: States may allocate 10 percent of funds for resource and referral programs; improvements in the states' licensing/inspection requirements; and health and safety training for child care workers. States may use existing R&R networks as long as referral services are available to families in all areas of the state. Within two years of enactment, all licensed providers shall have 40 hours of health and safety training every two years.

FUNDS TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE: States may use 12 percent of funds for grants and loans to establish or expand child care programs; to recruit and train new family day care providers (including a revolving loan fund for improvements to providers' homes); to help communities establish after-school services and programs for sick or homeless children; and to assist businesses with child care programs through a new public-private partnership section.

MINIMUM NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PROVIDERS RECEIVING PUBLIC FUNDS: As a condition of federal assistance, states must require only publicly-funded child care programs to comply with a limited set of minimum health and safety standards within 4 years after they are established (roughly 5 1/2 years after the date of enactment of the Act). The standards are based on those used by the U.S. Armed Forces and the national accreditation organizations. The standards will be developed by a National Advisory Committee composed of experts in the field, representatives of state and local government, and members of the business and religious communities. Any state may request a 1 year variance (with a one-year extension) if the state needs more time to comply with a particular standard in a particular area of the state.

FUNDS TO ESTABLISH LIABILITY RISK RETENTION GROUPS: The legislation authorizes \$100 million in FY1990 for the establishment of Child Care Liability Risk Retention Groups to increase providers' access to affordable liability insurance through a shared risk pool system.

CHURCH-BASED CHILD CARE INCLUDED: Non-sectarian church-based child care is fully eligible for assistance under the bill. The church-state language is based on other federal social service legislation.

RELATIVE CARE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDS: Relative care by grandparents, aunts, uncles and uncles is eligible for assistance provided such caregivers comply with state regulations, if any, governing such care.

MAJOR REVISIONS TO THE ACT FOR BETTER CHILD CARE SERVICES  
FOR THE 101ST CONGRESS

ALLOCATION OF ASSISTANCE:

<u>PROVISION OF LEGISLATION</u>	<u>ABC/100th</u>	<u>ABC/101st</u>
Direct Assistance to Families:	75%	70%
Provisions to Increase Supply:	15%	12%
Provisions to Increase Quality:		10%
State Administration:	10%	8%

NEW ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE CHILD CARE SUPPLY:

- \* New Child Care Public-Private Partnership Section to fund:
  - 1) New child care programs for businesses;
  - 2) Demo programs for communities and local employers;
  - 3) Business participation in R&R programs;
  - 4) Information and technical assistance for employers;
  - 5) Presidential award program for progressive employers.
- \* Grants and loans to family day care and nonprofit providers to establish and expand child care programs.
- \* State-based revolving loan funds for new family providers.
- \* Funds for the establishment and operation of after-school child care services, programs for sick and homeless kids and those which link elderly and children's services.

REVISIONS IN MINIMUM FEDERAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLICLY-FUNDED CARE:

- \* Change in composition of National Advisory Committee on Minimum Child Care Standards to increase input from states, localities, employers and religious organizations.
- \* Variance mechanism which permits a state to postpone its compliance with the minimum standard(s) for 1 or 2 years.
- \* Scope of national minimum standards bound by range of existing state standards. Additional comment period for national standard(s) which do not exist in states.

RELATIVE CARE ELIGIBLE FOR ABC ASSISTANCE:

- \* Grandparents, aunts, and uncles (18 or older) are eligible for reimbursement provided they comply with state regulations (if any) governing relative care.

CHILD CARE LIABILITY RISK RETENTION GROUPS:

- \* \$100 million for state-based insurance risk pools.

ENHANCED STATE FLEXIBILITY:

- \* States have additional funds for quality and supply functions. They also have more flexibility to implement the R&R and training requirements. Also, see change in standards above.

3/9/89

Dear Representatives:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a statement in support of House Resolution 24.

The care and education of our children is the most important duty of our society. While other governmental functions are of great importance, a neglected youth diminishes our future.

Alaska leads the nation in spending per capita in educating its children from grades K through 12. We have generous programs to aid Alaskans in procuring a college education. Our teachers are the highest paid in the nation. Our school facilities and equipment are among the best in the world. Yet, we are facing a 30% drop out rate and increasing alcohol and drug abuse among high school students.

Day care is an issue that is gathering some long deserved attention. Child developmental physiologists say that the average person undergoes the majority of their brain and personality development by age 2. Yet, during this critical time period, society provides painfully little guidance or support to parents. We spend great sums of money developing curricula for older children, and even more developing programs to help cure problems faced by older children. Problems such as drug abuse, minor crime, and learning disabilities are gaining their share of the limelight. Are we spending our efforts on cures when we could redirect them toward prevention? Helping with the development of a toddler or infant might do more to produce a vibrant productive citizen in the future than lengthy counseling and corrections of a young adult.

With the baby boom moving through the work force, our nation will depend more on both men and women working. This isn't a new idea, many have made this prediction in the past. The reality of today's world finds a majority of women in the work place, with this majority growing larger ever year. With child care being spread to more "non-traditional" care givers, it is about time we face the fact we can either have our young children raised in a system of happenstance, or prescription.

The quality of child care is extremely variable here in Juneau. All of it is expensive. My wife and I are fortunate that we can afford to place our child with a quality child care center. Others aren't that fortunate. The parents trying to find quality child care depend entirely on word of mouth for recommendations. While the state has basic health and sanitation requirements for child care providers, they seem less concerned about the fitness of providers to provide quality care for toddlers and

infants. In most states the requirements for licensed animal care are more stringent than that for day care.

Child care providers are paid substandard salaries, and provided little or no medical/health benefits, pension or leave. Most of them could earn more as sales clerks in the mall. The turn over rate for people in this field is comparable to that at a typical fast food restaurant.

The paradox is that parents can't afford day care, and day care providers can't afford to stay in business.

At some point in time our society must realize its responsibility for caring and educating its children from birth to the age of majority. We do a good job with children from ages 5 through 18, we need to add ages 0 through 4.

I leave you with this thought: a child care provider is compensated marginally over the minimum wage, and educates our children during their most sensitive years; a high school typing teacher earns in excess of \$45,000.00 per year for 9 months work, and teaches a child to type. Do we have our priorities right?

Sincerely yours,  
Michael H Harris  
P.O. Box 235  
Douglas Ar 79320