

HB

409

Sponsor Statement for CSSSHB 409 (HES)

HB 409 is a modest step towards recognizing a grandparent's interest in being involved in a process that affects their grandchildren. If a grandparent requests to be part of the process, HB 409 requires the department to notify them of upcoming custody hearings and provides grandparents with the opportunity to be heard at child in need of aid and delinquency hearings.

Over the past couple of sessions the legislature has focused considerable effort on making our child protection and custody procedures more open, responsive and, hopefully more responsible. We have given foster parents more input and the right to be heard in treatment and placement decisions and we have encouraged more efficient placement procedures.

We believe this bill will result in more informed decisions about the treatment and placement of Alaska's abused and neglected children. Additionally we believe this measure will increase the likelihood of children being placed with relatives who may not have otherwise been located, much less considered.

There will be cases where a grandparent is not a suitable option for child placement, but ideally, this bill will encourage the department, and parents, to consider grandparents more frequently as a the preferred placement option for children in need.

Please feel free to contact my office with questions or concerns.

STATE OF ALASKA
2000 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CSSSHB 409 (HES)

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Health and Social Services
 Title: Prescribing the rights of grandparents in CINA BRU: Front Line Social Workers
proceedings. Component: Front Line Social Workers
 Sponsor: Rep. Dyson, Rep. Kookesh COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 2305
 Requestor: House (HES) See also (SN#): _____

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
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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CHANGES IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (please specify)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2000) cost: \$0.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0				
PART-TIME	0				
TEMPORARY	0				

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill will have no fiscal impact on the Department if enacted.

Prepared by: Theresa Tanoury, Director Phone: 465-3191
 Division: Family & Youth Services Date/Time: 4/12/00 11:46 AM

Approved by Commissioner: Karen Perdue, Commissioner Date: _____
 Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

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Grandparents Rights Organization

Anchorage Chapter

The Grandparents Rights Organization is very pleased with HB 409.

This Bill allows grandparents to have the opportunity to be involved in the hearings held by the state in cases involving our grandchildren. This is a very important procedure for the Courts & DFYS to be able to properly establish what is in the "Best Interest of the Child". For the benefit of everyone concerned we consider "Best Interest of the Child" as described in AS 25.24.150(c)(1-9) (attached).

Course of our concern is what steps will be made to ensure that the State will follow these Statutes. As things stand now they often do not follow the statutes that currently exist. They need to be held accountable for their actions as we are.

According to the Article in "Parade" of the ADN, Sunday 3/26/200 there are 3.9 million children in the US living in homes maintained by their grandparents. That is 5.5% of all children under 18 years of age in the US. But those grandparents get paid less than 50% (if anything) of what a foster parent receives, thus saving the state over 50% on every grandchild that is with a grandparent. Some grandparents would need help, but most just want their grandchildren.

So money (as Ms. Langdon pointed out) is one reason we feel it would be beneficial to find a grandparent of a grandchild that is taken into State custody. How much is a child's life worth?

