

**HEB**

**45**

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)  
Date Referred to Committee: January 13, 1997

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 2/13/97

The HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

HB 45

HOUSE BILL NO. 45

RUNAWAY AND MISSING MINORS

"An Act relating to runaway and missing minors."

recommends it be replaced with the following committee substitute CS HB 45 (HES)  the same title  a new title

additional referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee  
 attached amendment(s)

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ Letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept) \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date) \_\_\_\_\_  
 fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_  fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note(s) H+SS, Public Safety  zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING WITH RECOMMENDATIONS	DP	DNP	NR	AM
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>				✓

*[Signature]*

**FISCAL NOTE**

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**1997 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**BILL NO. HB45**

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: Relating to Runaway and Missing Minors  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sponsor: Representative Kelly  
 Requestor: House (HES)

Dept. Affected: Health and Social Services  
 BRU: Family and Youth Services  
 Component: DFYS Central Office  
 COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 259  
 See also (SN#): \_\_\_\_\_

**Expenditures/Revenues:**

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>CHANGES IN REVENUES</b>						
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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 (please specify)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of any current year (FY97) cost:                     \$0.0

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

There would be no fiscal impact to the Division if this bill were to become law.

Prepared by: *L. Diane Worley*  
 Division: Family & Youth Services  
 Approved by Commissioner: *Harold Frazier*  
 Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

Phone: 465-3191  
 Date: 02/07/97  
 Date: 2/12/97

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# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1997 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO: HB 45

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Runaway and missing minors.  
Sponsor: Representative Kelly  
Requestor: H.HESS

Dept. Affected: Public Safety  
BRU: Alaska State Troopers  
Component: Detachments  
COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 0799

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)**

	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
OPERATING						
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>CAPITAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b> Revenue Code	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
<b>TOTAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

Estimate of current year (FY 97) impact: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**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.)**

This bill will not have a fiscal impact on the Division of Alaska State Troopers.

Prepared By: LI. Dan Lowden Phone: 289-5412  
 Division: Alaska State Troopers Date: January 10, 1997  
 Approved by Commissioner: *[Signature]* Date: 2/12/97  
 Agency: Ronald L. Olte, Department of Public

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CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 45(HES)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Offered:

Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE KELLY

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to runaway and missing minors; and providing for an effective  
2 date."

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

4 \* Section 1. AS 47.10.141(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) A peace officer shall take into protective custody a minor described in (a)  
6 of this section if the minor is not otherwise subject to arrest or detention. Unless (c)  
7 of this section applies, when a peace officer takes a minor into protective custody  
8 under this subsection,

9 (1) the peace officer shall

10 (A) return the minor to the minor's parent or guardian at the  
11 parent's or guardian's residence if the residence is in the same community  
12 where the minor was found and if the [MINOR AND THE] minor's parent or  
13 guardian consents [CONSENT] to the return, except that the officer may not  
14 use this option if the officer has reasonable cause to believe that the minor has

1 experienced physical or sexual abuse in the parent's or guardian's household;

2 (B) take the minor to a nearby location agreed to by the minor's  
3 parent or guardian if the parent or guardian does not consent to return of the  
4 minor under (A) of this paragraph and the officer does not have reasonable  
5 cause to believe that the minor has experienced physical or sexual abuse in the  
6 parent's or guardian's household; or

7 (C) if disposition of the minor is not made under (A) or (B) of  
8 this paragraph, take the minor to

9 (i) an office specified by the Department of Health and  
10 Social Services;

11 (ii) a program for runaway minors licensed by the  
12 department under AS 47.10.310;

13 (iii) a shelter for runaways that has a permit from the  
14 department under AS 47.35.085 that agrees to shelter the minor;

15 (iv) a facility or contract agency of the department; or

16 (v) another suitable location and promptly notify the  
17 department if an office specified by the department, a licensed program  
18 for runaway minors, a shelter for runaways that will accept the minor,  
19 or a facility or contract agency of the department does not exist in the  
20 community;

21 (2) if the peace officer plans to take the minor to an office, program,  
22 shelter, or facility under (1)(C) of this subsection, the peace officer shall give the  
23 highest priority to taking the minor to an office, program, shelter, or facility that is  
24 semi-secure;

25 (3) a minor under protective custody may not be housed in a jail or  
26 other detention facility but may be housed in a semi-secure portion of an office,  
27 program, shelter, or other facility under (1)(C) of this subsection;

28 (4) the peace officer, immediately upon taking a minor into protective  
29 custody, shall

30 (A) advise the minor of available mediation services and of the  
31 right to social services under AS 47.10.142(b); and

1  
2  
3  
4  
5

(B) if the identity of the minor's parent or guardian is known, advise the minor's parent or guardian that the minor has been taken into protective custody and that counseling services for the minor's parent or guardian and the minor's household may be available under AS 47.10.142(b).

\* Sec. 2. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

AMENDMENT #1

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

BY REPRESENTATIVE KELLY

TO: HB 45

- 1 Page 1, line 1, following "minors":
- 2       Insert "; and providing for an effective date"
  
- 3 Page 3, following line 2:
- 4       Insert a new bill section to read:
- 5       "\* Sec. 2. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c)."

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
PETER KELLY

Mailing Address:  
119 N. Cushman, Suite 203  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
(907) 458-8161

While In Juneau  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801-1182  
(907) 465-2327

House District 31

## House Of Representatives

February 3, 1997

Memorandum

To: Representative Con Bunde

From: Representative Pete Kelly 

Regarding: Hearing request for HB 45

=====

Please schedule a hearing for House Bill 45 at your earliest convenience.

House Bill 45 corrects a problem that occurred when my bill from last year, revising the juvenile code HB 387, and Senator Frank's bill, changing the runaway statutes SB 289, were merged. The language that resulted required a police officer to return a runaway minor to his parents - but only with the consent of the minor.

It does not make sense for the state to give a runaway minor, by definition an individual who chooses to live on the streets, the power to override his parents decision.

I have filed HB 45 to fix this problem.

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
PETER KELLY

Mailing Address  
119 N. Cushman, Suite 203  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
(907) 456-8161

Write to Author  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801-1182  
(907) 465-2327

House District 31

## House Of Representatives

### Sponsor Statement

HB 45

### Runaway and missing children

HB 45 provides a technical correction that occurred when my comprehensive re-write of the juvenile code was combined with Senator Steve Frank's legislation on runaway's following the last legislative session. When these two bills were combined a core piece of Senator Frank's legislation was lost. The reviser of bill needs this legislation to fix the problem.

This bill returns to a parent or guardian the decision to allow an unemancipated minor to remain on the street or to require the minor to return home. A runaway minor should not have the right of refusal as to where the minor should live. This decision should lie with the minor's parent, legal guardian, or in remote cases, a peace officer.

When you read the paper and learn of juveniles committing crime, vandalism, or living on the streets, you may ask yourself: "Where were these kids parents?" When you drive home late at night and see teens or younger children out on the street it is not just the parents who are at fault. Please remember that State law gives these children veto power over their parent's decision for the minor's return home.

We all agree that it is not in a minor's best interest for the minor to be "habitually absent from home or refusing to accept available care" (AS 47.10.010(a)(1)). It was not intentional for our statutes to read that a minor who has run away from home, must first consent to her or his return to that home. HB 45 corrects this problem.

SPONSOR STATEMENT

1 alleged offense, notified a peace officer, a law enforcement agency, or the  
2 Department of Health and Social Services of the name of the child and the  
3 child's location

4 • Sec. 3. AS 47.10.141(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) A peace officer shall take into protective custody a minor described in (a) of  
6 this section if the minor is not otherwise subject to arrest or detention. Unless (c) of this  
7 section applies, the peace officer shall [EXERCISE THE OFFICER'S DISCRETION  
8 AND] (1) return the minor to the legal custodian at the legal custodian's residence if  
9 the residence is in the same community where the minor was found and if the legal  
10 custodian consents to the return except that the officer may not use this option if the  
11 officer has reasonable cause to believe [SUSPECT] that the minor has experienced  
12 physical or sexual abuse in the legal custodian's household, (2) take the minor to a nearby  
13 location agreed to by [THE MINOR AND] the legal custodian ~~if the legal custodian~~  
14 does not consent to return of the minor under (1) of this subsection and the officer  
15 does not have reasonable cause to believe that the minor has experienced physical  
16 or sexual abuse in the legal custodian's household, or (3) if disposition of the minor  
17 is not made under (1) or (2) of this subsection, take the minor to an office specified by  
18 the Department of Health and Social Services, a program for runaway minors licensed  
19 by the department under AS 47.10.310, a shelter for runaways that has a permit from the  
20 department under AS 47.35.085 that agrees to shelter the minor, or a facility or contract  
21 agency of the department. ~~If the peace officer plans to take the minor to an office,~~  
22 program, shelter, or facility under (3) of this subsection, the peace officer shall give  
23 the highest priority to taking the minor to an office, program, shelter, or facility  
24 that is semi-secure. If an office specified by the department, a licensed program for  
25 runaway minors, a shelter for runaways that will accept the minor, or a facility or contract  
26 agency of the department does not exist in the community, the officer shall take the minor  
27 to another suitable location and promptly notify the department. A minor under  
28 protective custody may not be housed in a jail or other detention facility but may be  
29 housed in a semi-secure portion of an office, program, shelter, or other facility  
30 under (3) of this subsection. Immediately upon taking a minor into protective custody,

1 person, the court may make the appointment. The court shall have a summons issued and  
 2 served upon the parents of the minor, if they can be found, in a manner and within a time  
 3 before the hearing that the court considers reasonable. The court may determine whether  
 4 the father, mother, another suitable person, or the department shall have the custody  
 5 and control of the minor. If the minor is of sufficient age and intelligence to state desire,  
 6 the court shall consider them.

7 • Sec. 38. AS 47.10.120(a) is amended to read:

8 (a) When a child in need of aid [OR A DELINQUENT MINOR] is committed  
 9 under this chapter, the court shall, after giving the parent [OR LEGAL GUARDIAN] a  
 10 reasonable opportunity to be heard, adjudge that the parent [OR GUARDIAN] pay to the  
 11 department in a manner that the court directs a sum [THAT IS BASED ON THE FEE  
 12 SCHEDULE ADOPTED UNDER AS 44.29.022] to cover in full or in part the  
 13 maintenance and care of the child. The support obligation shall be calculated under  
 14 Rule 90.3(i) of the Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure [OR MINOR].

15 • Sec. 39. AS 47.10.141(b) is amended to read:

16 (b) A peace officer shall take into protective custody a minor described in (a) of  
 17 this section if the minor is not otherwise subject to arrest or detention. Unless (c) of this  
 18 section applies, when a peace officer takes a minor into protective custody under this  
 19 subsection.

20 (1) the peace officer shall exercise the officer's discretion and shall

21 (A) [AND (1)] return the minor to the minor's parent or  
 22 guardian [LEGAL CUSTODIAN] if the minor and the minor's parent or  
 23 guardian consent [LEGAL CUSTODIAN CONSENTS] to the return, except  
 24 that the officer may not use this option if the officer has reasonable cause to  
 25 suspect that the minor has experienced physical or sexual abuse in the parent's  
 26 or guardian's [LEGAL CUSTODIAN'S] household;

27 (B) [(2)] take the minor to a nearby location agreed to by the  
 28 minor and the minor's parent or guardian [LEGAL CUSTODIAN]; or

29 (C) [(3)] take the minor to

30 (1) an office specified by the Department of Health and

## WARNING SIGNS OF RUNAWAY CHILDREN

It is apparent that children with runaway tendencies manifest similar behaviors. The following list was compiled by parents of runaway children in the Fairbanks area. Those contributing the information all agree that it is far more than coincidental that many behaviors are similar, but they are puzzled as to what moves a child in that direction.

We hope this this information will alert other parents to a potential runaway problem before it happens.

- Dishonesty (lying, cheating, stealing).
- Lack of conscience.
- Poor school performance.
- Disruptive and/or disinterested in class.
- Disinterest in extra-curricular or other organized activities.
- Friendships with inferiors or hanging around with the bad elements.
- Inability to see the consequences of any given action.
- Drops out of family activities.
- Disavows family values.
- Manipulates others.
- Poor judgement and decision-making skills.
- Will do anything for peer acceptance.
- Gang attire and music preferences.
- Severe mood shifts.
- Bored and unable to entertain self – relies on peers, TV and others.
- Impulsive behavior – self damaging and harmful (i.e., drugs, shoplifting, sex, etc.)
- Low self-esteem.
- No sense of identity.
- Frequent and inappropriate display of anger.
- Unstable and intense friendships of short duration.
- Threats of suicide.
- Self mutilation.
- Avoidance of responsibilities by running or consequences of actions.
- Consistently truant.
- Destructive to property of self and others.
- Never admits to fault.
- Exhibits paranoid behavior.
- Continues to maintain relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend as forbidden by parents.
- Unrealistic use of money. Unable to hang on to money. Does not know value.

STATE OFFICE  
ALASKA PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 240106 Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0106 Phone (907) 277-0515 Fax (907) 272-5355



January 17, 1997

**Business Manager**

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Anchorage

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Scott Chain, Member  
Wrangell  
Pres. Wrangell Chapter

Leroy Mestas, Member  
Ketchikan  
Pres. First City Chapter

James See, Member  
Craig  
Pres. Prince of Wales Chapter

Representative Pete Kelly  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Kelly,

On behalf of the Alaska Peace Officers Association, I would like to thank you for sponsoring House Bill 45 relating to runaway and missing minors. At a recent meeting of the APOA State Board, we decided to unanimously support this legislation. We believe that a runaway minor should not have the right of refusal or choice as to where the minor should live. We feel this decision should lie with the minor's parent, legal guardian or, in remote cases, a peace officer.

We encourage you to call on us when there are hearings on this bill, so that we may testify about the need for this legislation. If you need assistance as you shepherd this bill through the legislative process, please call me at 451-5316, or our business manager, Joseph Young at 277-0515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mike", is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Corkill  
APOA State President

SUPPORT



**ALASKA CHAPTER**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS  
ALASKA CHAPTER**

525 Main Street, Juneau AK 99801  
586-4438 1-800-478-6279 Fax: 586-4439  
naswak@alaska.net

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**Testimony Regarding**

**HB 45 RUNAWAY AND MISSING MINORS**

**Before the  
HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ALASKA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
February 13, 1997**

**Presented by  
Angela M. Salerno, ACSW  
Executive Director,  
National Association of Social Workers Alaska Chapter**



## **ALASKA CHAPTER**

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS ALASKA CHAPTER

525 Main Street, Juneau AK 99801  
586-4438 1-800-478-6279 Fax: 586-4439  
naswak@alaska.net

*The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the world's largest organization of professional social workers. NASW's 155,000 members nationwide and 460 in Alaska work in a wide range of settings at all levels in the public and private sectors. Professional social workers focus on vulnerable populations and promote state and federal policies which enhance the lives of the people we serve.*

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on HB 45, Runaway and Missing Minors.

**NASW opposes HB 45 and does not recommend its passage.**

**HB 45 will result in increased incidence of parental abuse, injury, and even death among youth.** This measure will require a police officer to forcibly return a youth, without his or her consent, to a home that may be unsafe. Research has shown that 60% to 75% of runaways report serious physical abuse, and the prevalence of sexual abuse, especially among young women, is even higher. (Powers, J, Eckenrode, J. & Jaklitsch, B. (1990). "Maltreatment Among Runaway and Homeless Youth." *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 14:87). . Each year in Alaska 3,575 cases of child abuse are verified, and the state receives over 15,000 child abuse and neglect reports each year. (State of Alaska, Child Health Planning Work Group).

**The bill's exception to forcible return if the officer has "reasonable cause to believe" the presence of family abuse will not protect the youth.** Police officers are not qualified to assess the presence of physical or sexual abuse, and therefore must rely on reports from the youth. The youth may be reluctant to reveal a history of family abuse to an officer, and therefore could be routinely returned to a dangerous situation.

**Forcing runaway youth to return home against their will will not stop them from running.** As dangerous as life on the street is, its not nearly as bad as returning to an abusive parent. In fact, it will only serve to further alienate these youth, driving them deeper "underground" and out of state where they are even less likely to receive the services they need.

**Life on the streets is not fun.** In Alaska 1,900 Alaskan adolescents are homeless annually (Alaska DHSS). These youth are taking what is often the only option available to them. If services were made available, the great majority of runaway and homeless youth would readily access them, especially programs such as independent and transitional living, education, training, jobs and counseling that would enable them to become self-sustaining.

**The problems of homeless and runaway youth should be viewed as a human rights issues with roots in victimization.** Young people from troubled homes can be victimized within the family and exposed to violence which further infringes on their human rights. Would you consider applying such measures to any other group of citizens - stripping them of their rights and essentially treating them as the property of their parents? This legislation gives parents the option of consenting to the return of their children, and leaves open the opportunity for youth to be thrown away, abandoned and locked out of their homes.. We will not promote healthy, responsible adults with this legislation, and may in fact ensure that some youth suffer serious injury at the hands of their parents.

Comments on HB45:

Kim Wood  
PO Box 56152  
North Pole, AK 99705

Upon reading HB45 I was taken back to April 23, 1996, when our daughter "decided" that she didn't want to live with us anymore and would rather "live her own life" at age 13. That was the day I summoned the police to pick her up off the street because she said she was not coming home. When she was taken to the police station, she said she was not going home with us. We then asked the police what we could do and we were told "nothing." They then transported her to Family Focus. That was all they said they could do. Never once did the police tell our daughter that she had to go home with us, so she really felt like she had the upper hand and we felt she did too. She got what she wanted, to do what she wanted, when she wanted. I'm sure she probably laughed inside all the way to Family Focus, while we were crying at home. I might add here that there was never any question of physical, mental, or sexual abuse, just a child who got it in her head that she could do what she wanted and there was nothing we could do about it. The sad thing is that she was right, until we found out about Teen Help.

How helpless we felt that day and the days that followed until we were given the number of Teen Help. The day after I called them, an escort team was on their way to Fairbanks to take our daughter to a residential treatment facility where we could all begin to sort through what was wrong and begin the healing process. To date things are going well and our daughter is in a safe, secure environment, where together we are all working on the issues that ultimately led to April 23, 1996.

Every day I see in the paper where another adolescent is either missing, or assaulting their parents, etc. It makes me angry that there is nothing in our own state, much less our own community that can provide assistance to our children who are definitely crying out for help.

I would venture to say that most of the kids on the street are not from abusive homes, but rather they know that there is nothing their parents can do to make them be responsible for the bad choices they have made, and that if not checked, will eventually ruin their lives, like ending up in jail for the rest of their life for shooting a police officer in the chest. And actions that affect the lives of others in the community by way of stealing, vandalism, etc. How sad that our state thinks it's more important to give grants to start charter schools for "gifted" children when the money could be better used to establish facilities to help our kids at risk. And yes, I do mean help. If you could talk to the kids in the program that our daughter is in, you would find that they are now thankful that their parents are

making the emotional and monetary sacrifice they are making to ensure that their son or daughter is receiving the help they need.

One thing I noticed in the bill, (4) (B) "that counseling services for the minor's parent or guardian and the minor's household may be available under AS 47.10.142(B)." This is a good place to start, too bad it was never offered to my family. We were on our own in finding counseling and it would have been helpful if someone would have assisted us. When your family is falling apart, you feel like you are all alone in the world, and there was nowhere to turn for us. I can only hope that our state government will take a serious look at this issue and take action soon. The problem is not getting better, and will not go away on its own. It's too late for my family, but not for countless others in our community that are now or will in the future go through this tragedy.

Respectfully,

Kim M. Wood 2/13/97

by Al Near

HB45 seeks to correct a technical error that occurred when SB289 was written into AS 47.10.141(B). I support this correction.

Despite our best efforts, the runaway youth problem continues to plague us. Responsible parents who are trying to instill traditional values encounter legal roadblocks. If a kid chooses to leave home (runaway), there's very little a parent can do to prevent it, and kids know this! Laws designed to protect abused and neglected children are easily exploited by rebellious kids who are challenging authority. Young people who, in an earlier time would have been held accountable for their misdeeds, can now exercise adult *freedoms* unencumbered by *responsibility*.

Alaska desperately needs the option of secure treatment facilities for our rebellious runaways. At present, families have few choices when their son or daughter runs. If pleading with them to come home doesn't work...then what? A growing number of Alaskan families are sending them to programs "Outside". Facilities in Utah, Idaho and Montana can maintain a secure environment for rehabilitation programs and their success rates are impressive...over 80%! The cost is high too...\$100 a day and up, but over a dozen families in Fairbanks alone have children in just one of these programs today.

Why can't we have this option *in Alaska*? It seems that mandates flowing from Federal legislation of the 70s may be the reason. To ensure so called "least restrictive" settings for juveniles in custody here, certain Federal funds for juvenile programs are contingent upon compliance. For example, detention of juveniles who run away from home would place a portion of this grant money at risk. It's assumed that kids who run away are fleeing abusive homes. This completely overlooks the merely rebellious ones...kids who would exploit these laws and manipulate the system. Kids who know that law enforcement agencies do NOT aggressively pursue runaways or the people who harbor them.

I urge you and the administration to consider lifting the ban against secure placement for habitual runaways.



TEEN HELP  
1-800-355-8336

ID #

### How times have changed

Public school teachers rate the top disciplinary problems



#### 1940

Talking out of turn  
Chewing gum  
Making noise  
Running in the halls  
Cutting in line  
Dress-code violations  
Littering

#### 1990

Drug abuse  
Alcohol abuse  
Pregnancy  
Suicide  
Rape  
Robbery  
Assault

©1992 by Board of Congressional Quarterly Researcher

## In the next 24 hours . . .

(Based on national averages)

- 1,439 Teens will attempt suicide
- 2,795 Teenage girls will become pregnant
- 9,506 Teens will take their first drink of alcohol or use of drugs
- 3,561 Teens will run away

Truancy and violence by teens have increased tremendously. Teens now account for over a fourth of all Sexually Transmitted Diseases and over fifty percent of all teens use alcohol or drugs.

More teens than ever before are in need of help. Even the best of homes are being affected by this nationwide problem.

## Teen Help . . .

has resources or can refer parents to resources such as:

- Parent Support Groups
- Parent and Teen Retreats
- Adolescent Counselors
- Short Term Crisis Centers
- Treatment Programs
- Schools, Camps, other Alternatives

## For more information . . .

Call TEEN HELP

1-800-355-8336