

SCR

33

Alaska State Legislature

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Senate Rules Committee

Senator Randy Phillips, Chair

SCR 33 – Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Sponsor Statement

Senate Concurrent Resolution 33 will designate September as Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in the state of Alaska. This resolution encourages health care organizations, health care providers, municipalities, private agencies, and individuals to participate in awareness activities throughout the month.

The Alaska Chapter of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, founded by Kim Sexton and Deb Donoho in August 2000, respectfully requests this resolution be passed as a commitment to the health of the women of Alaska. The Alaska Chapter hopes to raise awareness about the silent and often misdiagnosed warning signs of ovarian cancer. They are specifically concerned that women may not be aware that:

- In the United States, more women die of ovarian cancer each year than of cervical and endometrial cancers combined.
- The American Cancer Society reports that ovarian cancer accounts for four percent of all cancers among women and ranks fifth as a cause of death.
- The American Cancer Society predicts that approximately 23,000 new cases of ovarian cancer will be diagnosed yearly with 13,000 deaths annually.
- Early detection is key to survival; if the cancer is diagnosed while confined to the ovary the five-year survival rate reaches 93% on average.
- The incidence of advanced stage ovarian cancer is increasing due to the vague symptoms and the lack of a screening test for early detection.

Senator John Cowdery, Vice-Chair
Senator Rick Halford, Senator Gene Therriault, Senator Johnny Ellis
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National Ovarian Cancer Coalition

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May 7, 2002

House Health, Education and Social Services Committee
Representatives Dyson, Wilson, Coghill, Stevens, Kohring, Cissna and Joule

Re: SCR33

Esteemed Representatives,

The purpose of my letter today is to ask for your support of SCR33 pertaining to Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

The Alaska Division of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition was formed in August of 2000. Our Mission Statement reads as follows: Our mission is to raise awareness about ovarian cancer and to promote education about this disease. By dispelling myths and misunderstandings, the coalition is committed to improve the overall survival and quality of life from ovarian cancer.

Because each woman diagnosed with ovarian cancer has a different profile, it is impossible to give a general prognosis. If diagnosed and treated early, when the cancer is confined to the ovary, the 5-year survival rate approaches 93 percent (78-98 percent depending upon tumor type, stage, and grade). Unfortunately, due to ovarian cancer's "quiet" symptoms, only 24 percent of all cases are found at this early stage. *Because many ovarian cancers are not detected early, the overall 5-year survival rate for women with ovarian cancer is only between 35 percent and 47 percent, depending upon the type of tumor. There are over 30 different types of ovarian cancer.*

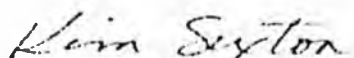
While the symptoms of ovarian cancer (particularly in the early stages) are often not acute or intense, they are not always silent if you know what to look for. Some symptoms of ovarian cancer include: Pelvic or abdominal pain or discomfort; Vague, but persistent gastrointestinal upsets such as gas, nausea and indigestion; Frequency and/or urgency of urination in absence of an infection; Unexplained changes in bowel habits; Unexplained weight gain or weight loss, particularly weight gain in the abdominal region; Pelvic and/or abdominal swelling, bloating, and/or feeling of fullness; Pain during intercourse; Ongoing fatigue.

No consistently reliable, accurate screening test to detect ovarian cancer exists (the Pap test does not detect it). Only 10-15% of the cases of ovarian cancer are attributed to hereditary causes. While the presence of one or more risk factors may increase a woman's chance of getting ovarian cancer, it does not necessarily mean that she will. A woman should be extra vigilant in watching for early symptoms, however, if she has any of these risk factors: Personal history of breast, endometrial, or colon cancer; Uninterrupted ovulation (infertility, never used birth control pills, or no pregnancies); Increasing age.

At present, there is no known method to prevent ovarian cancer, but some things appear to reduce a woman's risk of developing the disease. They include: Oral contraception: Use of oral contraceptives for a total of five years (does not have to be continuous) can decrease the risk by as much as 60 percent. Breast-feeding and pregnancy: Having one or more children, particularly if the first is born before age 30, plus breast feeding, may decrease a woman's risk. Tubal ligation: Tubal ligation is a surgical procedure in which your fallopian tubes are tied to prevent pregnancy. This procedure does not prevent all or even most cases of ovarian cancer, and therefore should only be done for valid medical reasons, and not solely to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer. Hysterectomy: A woman should not have a hysterectomy exclusively to avoid ovarian cancer risk, but if one is being performed for valid medical reasons and she has a family history of ovarian or breast cancer or is over age 40, she should discuss concurrent ovary removal with her physician. Prophylactic oophorectomy: Oophorectomy is the surgical removal of one or both ovaries. Only recommended for certain extremely high-risk patients, the operation eliminates the risk for ovarian cancer, but not the risk for a less common tumor called Primary Peritoneal Carcinoma. (The reason is that other tissue similar to the ovarian tissue remains in the pelvic cavity and may rarely develop into cancer.)

I thank you for your consideration of SCR33, and look forward to your favorable recommendation to the full House.

Respectfully,



Kim Sexton
Co-President, NOCC-Alaska



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The National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, Inc. is a Not-For-Profit 501(c)3 Corporation

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2002 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
Bill Version: SCR 33
(S) Publish Date: 5/1/02

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: _____
Title Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month BRU _____
Sponsor Rules by Request Component _____
Requester Senate State Affairs Committee Component No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
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 (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2002) cost: 0.0
Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2003 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Phone 465-4797
Division _____ Date/Time _____
Approved by: /s/ Senator Therriault, Chair Date 4/29/02
Agency _____