

OVERVIEW:

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REORGAN-

IZATION,

3/12/03

State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services

Frank H. Murkowski
Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001
NEWS RELEASE



Joel Gilbertson
Commissioner
907-465-3030
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www.hss.state.ak.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 4, 2003

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Health & Social Services reorganized for efficiency, better customer service

Reorganization includes internal changes, programs moving to DHSS from Depts. Of Administration and Education & Early Development

(Juneau) – DHSS Commissioner Joel Gilbertson announced today a major reorganization of the Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services. “We are integrating the health and social services provided to Alaskans, and combining programs in ways that make sense to the people DHSS serves,” he said. “Alaskans will get better customer service, and DHSS will be in a stronger position to deliver quality services in very tough financial times for the State.”

The Department reorganization includes internal consolidations that result in name and function changes for 4 Divisions, creation of a new department-wide program review function, and movement of a total of five programs from the Departments of Administration and Education & Early Development to the Dept. of Health & Social Services.

Gilbertson said that planning for the reorganization considered a wealth of valuable input and creative ideas from the DHSS performance review audit, employee surveys and the thoughts of thousands of Alaskans during regional transition field hearings last fall. He said reorganizations are always difficult, but that DHSS is focused on solid outcomes for Alaskans:

- Enhanced quality of life for the people DHSS serves
- Efficient coordination and management of multiple health and human services
- Maximum benefit from existing resources and reduced unnecessary and burdensome regulations
- Innovation, flexibility and accountability at all levels of state government

“We are reorganizing in part to restructure the way we use Medicaid funding for our programs, to maximize federal funding for our services,” he said. “Alaskans also want to be sure that any use of public funds results in the best health and social services. Part of our restructuring includes a program review function to ensure program integrity and maximization of any General Fund investment.”

[more]

Reorganization Highlights

Commissioner's Office

Two new units will be established by the Commissioner's Office using existing positions, whose functions will be to reduce General Fund expenditures across the Department and establish efficiency in rate-setting functions throughout the Department.

The Office of Program Review will ensure that DHSS programs accomplish their goals, and will help Divisions find ways to refinance programs to ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, services continue during difficult financial times.

Health Care Services (HCS)

This Division focuses on the individual health needs of Alaskans. The Division of Health Care Services ensures that individuals receive quality personal health care services from health care providers who are paid by DHSS. HCS consists of a number of functions formerly in the Div. of Public Health, with the addition of some functions formerly in the Div. of Medical Assistance.

Public Health

This Division protects and promotes public health. The Division of Public Health focuses on disease prevention and control, homeland security related to public health, and systems development and planning for a quality health care system. A number of the functions in the former Div. of Public Health remain, with the inclusion of systems development and planning functions from several divisions.

Children Services

At the Deputy Commissioner level, this new Office provides a more well-rounded system to help families keep their children safe and healthy. Children Services also includes several child health programs formerly in the Div. of Public Health, and Behavioral Rehabilitation Services formerly in the Div. of Medical Assistance.

Behavioral Health

This Division provides a comprehensive array of mental health & substance abuse services. The people DHSS serve get better customer service because service delivery is more efficient and treatment is integrated. The Div. of Behavioral Health includes functions formerly in the Div. of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Div. of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities.

Public Assistance

This Division continues its main mission of supporting families and individuals to become self-sufficient. It will serve families better by consolidating programs and funding sources that assist families enter or remain in the workforce, and by reducing the number of applications a person has to fill out and offices they need to visit to get assistance. The Div. of Public Assistance will include outreach for Denali KidCare, formerly in the Div. of Public Health, and Childcare Assistance, formerly in the Dept. of Education & Early Development.

Senior & Disabilities Services

This Division provides a full range of care for Alaska seniors and disabled Alaskans in one agency. The people we serve get improved access to a continuum of care – all the services seniors and disabled people need. The Div. of Senior & Disabilities Services includes the Div. of Senior Services formerly in the Dept. of Administration, Adult Public Assistance formerly in the

Div. of Public Assistance, and several other functions from the former Div. of Medical Assistance.

Div. of Alaska Longevity Programs

The Longevity Bonus Program and Pioneer Homes programs will be transferred from the Dept. of Administration.

Juvenile Justice

This Division is a specialized and discrete unit focused on better outcomes for youth in trouble.

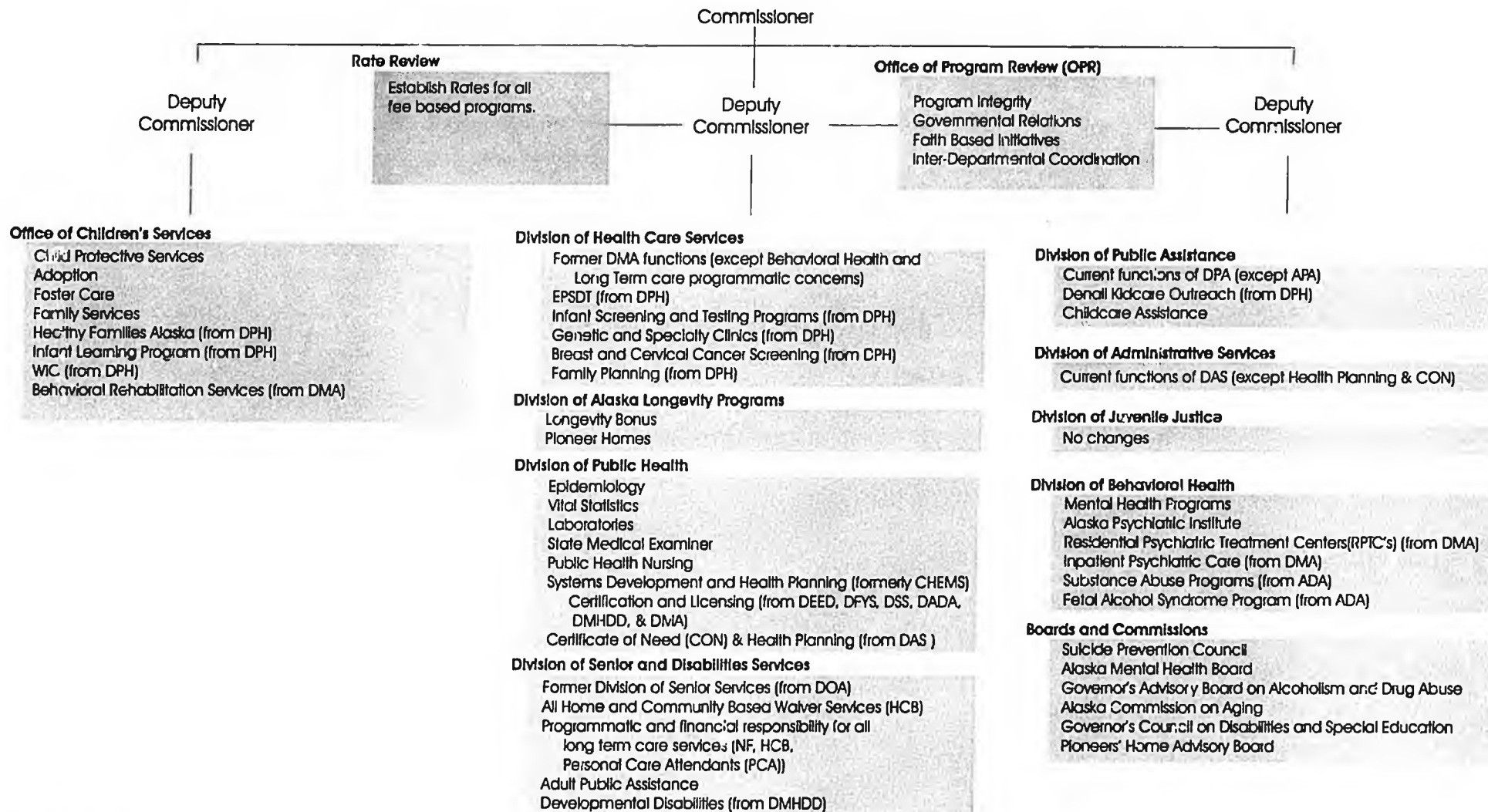
Admin Services

This Division will focus on core functions – services to DHSS agencies.

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For more information, please contact

Ross Soboleff
Public Information Officer III
Department of Health and Social Services
(907) 465-1611





Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Health Education and Social Services Committee

_____ committee name

Committee on Re Organization of DHSS

, dated 03-11-03

_____ bill # / subject

To Senator Dyson, Green, Wilken, Davis, and Guess:

I am concerned about the Department of Health and Social Services. The DHSS needs some serious improvements in the way their department performs. The citizen's of Alaska are not getting their moneys worth regarding the huge amount of tax money being spent with DHSS when compared with their DHSS's public services. The DHSS has too much power over the families that reside in Alaska. The DHSS Social Worker's have extremely high caseloads. Its directly related to the currant policy of allowing anonymous reports of harm, which are called into the DHSS 800 phone number. Until this anonymous reporting is changed, we will continue to have high caseloads! These caseworkers are required to investigate all reports of harm. The general public knows there is no accountability for making false reports of harm against people they may dislike or want to exact revenge upon. I have been the victim of anonymous reports of harm. Many different calls alleging that I was neglecting my three children. My oldest child is sixteen, my middle son is fifteen, and my youngest child is eleven. There have never been any reports of harm made concerning my children or myself until I separated from my daughter's father. The anonymous reports began when we separated. We had an active child custody case within the Court System. The Court had access to the reports of harm but I could not learn who made the reports of harm, what the allegations were, or why they were made against me. Now DFYS has a permanent file containing personal information about me, my children, all my mental health records, and who knows what else. The Court has complete access to everything inside these confidential DFYS files, and they are being used against me to determine custody of my kids! DFYS went to my children's schools and interviewed them three separate times. I looked up their guidelines. The caseworker was supposed to inform me of the interviews. But, nobody had told me from DFYS, I found out when my daughter asked me if they were taking her away from me. My daughter wanted to know if she would be living in a foster home! I did not know what to tell my daughter because nobody from DFYS would give me any information. DFYS should not be allowed to interview any children without one of the children's parents who is present during their interview. This interview occurred at school, my daughter was completely embarrassed when her friends asked her why DFYS wanted to talk to her. DFYS

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FOLLOWING
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ARE
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ORIGINAL
COPIES

should not be interviewing these children at school, the other students notice and ask questions! This is a private family situation; it should be only conducted in DFYS's office. These parents should have adequate notice so they can obtain legal counsel to protect their legal rights during this interview. These parents should have an Attorney present during the interview! If the parent being investigated by DFYS can't afford an attorney, one should be appointed for them, to be present during all their interviews. Please do away with DFYS's 800-phone number that allows people to make anonymous reports of harm. Enact new statutes, which require reporters of harm to sign formal statements and give proof of their identity! When people want to make reports of harm, allow them do it in person at the DFYS office. Make these reporters file a formal written statement, signed with these reporters' names. Attach a photocopy of this reporter's picture ID to the formal complaint. Enact a statute giving parents complete access to all DFYS reports and also reports in their child's school files. Enact a statute for providing legal aide for parents, to a Public Defender attorney to be present during all DFYS interviews. There needs to be statutes enacted for stiff legal penalties concerning these people who making the false reports of harm. These changes would protect children who are really in need of assistance. It would reduce the current caseloads that will free caseworkers from these false reports of harm, allowing them to devote their resources and attention to cases real cases. Please implement some real changes!!!

Signed: Laurie Churchill
 Testifier

 Representing (optional)

PO Box 7043 Nikiski, Ak 99635
 Address

907-776-3499
 Phone number

PLEASE ASK:

In considering my questions on reorganization of HESS, try to remember that many of the people on this service are without income and in poor health beyond their control. And... If able, would readily depart the system in favor of good old-fashioned work! (Background on page 2)

Regarding reorganization:

Please elaborate on reasoning behind minimizing medication coverages by shifting costs directly to recipients. Will this continue or worsen in the new structure?

Because doctors will take installment arrangements and Pharmacists will not, can you and are you considering a co-pay option for doctor visits that would allow for program savings to be applied to prescription benefits? And/Or allow greater voluntary doctor access?

Will the funding to "C.A.M.A." be increased or decreased under the new structure?

Will the programs in the new structure allow for the related illnesses that are usually present but not covered, to be addressed; or, definitions be broadened within existing programs for the same purpose?

(related) Will the doctors be given any new latitudes to address illnesses that exacerbate the qualified illnesses?

Thank you for clarifying these issues. I am a reluctant participant in a system that is difficult to understand and seems to have gaps. Thanks again

Sincerely,
Jeri A. Denison

Subject:

Date: Tue, 11 Mar 2003 02:06:54 -0900

From: "Jeri Denison" <caggem2@hotmail.com>

To: todd.larkin@legis.state.ak.us

152 - Palace Circle - #1
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
March 10, 2003
907-456-4902

Health and Social Services
c/o Todd Larkin
Assistant to Rep. Jim Holm
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska

Re: Health and Social Services Reorganization, ie. CAMA

Dear Sirs and Madams;

I am a CAMA recipient and have endured the limited benefits of this program! While I understand there is, allegedly, no money for all the needs of the State of Alaska I will never understand why the money always seems to be cut from Social Service Programs and the people in such desperate need for them! CAMA has been hit twice since November 1, 2002! I never really understood this until I became so ill five years ago! (May 1998) I would love to return to work and make \$2500 a month instead of living on \$280 per month on interim assistance! But that's not possible! I have two of the conditions required that make me eligible for the CAMA Program! As well as sixteen other medical problems! I am unemployable!

I'd like to ask you to consider the predicament that I , and people like me, are in regarding our poor health and having virtually no income! And secondly, I would like you to consider what you would do if I were your daughter, sister, mom, niece, or some other relative or friend? Would you want to see them suffer medically as well as financially? I don't believe you would! Please consider my questions in reorganizing the HESS and CAMA in particular!

I would like to know why our medication coverage has been minimized and how you propose we are to pay for these medications? I have to take a particular medication in order to help and try to heal a stomach condition that can easily turn to cancer and if I can't get that, you may as well sign my death warrant! It is \$280.00 per month for 60 pills! That's all I get from the state per month! Would you want this to happen to you or someone in your family?

In reorganizing HESS, do you plan to make medical coverage for the doctors we need to see, available [unlimited] perhaps with a co-pay? Please don't punish us for being ill! I know I never wanted to be like this at 46 years old! I had my life planned much differently!

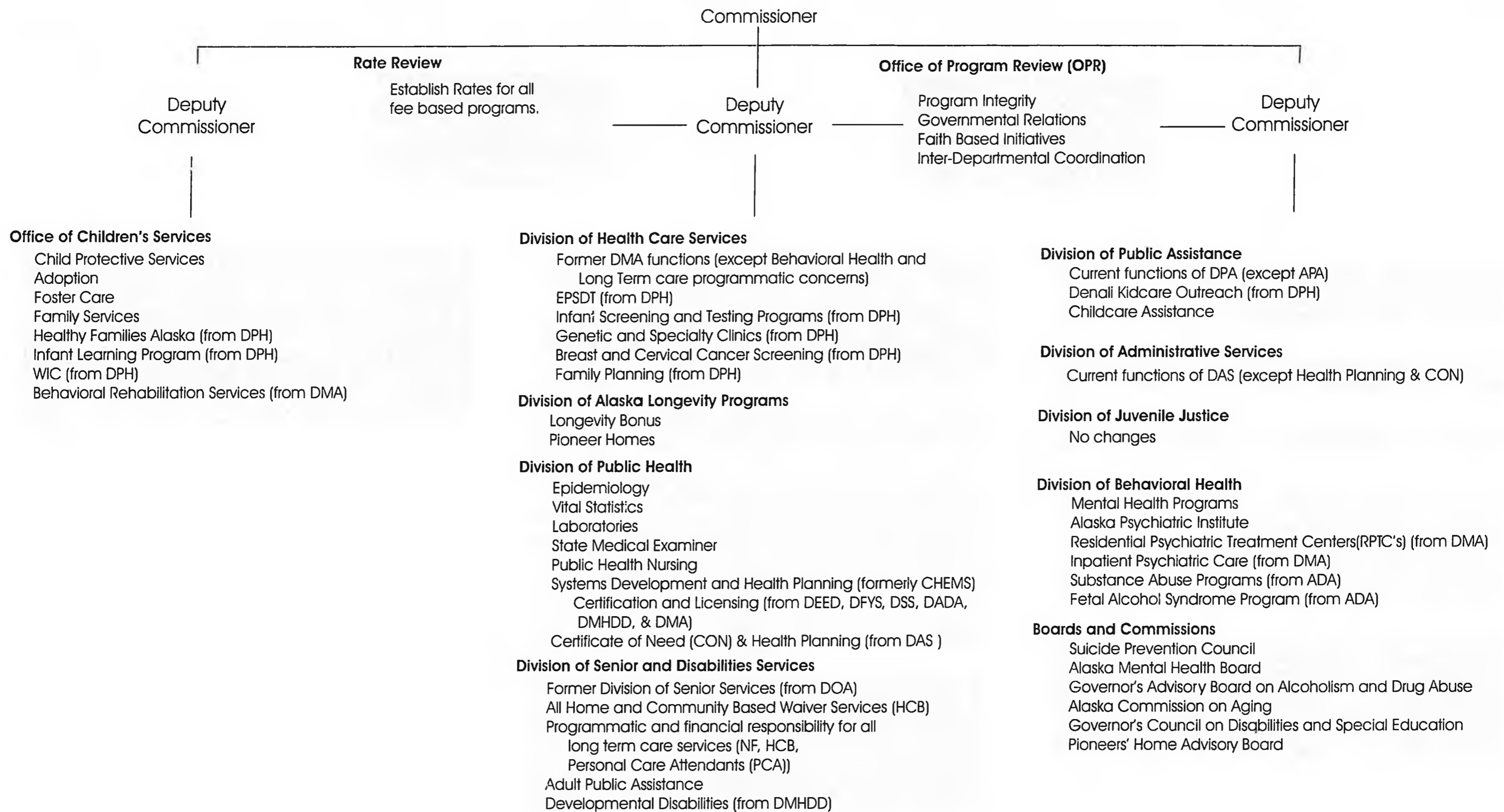
In reorganizing HESS, are you going to requisition more funding back into the CAMA Program? And when are you going to change the rule that we can only go to the doctor that cares for the condition that makes us eligible for the CAMA Program? I have chronic depression and anxiety as well as a sleep disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder! Also, chronic hypertension! And 13 medical problems on top of that and they are serious! Two are life threatening! I know for a fact that these illnesses correlate with one another and they feed off each another! It is simply a vicious cycle! I worry all the time about my health, the money and dying! I owe over \$200,000.00 for medical bills that CAMA hasn't covered! Which in turn stresses me out and I have anxiety attacks, get severely depressed, can't sleep which makes me sicker, and then my stomach acts up and I get tense, my blood pressure shoots up and so on, and so on! Please take a serious look at this coverage and do as much as you can to help us! I know I'm not looking for a free ride, simply some help while I wait to be approved for Social Security Disability! I've been fighting for five years and I'm not giving up!

Thank you for taking the time to review my questions put before you and may God Bless You in your decision making!

Very sincerely,

Jeri A. Dension
<capgem2@hotmail.com>

The new MSN 8: smart spam protection and 2 months FREE*
<http://join.msn.com/?page=features/junkmail>





Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Health Education and Social Services Committee

committee name

Committee on Re Organization of DHSS , dated 03-12-03
bill # / subject

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Reorganizing Alaska's Dept. of Health & Social Services for Better Customer Service



3/11/2003

"We are integrating the health & social services provided to Alaskans, and combining programs in ways that make sense to the people DHSS serves."

*-- Joel Gilbertson,
Commissioner*



3/11/2003

DHSS reorganization

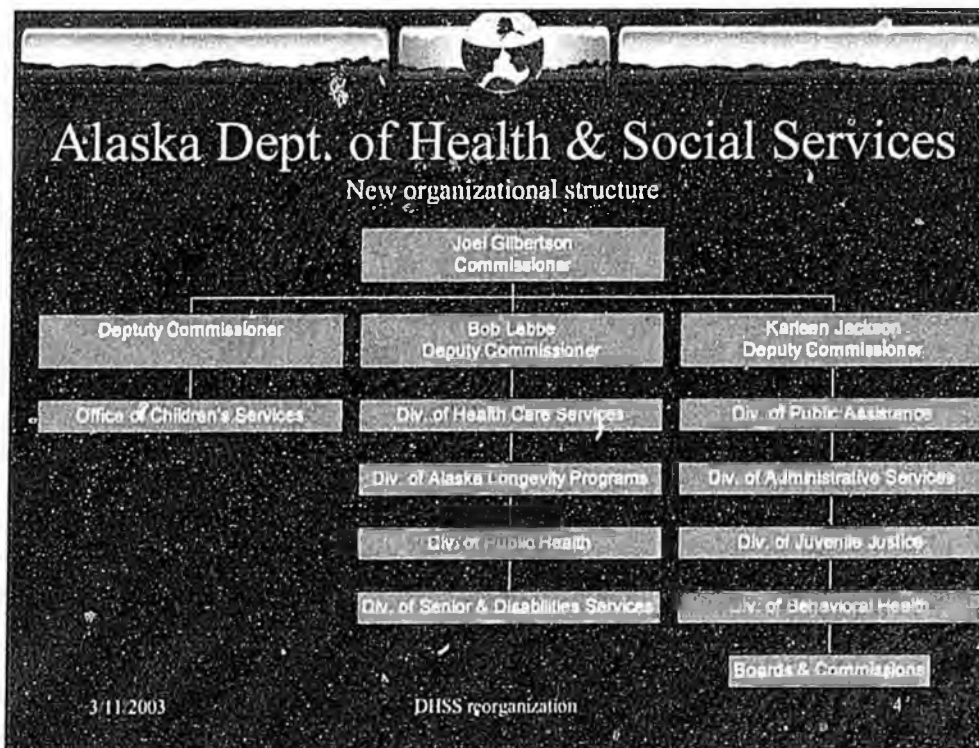
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Goals

- ❖ Enhanced quality of life for the people DHSS serves
- ❖ Efficient coordination & management of multiple health & human services programs
- ❖ Maximum benefit from existing resources & reduce burdensome regulations
- ❖ Innovation, flexibility & accountability at all levels

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DHSS reorganization
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Office of Children's Services

- ❖ This Division focuses provides a more well-rounded system to help families keep their children safe and healthy
- ❖ Responsibility moved to Deputy Commissioner level
- ❖ Child health programs moved from Div. of Public Health
- ❖ Will implement Performance Improvement Plan of the 2002 Federal Review

3/11/2003

DHSS reorganization




Office of Children Services

- ❖ Behavioral Rehab Services [residential childcare] funds & program responsibility moved from Div. of Medical Assistance, to better serve children needing community-based residential services
- ❖ Key functions formerly in DFYS
 - ❖ Child protection services
 - ❖ Adoption
 - ❖ Foster Care
 - ❖ Family services

3/11/2003

DHSS reorganization




Div. of Public Health

Key functions continue in this division

- ❖ Epidemiology
- ❖ Vital Statistics
- ❖ Laboratories
- ❖ State Medical Examiner
- ❖ Public Health Nursing

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Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

Commissioner

Office of Program Review (OPR)

Office of Policy & Planning

Office of Information Technology

Office of Legal Services

Office of Children's Services

Child Abuse and Neglect
Child Support
Child Welfare
Child Welfare Services
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Division of Health Care Services

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Division of Adult Longevity Programs

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Division of Public Health

Epidemiology
Vital Statistics
Laboratories
State Medical Examiner
Public Health Nursing
State Medical Examiner
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State Medical Examiner
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Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

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Board and Commissions

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Div. of Senior & Disabilities Services

- ❖ This Division provides a full range of care for Alaska seniors and disabled Alaskans in one agency
- ❖ Improved access for people DHSS serves to a continuum of services – all the services seniors and disabled people need
- ❖ All Developmental Disabilities programs formerly in Div. of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities

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DHSS reorganization

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Div. of Senior & Disabilities Services

- ❖ Program & financial responsibility for Medicaid funded programs [Home & Community-Based Waivers] for seniors & disabled persons moved from Div. of Medical Assistance to improve services for both groups
- ❖ Div. of Senior Services moved by Executive Order to DHSS from Dept. of Administration
- ❖ Adult Public Assistance moved to this Division from Div. of Public Assistance – next fiscal year

3/11/2003

DHSS reorganization

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Minimally affected by Reorganization

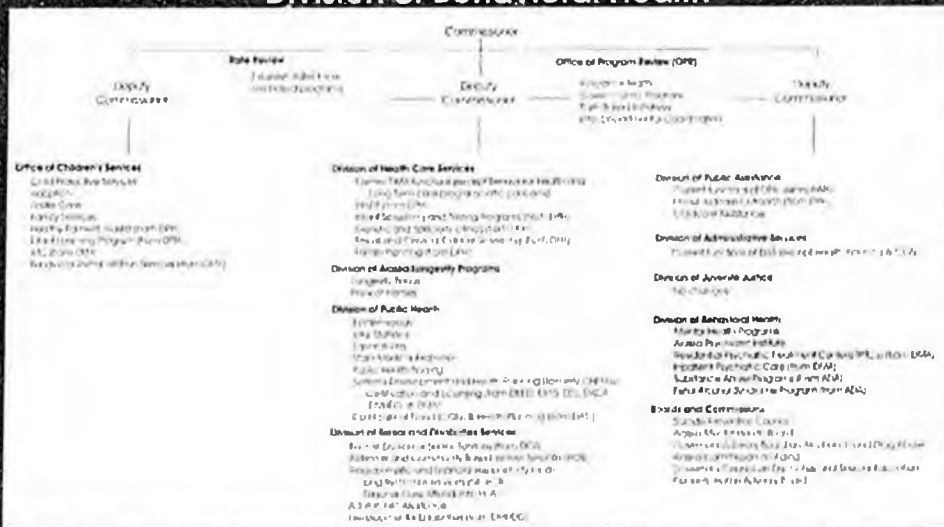
- ❖ Div. of Juvenile Justice is specialized and discrete unit focused on better outcomes for youth in trouble
- ❖ Div. of Administrative Services continue to focus on providing services to DHSS agencies
 - ❖ Health Planning & Certificate of Need transferred to Div. of Public Health

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DHSS reorganization

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Division of Behavioral Health



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DHSS reorganization

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Div. of Behavioral Health

- ❖ This Division provides a comprehensive array of mental health and substance abuse services
- ❖ Better customer service for clients – service delivery is more efficient, treatment is integrated
- ❖ Functions formerly in Div. of Alcoholism & Drug Abuse and Div. of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities

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DHSS reorganization

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Div. of Behavioral Health

- ❖ Program, financial responsibility for Medicaid-funded programs [residential psychiatric treatment, inpatient treatment, mental health, substance abuse rehab services] moved from Div. of Medical Assistance for better service to clients

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DHSS reorganization

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Div. Of Behavioral Health

Key functions

- ❖ Mental Health programs
- ❖ Alaska Psychiatric Institute
- ❖ Residential Psychiatric Treatment Centers
- ❖ Inpatient Psychiatric Care
- ❖ Substance Abuse Programs
- ❖ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Program

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DHSS reorganization
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Boards and Commissions

Role Titles

Deputy Commissioner

Office of Program Review (OPR)

Deputy Commissioner

Deputy Commissioner

Office of Children's Services

- Child Abuse and Neglect Services
- Child Welfare
- Child Support
- Child Welfare Services
- Child Welfare Services
- Child Welfare Services
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- Child Welfare Services
- Child Welfare Services

Division of Health Care Services

- Alaska Psychiatric Institute
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Division of Public Assistance

- Alaska Department of Social Services
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Boards & Commissions

- ❖ Suicide Prevention Council
- ❖ Alaska Mental Health Board
- ❖ Governor's Advisory Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse
- ❖ Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education
- ❖ Moving to DHSS from Dept. of Administration
 - ❖ Alaska Commission on Aging
 - ❖ Pioneer's Home Advisory Board

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DHSS reorganization

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Current Status

- ❖ Reorganization plan announced March 4, 2003
- ❖ Governor Murkowski introduced FY 04 Budget March 6, 2003
- ❖ Executive Order #108 before Alaska Legislature affects certain elements of Reorganization Plan
- ❖ Executive Order takes effect July 1, 2003
- ❖ Most of reorganization elements begin implementation on July 1, 2003
- ❖ Several elements not scheduled until following year

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DHSS reorganization

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