

HB

241



REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CROFT

HB241

The Pioneers' Dignity Act of 1997

Sponsor Statement

One hundred dollars a month disposable income. That's all many residents of Alaska's Pioneer Homes have.

No current resident may be evicted from a Pioneer Home for inability to pay. However, in exchange for state assistance in paying their Home costs, some Pioneer Alaskans must forfeit virtually all their assets, spending down their savings then accepting what many proud Pioneers consider to be a form of welfare. It does not have to be this way.

The Pioneers' Dignity Act of 1997 guarantees the rights of Home residents to keep up to \$5,000 in personal property and to receive certain forms of income, such as Permanent Fund Dividends and ANCSA distributions. In addition, when one spouse lives in a Home and the other continues to live outside the Home, the house or condominium is not counted as an asset of the resident spouse.

Pioneers' Home costs have risen sharply in recent years and will continue to rise. A basic room currently costs a resident \$934 a month, but will cost \$2,129 by the year 2003. Of the 600 residents statewide, approximately 130 apply for and receive state assistance in paying their rates. To be eligible for payment assistance, residents must relinquish all their income—including Longevity Bonus and Permanent Fund Dividend—and keep only \$100 a month.

One hundred dollars isn't enough to pay for clothing, subscriptions, toiletries, calls to relatives and gifts for grandchildren. In the richest state in the union, to restrict Home residents to such a meager allowance is to needlessly rob them of their dignity and independence. Our Pioneers—who have contributed so much effort to building our great state—deserve better treatment.

The fiscal impact of HB241 will be minimal. Increased revenues from Home residents will more than offset the cost of disregarding certain assets and income. Some of the features of the bill will soon be incorporated in pending regulations. HB241 simply sets in statute some of the more important and basic rights.

Please join me in treating our Pioneers with the respect they deserve.





REPRESENTATIVE ERIC CROFT

MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Ivan Ivan, Chair, House Community & Regional
Affairs Committee
From: Rep. Eric Croft *Eric Croft*
Date: April 14, 1997
Re: IIB241

Please schedule a hearing for HB241 at your earliest convenience.

Please find attached:

- A copy of the bill
- Sponsor Statement

I will submit the following to you before a hearing:

- Fiscal note
- A position paper from the Division
- Letters of support

I would like for your committee to hear teleconferenced testimony.
If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Tom Atkinson
of my staff at 465-2116.



FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1997 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 241

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Administration
 Title: "An Act relating to payment assistance for costs of residing
in the Alaska Pioneers' Homes..." BRU: Senior Services _____
 Sponsor: Rep. Croft _____ Component: Pioneers' Homes _____
 Requestor: (H) C&RA _____ COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 1950 _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE: (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
OTHER						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY 97) cost: \$ _____

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

The department anticipates no fiscal impact from this legislation. This bill affects a portion of the regulations currently proposed by department, discussed in the public hearing on April 16, 1997. The effective date of these regulations, after receiving and considering all public comment, is July 1, 1997.

Prepared by: James L. Kohn _____ Phone: 465-4400 _____
 Division: Alaska Longevity Programs _____ Date: _____
 Approved by Commissioner: Mark Boyer Alison M. Selge _____
 Agency: Department of Administration _____ Date: 4/22/97 _____

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cc:Mail for: Tom Wright

Subject: Fiscal Notes

From: Tom Wright 4/21/97 7:57

To: Shari_Kochman@Gov.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1

Shari,

The House Committee on Community and Regional Affairs will need fiscal notes for:

HB 241: Payment of Costs of Pioneers' Homes (Administration)

HB 162: Ban Craft Buying on Liquor Premises (ABC Board-Revenue, Arts Council-Education)

HB 38: Conveyance of Land Selection to Boroughs (Community and Regional Affairs).

The hearing is scheduled for this Wednesday, April 23rd. Please call me at 3882 if you have any questions.

Tom Wright