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SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

FURTHER

2/7/89

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE 2/9/89

Mr. President:

Finance Committee considered SB 138

training of foster parents

and recommended

- replace with _____ CS _____) same title
- or adopt _____ CS _____) new title
- attached amendment(s) and technical title change (HB only)
- _____ letter of intent adopted

do pass

do not pass

no recommendation

individual recommendations

further referral to _____

FISCAL NOTE(S) zero fiscal impact appropriation no FN
 new updated previous PHSS
 same as previous fiscal note(s) published _____

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

[Signature]
[Signature]
Carl Fuchs

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

ire rector - needs amendment
[Signature]
(Rec)

Chairman signature and recommendation

Committee Backup attached

[Signature] Do Pass

R/O SFC 2-9-89 1/31/89 S(HESS), SFC

STATE OF ALASKA
1989 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION: SB 138
PUBLISH DATE: 1-23-89

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: "An act relating to the training
of foster parents."
Sponsor: Senator Fischer
Requestor: _____

Agency Affected: Health and Social Services
BRU: _____
Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

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

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

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

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: James M. Chase Phone: 465-3170
Division: Division of Family & Youth Date: 1/22/89
Approved by Commissioner: Mike M. Nelson Date: 1/29/89
Agency: DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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

RECEIVED
JAN 31 1989

1 IN THE SENATE

BY FISCHER

2

SENATE BILL NO. 138

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

SIXTEENTH 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 1990 or fiscal
6 year 1991. 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 1990 and 1991.



Alaska Foster Parents Association

P. O. BOX 140651 • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508



February 15, 1989

Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Subject: SB-138, Training of Foster Parents

The Alaska Foster Parent Association supports, as it has for several years, mandatory training for foster parents. The benefits of training are well known. High quality training results in superior knowledge, which in return generates superior performance. If you want a task completed properly, you must assure that the people who are to perform that task have the level of training required to accomplish the responsibilities you assign to them.

Foster parents are given a difficult task, and for them to perform adequately, they must have training to equip them to meet a variety of challenges. The children that they receive into their families are not coming from loving and nurturing backgrounds. They have been neglected, abused and mistreated in ways that often affect them for the remainder of their lives. They often have learning disabilities, behavioral problems and sometimes severe emotional impairment. Foster parents must be able to recognize indications of other than normal behavior so that they may bring them to the attention of their social worker and assist in delivery of services to address the child's need. While there may be professional counseling or other services on a recurrent basis, it is the foster parent who is there for that child twenty-four hours a day. They need to know what they can do to help that child overcome obstacles to growth and development.

The training needs of foster parents are varied. We have some foster parents who do not have a high school diploma, and others who have Phd's. Some have years of experience while others have been foster parents only a few days. Some have attended training here or in other states, while some have had no training at all. Foster parents have busy schedules and time to attend training may be difficult



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to arrange during normal business hours. The best possible training would be community based and flexible enough to allow participation. It should be interesting, informative, and provided at various skill levels. To force an experienced foster parent to sit through 16 hours of basic parenting 101 is not only wasteful, but also frustrating in that the foster parent gives up personal time with expectations of learning something helpful to themselves and the children they foster.

We support SB-138 wholeheartedly and thank the sponsor, Senator Fischer, and all of you for your continued support of children in need.

Frank H. Wasmer
Frank H. Wasmer
Vice President

**ALASKA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 140651
Anchorage, Ak. 99514**

RE: SB 138 Foster Parent Training

February 16, 1989

Senate Finance Chairman and Committee Members:

My name is Miriam Sumner, President of Alaska Foster Parent Association. I have been an officer and/or board member of Alaska Foster Parent Association for 13 years--and in all those years, the primary goal and function of AFPA has been foster parent training. AFPA provided monthly foster parent training/educational opportunities beginning in Anchorage and expanding statewide as local foster parent groups were formed. Between monthly training opportunities; local, regional, and statewide conferences (partially funded by a contract with the Division of Family & Youth Services), 20-24 hours of training was available to most of the foster parents in Alaska. With the added usage of video tapes of many of these training sessions, the rest of the foster parents could have been reached. The primary difficulties AFPA encountered were foster parents understanding the need and benefits of training and encouragement by DFYS for foster parents to attend. It became obvious to AFPA that it was necessary to make a minimum amount of training mandatory for all foster parents.

The purpose of this legislation was to require foster parents to access a minimum of 15 hours per year of training that related to foster care--regardless of the source of that training. In most communities statewide educational opportunities have been numerous and varied--from sources such as the foster parent association, womens resource groups, mental health, drug and alcohol centers, community schools, etc. It is vital that foster parent training be localized so training is regular and on-going to enable foster parents to attend not only that training that is relevant to their skills and type of foster care they provide, but also to their schedules and ability to attend. It has also been vital to successful foster parent training that training be provided on a grassroots level using foster parents as trainers or to select speakers and workshops that are directly related to the needs of those foster parents and that communities needs.

We ask that you support this legislation fully. It does not require any new funding as \$365,000. has been contained in the DFYS budget for foster parent training since at least 1984. Federal monies through Title IVE and IVB can also be used

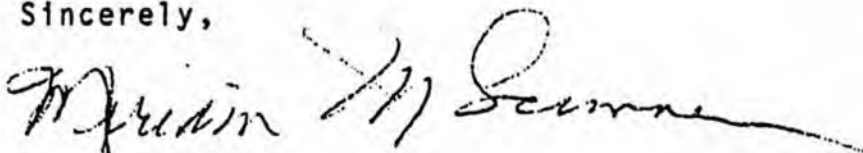
for foster parent training. Usage of the foster parent network for regular and ongoing training could be utilized again for a great reduction in costs and increase in service provided.

Foster parents must be educated about the types of children they will be caring for, how to best meet their needs, how the system works, managing behaviors, working with parents and agency staff--to name just a few. This education will not only improve the quality of services to foster children and youth, but will retain foster parents longer and reduce burnout--therefore creating more experienced and educated foster parents to meet the needs of Alaskan children who must live away from their families. When we can educate foster parents to successfully treat abused, neglected, and delinquent youth, we can help break the cycle of abuse and neglect and violence. Foster parents are a vital part of providing that treatment for children and youth; they are capable of being a real asset to and integral part of the treatment and prevention of abuse and neglect with some training and supports. That must start with this bill to make a minimum of 15 hours of training mandatory.

If you need further information regarding the need for foster parent training, why it must be mandatory, history, or implementation, please contact me at 745-2196 or 745-7797 days or write me at the above address.

Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you about foster parent training.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Miriam Sumner". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Miriam Sumner
President, AFPA