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Alaska State Legislature

Legislative Research Agency



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Phone: (907) 465-3991
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February 14, 1992

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Dave Donley

FROM: Patricia Young *PM*
Legislative Analyst

RE: Treatment for Children Sexually Abused Outside the Family
Research Request 92.105

You wished to know the basis for assertions that a high percentage of sex offenders were themselves sexually abused children. You also wished to know what counseling or treatment programs are available to children who have been sexually abused by persons who are not members of their households.

Sex Offenders as Victims

Numerous studies document the high incidence of childhood sexual abuse among sex offenders. According to David Finkelhor, Ph.D., co-director of the University of New Hampshire's Family Research Laboratory and one of the country's leading experts on child sexual abuse, studies generally show that between one third and one half of all offenders were, themselves, sexually abused as children.¹ Studies also show that as many as 60 to 80 percent of adult sex offenders began offending as juveniles or adolescents; that sexually aggressive behavior escalates; and that by the time of apprehension, most offenders have committed numerous sexually abusive acts.

¹Some studies have shown much higher percentages. In "Victim to Victimizer," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, September 1989, p. 326, Gail Ryan of the Kempe National Center for Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect referred to studies showing that as many as 70 to 80 percent of adult sex offenders were sexually victimized as children (Groth and Freeman-Longo, 1979; Longo, 1982; Kline, 1987). Fay H. Knopp commented in *Retraining Adult Sex Offenders: Methods and Models* (Orwell, VT: Safer Society Press, 1984), p. 53, that among sex offenders, sexual abuse during the developmental years is reported from a low of 20 percent to a high of 100 percent.

legislative research

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Recent data collected by Dr. Finkelhor and others suggest that the incidence of child sexual abuse is alarmingly high, and that boys are victimized nearly as frequently as girls: approximately one in four girls and one in five to seven boys are sexually victimized by age 18. Nevertheless, approximately 90 percent of the apprehended adult sex offenders are male. Thus, although many offenders have been victims, it is not likely that most victims become offenders.

Dr. Sharon Araji, assistant professor with the Department of Sociology, University of Alaska, and an authority on how sexual abuse in childhood affects adult development, stresses that although not everyone becomes a perpetrator, no one escapes the trauma and the impact of being victimized as a child. Authorities agree that gender is significant in the manifestation of trauma associated with child sexual abuse: abused males have a far higher risk of becoming sex offenders than do females; females, on the other hand, tend to become lifelong victims--susceptible to rape, domestic violence, drug and alcohol addiction or other substance abuse.² Furthermore, women who have been abused as children are generally less capable of preventing their own children from being sexually abused--thus exacerbating the cycle.

Each incident of child sexual abuse results in multiple victims, and entire families need help to adequately deal with the trauma. Authorities agree that without adequate, appropriate treatment, the social cost of child sexual abuse is enormous.

Availability of Services for Children Victimized Outside the Home

According to Cindy Smith, coordinator of the Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and Nina Kinney, Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), Department of Health and Social Services, formalized support services are available only for children abused by someone within their own households. Counseling and treatment are available to low-income individuals molested by non-family members on an extremely spotty basis through some shelters and crisis centers such as Standing Together Against Rape (STAR) in Anchorage, Aiding Women From Abuse and Rape Emergencies (AWARE) in Juneau, the Tundra Women's Center (TWC) in Bethel, and Women in Safe Houses (WISH) in Ketchikan. Although some agencies have community education programs, few have funding sufficient to provide adequate counseling and therapy on an on-going basis. Generally, these agencies and community mental health facilities report that little outreach is possible; they are able to assist only those individuals who come to them for help. Some facilities are overloaded to the extent that they are able to see individuals in immediate crisis only.

²Numerous other problems including multiple personality disorders, depression, promiscuity, and a propensity for suicide have been documented as attributable, at least in part, to sexual abuse during childhood.

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Without exception, service providers across the state noted that there is a vast unmet need for services for children molested outside the home as well as for the non-offending family members, particularly in rural areas. Given the increasing number of sex offenders--among adolescents and even among the preadolescent--intervention is seen as necessary; prevention seen as critical.

I have attached a copy of the final "Report of the Child Sexual Abuse Working Group," submitted to Governor Cowper in 1988. Among other issues, this report addresses the need for services for children abused outside the family. I have also attached "Juvenile Sex Offenders," from the Fall 1991 *Virginia Child Protection Newsletter*, an article documenting the rise in sex offending among children. I hope this information is sufficient for your purposes. If you have questions or need further information, please let me know.

Attachment

REPRESENTATIVE DAVE DONLEY



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Representative Georgianna Lincoln, Co-Chair
Representative Pat Carney, Co-Chair
House HESS Committee

FROM: Representative Dave Donley 

RE: HB 539 - Appropriation for Mental Health
Treatment for Child Abuse Victims

DATE: February 20, 1992

I respectfully request that HB 539, a bill designed to make mental health services available to victims of child sexual abuse be scheduled for a hearing before the HESS Committee at the earliest possible opportunity. The appropriation in HB 539 is from the mental health trust income account.

Over the past years, while working on legislation to strengthen the laws against child abuse and sexual assault, I discovered that an incredibly large number of sex offenders have been sexually abused as children. I also discovered that there is essentially no treatment available in this state for children who have been abused by someone who does not live in the child's household. As shown in the attached research report prepared by the Legislative Research Agency, the problem is more severe in rural Alaska than it is in the urban areas of the state.

Unless we are willing to accept ever-growing numbers of sex offenses against children, we must do something to stop the cycle of abuse. Treating today's innocent victims of abuse is a concrete step that we can take to reduce the number of sex offenders tomorrow.

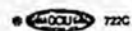
JUNEAU OFFICE



P.O. BOX

Sponsor statement

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The amount of the appropriation was determined as follows:

Training at 5 regional locations
(available to community mental health
providers, grantees of the Council on Domestic
Violence and Sexual Assault, etc.) \$126,000.00

15 Counselor positions at 14 locations

8 positions at \$85,000 (salary \$50,000,
benefits \$15,000, misc. costs \$20,000) to be
placed in the following communities:
Anchorage (2), Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai,
Ketchikan, Sitka and Wasilla \$680,000.00

7 positions at \$98,000 (salary \$60,000,
benefits \$18,000, misc. costs \$20,000) to be
placed in the following communities: Barrow,
Bethel, Dillingham, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome,
and Unalaska \$686,000.00

For your information, I have asked the Mental Health Board to look at the amount of the appropriation and to determine whether it is reasonable in light of the magnitude of the problem. If the Mental Health Board believes that the amount of the appropriation should be changed, I will bring their position to the attention of the HESS Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.



Official Business

Alaska State Legislature

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


House Health, Education and Social Services Committee

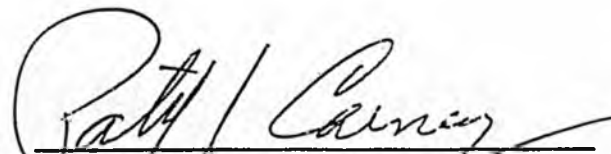
Letter of Intent

House Bill 539

The House Health, Education and Social Services Committee recognizes a gap in our mental health services for victims of child sexual abuse and strongly encourages the Finance Committee to favorably consider the increment requested by the Alaska Mental Health Board to accomplish the result intended in House Bill 539.

Dated: April 13, 1992


Representative Georgianna Lincoln
Co-Chair


Representative Pat Carney
Co-Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

4-14-92
Finance

(7)
 Date Referred: February 18, 1992

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 4-13-92

The HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

HB 539

HOUSE BILL NO. 539

APPROP: SERVICES FOR CHILD ABUSE VICTIMS

"An Act making a special appropriation for mental health services for victims of child sexual abuse; and providing for an effective date."

RECOMMENDATIONS: the same title
 be replaced with _____ a new title

have attached amendments(s)

do pass

do not pass

no recommendations

individual recommendations

additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: H.E.S.S. letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): _____ (Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: _____ (Dept/Date)

fiscal impact _____

fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note _____

zero fiscal note(s) _____

SIGNING <u>DO</u> PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>[Signature]</i> CARNEY	✓	<i>[Signature]</i> (LINCOLN)			✓
<i>[Signature]</i> Davis	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i> J. C. [unclear]	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i> Cheri Davis	✓				

[Signature]
 CO-CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE