

**HB**

**413**

# Alaska State Legislature

House Labor & Commerce  
Committee

House Military & Veterans' Affairs  
Special Committee

House Economic Development & Tourism  
Special Committee



716 West 4th Ave., Suite 330  
Anchorage, AK 99501-2133  
(907) 269-0190  
(907) 269-0193 Fax

Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.u  
[www.legis.state.ak.us/home/house/scissna.html](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/home/house/scissna.html)

## Representative Sharon Cissna Sponsor Statement House Bill 413

*"An Act relating to intensive family preservation services;  
and providing for an effective date."*

HB 413 allows the Department of Health and Social Services to make available an intensive intervention effort prior to the removal of children from their parents to state custody when the family is in crisis. The program is based on a model successfully used by Washington State since 1974 called *Homebuilders*.

*Homebuilders* is a comprehensive program that intervenes in a family's moment of crisis, when other efforts have been tried and failed. It applies to a child or children who are in imminent risk of unnecessary placement but are not in danger of imminent risk of harm if they stay with their family.

- Homebuilders in Washington State has been very successful and in 1982 published an 88% success rate\* among participants in the project.
- The program is cost effective. In 1986, the cost of the Washington State Homebuilders was \$2,600 per child per year. The cost of foster care placement was \$7,186 per child per year. The cost of group home placement was \$22,373 per child per year. This does not begin to take into consideration how much it costs the state to put a child in an institution, nor increased costs in Alaska.

Homebuilder's success is built on the following program characteristics:

- Immediate response (within 24 hours) by a caseworker or caseworker team;
- 24-hour-a-day availability of the same caseworker for up to 6 weeks;
- Service delivery by the same caseworker in small caseloads (2 families per worker or 6 families per team); and
- Approximately 15 hours of intensive home service provided by the same caseworker each week.

HB 413 allows funding of one position to research Federal and other funding sources for the program in Alaska. The benefit of this position's research would be finding additional non-GF monies to benefit the budgets of other programs as well.

\*Based on how long the child stays in their home after the program is terminated.

# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
2000 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 413

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: Relating to intensive family preservation  
servi. es.  
 Sponsor: Rep. Cissna  
 Requestor: House (HES)

Dept. Affected: Health and Social Services  
 BRU: Family and Youth Services  
 Component: FYS Management  
 COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 2306  
 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	67.1	67.1	67.1	67.1	67.1	67.1
TRAVEL	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
CONTRACTUAL	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
SUPPLIES	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
EQUIPMENT	5.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>80.3</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGES IN REVENUES ( )						
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

FUND SOURCE	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
1002 Federal Receipts	22.5	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	57.8	53.8	53.8	53.8	53.8	53.8
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (please specify)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80.3</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>74.8</b>

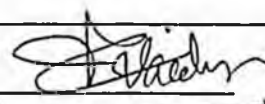
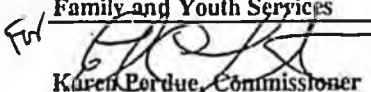
Estimate of any current year (FY2000) cost: \$0.0

**POSITIONS:**

POSITIONS	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
FULL-TIME	1	1	1	1	1	1
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

As written, this legislation creates a significant workload for DFYS. It requires the agency to seek outside funding for program development and delivery, to develop outcome measures, to monitor grantees and internal service units to ensure compliance, and to produce a comprehensive study in approximately 18 months. These activities will require the creation of a new Range 20 program coordinator position in the DFYS central office. Title IV-E may fund a portion of the position, based on the activities of the position and the percentage of children in custody that are Title IV-E eligible. Based on historical reimbursement rates, this position will be approximately 72% state funded and 28% IV-E funded.

Prepared by: Theresa Tanoury, Director  Phone: 465-3191  
 Division: Family and Youth Services Date/Time: 3/14/00 3:25 PM  
 Approved by Commissioner: Karen Purdue, Commissioner  Date: 4/3/00  
 Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

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**ANALYSIS (cont.):**

A breakdown of projected implementation costs of this bill follows.

Funding percentage: GF 72%; Federal 28%.

Expenditure Analysis:	Annual Cost <u>FY01</u>	Annual Cost <u>FY02 - FY06</u>
Personal Services 71000	<u>67.1</u>	<u>67.1</u>
Sub-total Personal Services:	67.1	67.1
 Travel 72000:	 <u>2.5</u>	 <u>2.5</u>
Sub-total Travel:	2.5	2.5
 Contractual Services:		
Telephone (monthly basic & long distance)	1.6	1.6
Lease space for new employee:	<u>3.1</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Sub-total Contractual Services:	4.7	4.7
 Supplies:		
Office supplies:	0.5	0.5
 Equipment: (for new positions)		
Computer	3.0	0.0
Telephones/communication equipment:	0.5	0.0
Desk & office chairs:	<u>2.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Subtotal Equipment:	5.5	0.0
 Total	 <u>80.3</u>	 <u>74.8</u>
 Funding:		
General Fund	57.8	53.8
Federal	<u>22.5</u>	<u>20.9</u>
	80.3	74.8

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 110601  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0601  
PHONE: (907) 465-3030  
FAX: (907) 465-3068

April 3, 2000

Honorable Sharon Cissna  
Alaska Legislature  
State Capitol Room 420  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Cissna:

I am writing in support of your proposed legislation, House Bill 413, which relates to providing intensive, up-front services for families who are experiencing a crisis which may result in the Department of Health and Social Services taking custody of their children.

As we have discussed, I believe that the passage of HB 413 and the development of a program (initially a pilot) to serve such families would be beneficial to Alaska's children and families. It has the potential to keep families together, which is always the Department's first goal. Additionally, it could save the State money in the long run by preventing removal of children from their homes and being placed in the foster care system.

The number of children in the Department's custody placed in out-of-home care has grown significantly over the last few years. For example, in January 1994, 1,250 children were placed in out-of-home care, in January 1998 the number was nearly 1,600, and in January 2000, there were 2,150 children in out-of-home care. The increasing numbers illustrate a real need for additional services to assist families who are on the brink of State intervention.

We do have existing services, but they are not adequate to meet the staggering demand and the funding for these programs is limited. The model you are suggesting, which puts intensive efforts up-front before removal is necessary, has worked well in other states, and I believe would reduce the overall number of children the Department has to remove from their homes. Of course, our mandate to intervene and protect children and provide out-of-home care will not change, but by giving families access to intensive, up-front services, our removal rate would likely decline and less children would need to be placed in State's custody.

The Division of Family and Youth Services would need a coordinator to seek federal and other funding streams for the program and to start up and monitor a pilot program. A primary duty of this position would be to determine the feasibility of the State to secure a IVE waiver to redirect

Representative Cissna

April 3, 2000

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federal dollars now spent on foster care to in-home support. Such a waiver, if feasible, could redirect millions of dollars to the in-home support efforts. I believe the investment would be well worth the potential benefit.

Again, Representative Cissna, thank you for putting forth this thoughtful bill to help families stay together during a period of crisis. While this would not be a panacea and work for all families with whom the Department is involved, it could benefit many. The Department of Health and Social Services supports HB 413 and very much appreciates your commitment and efforts to better serve Alaska's children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen Perdue".

Karen Perdue  
Commissioner

# **Family Preservation Services**

**Homebuilders Model**

**Intensive  
Family Preservation  
Homebuilders Values**

**It is  
our job  
to instill  
hope.**

**One cannot easily  
determine which  
types of families are  
"hopeless," and  
which will benefit  
from intervention.**

**We can do  
harm as well as  
good; we must  
be careful.**

**People are  
doing  
the best  
they can do.**

**In most  
cases, it is  
best for  
children  
to grow up  
with their  
natural  
families.**

**Clients  
are our  
colleagues.**

## **Program Characteristics**

- Limited to children at imminent risk of unnecessary placement
- Immediate response (within 24 hours)
- Highly flexible scheduling (24-hour, 7-day per week availability)
- Small caseloads (2 families)
- Intensive intervention (5-20 hours per week as needed)
- Services delivered in client's home and community
- Time-limited and brief (4-6 weeks)
- "Hard" and "soft" services delivered by a single worker (with safety backup)
- Ecological approach (works with the family and community interaction)
- Goal-oriented, with "limited" objectives

## **Characteristics of the Homebuilders Model**

### ***Accessibility***

- Immediate response to referral
- 24-hour-a-day availability
- Maximum caseload of two families
- Services located in the natural environment

### ***Flexibility***

- Wide range of services available
- Services responsive to client values and lifestyles
- Appointments scheduled at convenience of clients

### ***Accountability***

- Cost-effective studies
- Comparison group studies
- Measures of treatment effectiveness
- Auditors and outside evaluations
- Performance-based contracts
- Client feedback
- Referring-agent feedback
- Staff evaluations

## **Values and Beliefs**

- Children need families
- Child's safety first concern
- Most family members really care about each other
- Troubled families want to change
- Everybody is doing the best they can do at the time
- A crisis is an opportunity for change
- Inappropriate intervention can do harm
- Power for change resides in the family

## **Evaluation Measures**

### **Objective**

- Safety
- Prevention of unnecessary placement
- Improved family functioning
- Cost effectiveness

### **Subjective**

- Client satisfaction
- Satisfaction of referral sources
- Satisfaction of funding sources
- Opinion of services community