

SB

76

SFIN

FILE

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

REPORTED OUT
APR 18 2007
 SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 3/14/07

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED
 IN TO OFFICE: 18 April 2007

Finance Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 76

SB 76 TUITION FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN

"An Act establishing a higher education savings program for eligible children who were placed in out-of-home care by the state; and providing for confidentiality of identifying information of a beneficiary under the program."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous SCS or CS SB 76 (HES)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:
 Same Title
 New Title

HOUSE BILL:
 Same Title
 Technical Title Change
 New Title w/ SCR # _____

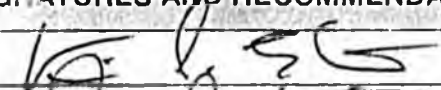
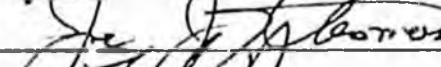





NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
DHSS	3/22/07	41.4			

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
Univ				✓	#1

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIG: ATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	Do PASS	Do NOT PASS	No REC	AMEND
	Elton	✓			
	Thomas	✓			
	Dyson	✓			
	Huggins	✓			
	Olson	✓			
CO-CHAIR: 	Hoffman	✓			
CO-CHAIR: 	Stedman	✓			

FISCAL NOTE

REPORTED OUT
APR 18 2007
 SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

STATE OF ALASKA
 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: CSSB 76(HES)
 (S) Publish Date: 3/14/07

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: University of Alaska
 Title Tuition for Certain Children RDU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor _____
 Requester Senator Ellis Component No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
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						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 (FY2007) cost: 0.0
 Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)
 This bill would have no fiscal impact on the University.

Prepared by: Michelle Rizk Phone 450-8187
 Division: University of Alaska Date/Time 3/2/07 5:00 PM
 Approved by: Pat Pitney Date 3/2/2007
 Agency: University of Alaska

(Revised 10/18/2006 OMB)

COMMITTEE COPY

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: SB076-DHSS-FMS-03-01-07 SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bill Version: SB 76

() Publish Date:

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction):
Title TUITION FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN

Dept. Affected: Health & Social Services

RDU Departmental Support Services

Component Off Faith-Based & Community Initiatives

Sponsor ELLIS

Requester SENATE (HES)

Component No. 2849

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4
Travel						
Contractual	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES (0)						
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: _____

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 76 creates a higher education savings program for eligible children who have been placed in out-of-home care by the Department of Health and Social Services.

The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives is responsible for administration of the ASPIRE (Alaska Youth Succeed When People Invest Resources in Education) program to encourage investment in the higher education of eligible children in the state.

(cont. on page 2)

Prepared by: Stephanie Wheeler, Executive Director
Division: Office of Faith Based & Community Initiatives
Approved by: Karleen Jackson, Commissioner
Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

Phone 269-8016
Date/Time 03/22/2007
Date 03/01/2007

FISCAL NOTE
FN #

STATE OF ALASKA
2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

(cont. from page 1)

The office estimates that it will take 25% of the time of an existing program coordinator (Range 18) located in Juneau or Anchorage to administer the program. The position will be responsible for management of the broader Alaska Partnership for Healthy Communities (APHC) initiative designed to improve collaboration among government agencies and communities through projects that promote integrated services for Alaskans. The ASPIRE program fits well with the position's broader responsibilities.

Contractual funds in the amount of \$20.0 per year are requested to create and print brochures and to support a very modest television and radio promotional effort to publicize ASPIRE.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Chair, Senate Labor and
Commerce Committee
•
Legislative Budget and Audit
Committee
•
Senate Rules Committee
•
Committee on Committees



While in Session
State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-3704
Fax: (907) 465-2529

While in Anchorage
716 W. 4th Ave, Ste. 440
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-0169
Fax: (907) 269-0172

SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS

SPONSOR STATEMENT SB 76

For children in long-term foster care, one of life's most significant hurdles occurs when the child "ages out" of the state's care. Often times, foster children are ill prepared for life as an adult, whether they choose to pursue education beyond high school or seek the necessary training to join the work force.

SB 76 establishes the **ASPIRE** program, an acronym for Alaska's youth Succeed when People Invest Resources in Education. This program will give children in the custody of the State of Alaska an opportunity to pursue education and training after high school that they may not normally have.

The purpose of the bill is to allow churches, community organizations, non-profits, businesses and individuals to establish education savings accounts in the name of foster children. This bill would create a program in which these organizations or individuals could contact the Alaska Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and make a donation that would establish a savings plan for a child who has been in out of home care for more than two years.

SB 76 would, upon request, allow the Office of Children's Services to release required information for the Alaska Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to open a 529 savings plan in the name of a foster child. The bill would provide a confidentiality clause that would prohibit the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives from using the personal information of foster children for any purpose other than the establishment and maintenance of an education savings plan.

Under the provisions of this bill, the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives would be responsible for the promotion of the program throughout the state.

In accordance with the rules of the UA college savings program, the money in these accounts could be used not only for college and university tuition, but also for vocational training and other education related expenses. Under the terms of the UA college savings program, foster children could use this money at the eligible institution or training program of their choice.

Many of Alaska's foster children have faced extremely tough challenges, and deserve a program that encourages Alaskans to invest in their potential. This is important legislation for the children who represent the future of Alaska. I urge you to support the passage of SB 76.

ASPIRE

ALASKA'S YOUTH SUCCEED WHEN PEOPLE INVEST RESOURCES IN EDUCATION

SB 76 FAQ

1. What does the bill do?

SB 76 establishes the ASPIRE program, an acronym for Alaska's youth Succeed when People Invest Resources in Education. The ASPIRE program is designed to connect churches, community groups, non-profits, businesses and individuals with foster children to provide them with educational opportunities beyond high school. This program will give children in custody of the state an opportunity to pursue education and training after high school.

2. Why is this bill necessary?

The bill is necessary to address confidentiality issues regarding the release of private information of foster children. It is also necessary to set guidelines for DHSS to establish a process to identify foster kids with the highest priority need.

3. How does it work?

The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives is responsible for the promotion of the program through its various contacts in the faith based and non-profit community across the state. Once a donor is identified they can contact OFBCI to contribute money, which OFBCI can only use for establishing a UA Savings Account. DHSS (OCS) involvement is necessary for OFBCI to have the required information about each foster child.

4. Who can contribute?

Individuals, non-profit organizations, churches, businesses, etc can all contribute to a UA College Savings Plan. The UA Savings program is extremely flexible.

5. Who is an eligible beneficiary?

Children who have been placed in "out of home" care for a minimum of two years are eligible. DHSS is assigned the task of identifying the children with the highest priority and potential for success.

6. Don't some foster children already receive free tuition?

Some do, but eligibility is often too strict for many foster children to take advantage of the program. Through state tuition waivers, children must be in custody

on their 16th birthday, and must attend an AK state university (UAA, UAF, UAS). With a UA savings account, any eligible child would be able to attend community college, university, and vocational education anywhere in the country.

7. Once a donor is identified, how does DHSS decide who gets to be a beneficiary?

DHSS is assigned the task of establishing a process to identify children with the highest priority. The two most important factors, according to DHSS, are age and the consideration of "aging out" of the system, and length of time in state care.

8. What happens if a foster child is not able to use the money?

If a beneficiary is unable to use the money for any reason, another beneficiary can be named. In other words, if a business or church opens an account for a child, and that child becomes ineligible, a 2nd child would be named as the beneficiary and be able to take advantage of the account.

9. Is there an age limit for the beneficiaries?

In section 1, paragraph C of SB 76, a provision is included to name a new beneficiary if the current beneficiary does not enroll in an eligible program before the age of 30.

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

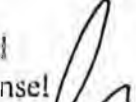
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

February 13, 2007

SUBJECT: Sectional Summary (CSSB 76())
(Work Order No. 25-LS0443\E))

TO: Senator Johnny Ellis
Attn: Gabe Aceves

FROM: Jean M. Mischel
Legislative Counsel 

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

Section 1. Establishes a program within the Department of Health and Social Services to encourage investment in savings for the higher education of eligible foster children.

Section 2. Provides for the disclosure of appropriate confidential information pertaining to a case involving a child in need of aid, including a foster child, to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska to the extent necessary to support the program established under section one.

Section 3. Provides for the disclosure of appropriate confidential information pertaining to a case involving a child who is adjudicated as delinquent, to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska to the extent necessary to support the program established under section one.

JMM:lmb
07-020.lmb

James F. Lynch
Associate Vice President
Phone: (907) 450-8121
Fax: (907) 450-8023
jim.lynch@alaska.edu



Butovich Building
910 Yukon Drive, Suite 207
PO Box 755120
Fairbanks, AK 99775-5120

UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

February 22, 2007

The Honorable Johnny Ellis
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: SB 76, An Act establishing a higher education saving program for eligible children who were placed in out-of-home care by the state

Dear Senator Ellis,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 76 authorizing the creation of a higher education savings program for children placed in out-of-home care. Essentially the bill provides a structure and authorizes the Department of Health and Social Services to open accounts for selected individuals in the University of Alaska College Savings Plan with donated funds from private sources. As you may recall, I testified in support of a predecessor to this bill last year.

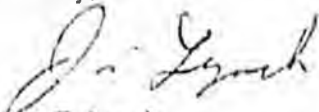
The UA College Savings Programs has been ranked as one of the top college savings programs in the country. The funds can be used for college or vocational/technical education at any eligible school across the country.

The motivation for starting the UA College Savings Plan was not merely financing education, but also the success of the "I have a dream" program in New York, where Eugene Lang awarded college scholarships to a class of "at-risk students" on the condition that they successfully complete high school. Changing the perspective of these children and their families regarding the opportunity to go to college had a major impact on success rate of those students. The primary goal of the college savings program has been to change the mindset for our children and their families from "If I go to college" to "When I go to college."

Alaska has been more successful than any other state at attracting low to modest income families into its college savings program (primarily due to the exclusive Permanent Fund Dividend Check-off for the UA College Savings Program). Approximately 56% of the participants in the Alaska plan are from households with family incomes of less than \$50,000 per year compared to 17% for our national plan participants. Almost half of families in the UA Plan are saving for a child who may be the first college graduate in their family while in our national plan that number is only about one fourth of the families.

I have strong hopes that SB 76 will extend this opportunity and aspiration to those who are perhaps less fortunate than most. The real value may not be in the college education, but the child's perception of what the future holds.

Sincerely,



James F. Lynch

CWLA

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Making Children a National Priority

HEADQUARTERS • 440 First Street, NW, Third Floor • Washington, DC 20001-2085
202/638-2952 • Fax 202/638-4004 • www.cwla.org

Gabe

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Shay Bilchik

Senator Johnny Ellis
Alaska State Legislature
716 W. 4th Ave., Suite 440
Anchorage, AK 99501

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Timothy F. Noeiker

May 4, 2006

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Kate Sidex Fletcher

Charles A. Heat

Dear Senator Ellis,

TREASURER

Ross E. Wales

Thank you for your leadership in helping foster youth in Alaska make a successful transition to adulthood. The Child Welfare League of America commends your vision and commitment to these youth. Your legislation, Senate Bill 287, addresses critical issues for these young people and we applaud your efforts.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Andrew M. Ezisa

CWLA supports all attempts to assist youth in their transition to adulthood. The data show the difficult challenges they face in a number of areas, particularly in pursuing higher education. We'd like to suggest, however, additional ways to support these youth in this important time of transition.

SECRETARY

Faith Roszell

We know that in addition to education youth face other serious challenges when they leave foster care. Housing and transportation are enormous hurdles. Other challenges include access to health care services and securing and maintaining employment. While a 529 savings account provides critical support for vocational training or education expenses it wouldn't be available for these other necessities. A more flexible account is needed to help address this wider array of issues. Individual Development Accounts provide more flexibility, which is necessary to address these multiple issues. These accounts or some other similar approach could be used for a wide variety of uses depending on the individual needs.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Rhett N. Mabry

We would be happy to discuss these approaches further if you like. We applaud your leadership and know that with efforts such as yours there will be progress in Alaska for youth transitioning out of foster care to a productive and fulfilling adulthood.

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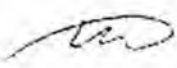
Johnny Wade Sloan

Julie Sweeney-Springwater

Robert S. Tsuchida

Anne A. Wolf

Sincerely,



Shay Bilchik
President/CEO

Alaska Conference of Catholic Bishops

415 Sixth Street, Suite 300

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Ph (907) 586-2404 / Fax (907) 586-2405

E-mail citw@alaska.net

March 3, 2006

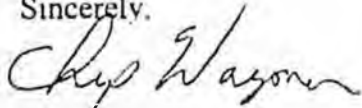
The Honorable Johnny Ellis
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Ellis:

On behalf of the Alaska Conference of Catholic Bishops, I would like to thank-you for sponsoring Senate Bill 287, an act establishing a higher education savings program for children in state foster care. The Alaska Conference of Catholic Bishops is the official public policy voice of the Roman Catholic Church in Alaska.

We appreciate your thoughtfulness in proposing an innovative way to assist eligible children in foster care to pursue educational opportunities beyond grade 12. Foster care children, like many other vulnerable persons, are often out of sight and out of mind of those of us who have the financial resources for a dignified life. We also commend you for proposing a mechanism by which Alaskans who have the financial ability can help to contribute to the higher education costs of those who do not have the financial ability. Turning from self-love toward love of neighbor is a central teaching of the Gospel message. S B 287 provides another way for Alaskans to put this teaching into practice and we support it.

Sincerely,



Chip Wagoner
Executive Director
Alaska Conference of Catholic Bishops





ALASKA
COMMUNITY
SERVICES, INC.

Helping Alaska's Seniors — Help Alaska

April 13, 2006

ANCHORAGE

1057 W. Fireweed Lane, #103
Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: (907) 276-6472
Fax: (907) 276-6475

www.akcommunityservices.org

Senator Johnny Ellis
Minority Leader
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Rm 9
Juneau, AK, 99801

Dear Senator Ellis,

FAIRBANKS

HOMER

JUNEAU

.ENAI

KETCHIKAN

SEWARD

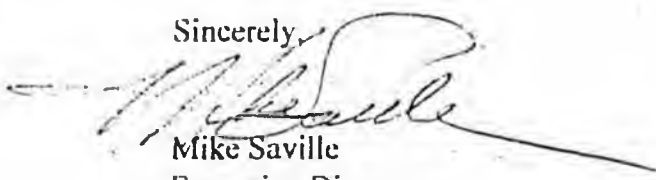
WASILLA

Thank you for your letter concerning Senate Bill 287. I am very pleased that you are proposing legislation that offers increased opportunities for Foster Children in the state of Alaska. I too believe that these children deserve and should be able to take every advantage of programs that enhance their ability to succeed in life and become responsible, productive adults.

Alaska Community Services volunteers provide services to these and many other children across the state through our Foster Grandparent Program. I am certain that they are also concerned with the future of these children, and will lend their support to this legislation. I will request the support of my legislators for SB 287 and also ask that my colleagues do so as well.

During this time when most of our focus seems to be primarily on pipelines and taxes, I thank you for your ongoing support of and commitment to programs that address the needs of disadvantaged or devalued Alaskans.

Sincerely,


Mike Saville
Executive Director



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

www.bgcalaska.org

Senator Johnny Ellis
State Capitol Room 9
Juneau, Alaska 99801

April 19, 2006

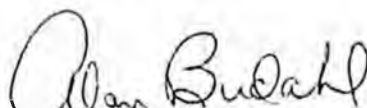
Dear Senator Ellis,


On behalf of Boys & Girls Clubs Board of Directors and professional staff, we are writing to extend Boys & Girls Clubs' support for Senate Bill 287, legislation designed to help provide higher education opportunities for foster children. As you are well aware, our organization has been operating youth development programs for 40 years. In 1998, we eagerly undertook a Statewide Expansion Initiative that has developed Clubhouses in 29 rural Alaskan communities. This initiative, combined with our steady expansion in urban communities, has broadened our total impact to 30,000 youth in 38 Alaskan communities.

Our members' challenges range from peer pressure to poor grades, hunger, abusive notes, or multiple foster home placements. For every child that walks through a Clubhouse door, we listen, we comfort, we challenge and cheer. Many of our staff, volunteers and program partners establish personal connections and mentor relationships with our members in foster care. SB 287 will provide them with an avenue to have a lasting impact on these children well into adulthood.

Again, thank you for sponsoring this legislation. Boys & Girls Club appreciates your support of our programs and your commitment to Alaska's youth.

Sincerely,


Alan Budahl
Board of Directors, Chair


John P. Oates
President and Chief Executive

Main Office
2300 W. 36th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99517
Tel: 907-248-5437
Fax: 907-248-0047

President & CEO
John P. Oates
Tel: 907-770-7337
Fax: 907-770-7346
joates@bgcalaska.org

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* Past Chairs, Board of Directors

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
Establishing Education Savings Accounts for Foster Children in Alaska

Children in the foster care system face significant challenges when they age out of state care. Often, these children do not have a plan or the means to access job training or post-secondary education. With a program in place whereby concerned organizations and citizens can establish savings accounts in the names of foster children, these children will have opportunities beyond high school.

Alaska's foster children deserve a program that invests in their potential. Alaska should create a program designed to give children in foster care the opportunity to pursue education and job training past the age of 18.

Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Walter Majors
Organization Juneau Youth Services
Title Executive Director
Signature Walter Majors
Address PO Box 32839 Juneau AK 99803
Phone 907-796-4131 Fax 907-789-2106
Email walterm@jys.org Website www.jys.org

I/We would also be willing to:

- Publish an article in our newsletter
 Participate in media events
 Contact legislators

- Mobilize our membership
 Help to build a coalition

Please return this form to:
Office of Senator Johnny Ellis
State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, AK 99801

Sounds like a good bill.
Thanks, Johnny!
Walter

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
Establishing Education Savings Accounts for Foster Children in Alaska

Children in the foster care system face significant challenges when they age out of state care. Often, these children do not have a plan or the means to access job training or post-secondary education. With a program in place whereby concerned organizations and citizens can establish savings accounts in the names of foster children, these children will have opportunities beyond high school.

Alaska's foster children deserve a program that invests in their potential. Alaska should create a program designed to give children in foster care the opportunity to pursue education and job training past the age of 18.

Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Mertis Johnson
 Organization EASY Living Adult Care
 Title Owner
 Signature Mertis Johnson
 Address 7710 Wain Road Anchorage
 Phone 333-1846 Fax 333-3562
 Email mentis@sci.net Website _____

I/We would also be willing to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publish an article in our newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobilize our membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in media events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help to build a coalition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact legislators | |

Please return this form to:
 Office of Senator Johnny Ellis
 State Capitol, Rm. 9
 Juneau, AK 99801

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
Establishing Education Savings Accounts for Foster Children in Alaska

Children in the foster care system face significant challenges when they age out of state care. Often, these children do not have a plan or the means to access job training or post-secondary education. With a program in place whereby concerned organizations and citizens can establish savings accounts in the names of foster children, these children will have opportunities beyond high school.

Alaska's foster children deserve a program that invests in their potential. Alaska should create a program designed to give children in foster care the opportunity to pursue education and job training past the age of 18.

Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Eileen M. Lally

Organization _____

Title _____

Signature Eileen M. Lally

Address 6508 Foursueth St Anchorage 99518

Phone 907 786 6731 Fax _____

Email _____ Website _____

I/We would also be willing to:

- Publish an article in our newsletter
- Mobilize our membership
- Participate in media events
- Help to build a coalition
- Contact legislators

Please return this form to:
Office of Senator Johnny Ellis
State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, AK 99801

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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Kathryn Parssow
 Organization Enterprise Center for Human Services
 Title Director
 Signature [Signature]
 Address 2050 Fifth Ave Ketchikan 99901
 Phone 907 228 6521 Fax 907 247 4135
 Email Kathyr@city.ketchikan.ak.us Website _____

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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Jim Maley
Organization ALASKA CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Title PRESIDENT / CEO
Signature [Signature]
Address 4600 ABBOTT RD ANCHORAGE 99507
Phone (907) 346-2101 Fax 348-9230
Email AKCHILD@AK.NET Website WWW.ACS.AK.ORG

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Great plan, Johnny
[Signature]

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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Barbara Dubovich
Organization Camp Fire USA Alaska Council
Title Chief Executive Officer
Signature Barbara Dubovich W
Address 3745 Community Park Ln #104 Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone 907 279 3551 Fax 907 278-9829
Email bdubovich@campfireak.org Website www.campfireak.org

I/We would also be willing to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publish an article in our newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobilize our membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in media events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help to build a coalition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact legislators | |

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Please add my name

Name _____
Organization _____
Title _____
Signature _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Email _____



**Resource Center
for Parents & Children**

1401 Kellum Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-2866 x107 • Fax (907) 451-8125 • (800) 969-7272
cturner@rcpcfairbanks.org

Coleen Turner
Executive Director

*A Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America
and a Member Agency of United Way of the Tanana Valley*

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 Participate in media events
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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Lina Sudduth
Organization Craig Child Care Center
Title Director
Signature [Signature]
Address 1100 2nd Ave (Craig 99901)
Phone 907-322-3323 Fax 907-322-3317
Email csudduth@ccca.alaska.net Website _____

I/We would also be willing to:

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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Amanda Faulkner
Organization Frontier Community Services
Title Infant Learning Program Coordinator
Signature Amanda Faulkner
Address 43335 K-Beach Suite 310 Soldotna, AK 99669
Phone 907-714-6644 Fax 907-262-6295
Email a.faulkner@pcsonline.org Website _____

I/We would also be willing to:

- | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publish an article in our newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobilize our membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in media events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help to build a coalition |
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Please add my name/organization to the list of supporters.

Name Yvonne Chase
Organization Devali Family Services
Title President/CEO
Signature Yvonne Chase
Address 1675 C Street, Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone 907-222-2322 Fax 907-222-2398
Email ychase@devalis.org Website devalis.org

I/We would also be willing to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publish an article in our newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobilize our membership |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participate in media events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help to build a coalition |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contact legislators | |

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Juneau, AK 99801

FH

MISSOURI'S BELIEVE PROGRAM



Frequently Asked Questions about BELIEVE

1. What does BELIEVE stand for?

BELIEVE stands for Bringing Educational Leadership by Investing and Expecting Victory in Every Child. We believe that every child in Missouri can succeed if given the right support. Missouri has over 11,000 foster children under its care. BELIEVE is a program to identify corporations or non-profit organizations interested in sponsoring a child who is in the custody of the State of Missouri for a MOST (Missouri Savings Tuition Program) scholarship. MOST is the State of Missouri's 529 plan which allows the sponsor to set up an account to save for college tuition tax free. The sponsor also receives a tax deduction for their annual investment in the MOST plan of up to \$8,000 per person.

2. Who can agree to sponsor a foster child?

Any corporation, non-profit organization, person, or other entity can agree to sponsor a child and set up an account naming the child of their choice as beneficiary.

3. What is the benefit of a MOST account?

The investment in a 529 MOST account allows the investment to grow tax-free and the beneficiary can use it for their college tuition and other college costs tax-free. In other words, at no time is tax due on the principal or the earnings as long as it is used for eligible college expenses. The organization or entity contributing to the account can receive a tax deduction each year of up to \$8,000 per taxpayer.

4. How much is required to open an account?

To open an account you only need \$25.00. We are asking that for the BELIEVE program the initial contribution be based on the investment plan that is most suitable for the age of the child selected to help kick start

a college savings plan for a foster child. But the bottom line is that any amount is better than none at all.

5. What happens if the child does not go to college after making annual contributions?

A new beneficiary can be named at that time or when the account is initially set up a contingent beneficiary can be named. If neither of these options is suitable to the account owner, then the money can be used by the account owner but taxes would be owed if the proceeds are not used for college expenses.

6. Why should any corporation or entity be interested in sponsoring a child for the BELIEVE program?

Many foster kids never have a chance to reach their full potential because of circumstances that are out of their control. The state takes responsibility for these kids, but what happens to them after they turn 18? Many times we don't know and what is worse, many times no one cares. This program singles out a child that a group of people, organization, church, or corporation can encourage by providing the money to ensure that they have a chance to go to college. If the child knows this -- knows that suddenly somebody BELIEVES in him or her to actually succeed and reach their goals then great things begin to happen. This is an opportunity to help a child reach their dream by investing and believing in their future by setting up a 529 MOST account to pay for their college expenses.

7. How do I sign up to sponsor a child in the BELIEVE program?

Organizations wishing to participate in the BELIEVE program should contact Jane Dudeck, Chief of Staff, State Treasurer's Office at (573) 751-4943 or Jane.Dudeck@treasurer.mo.gov.

8. How much would an organization need to contribute if it wanted to cover 100% of the costs of tuition for a child?

The answer to this depends on a number of variables, including the number of years that the organization contributes before the child goes to college, the actual college that the child goes to, the future rate of inflation for tuition costs and the return on the investments selected. Here are several examples of how much an organization would need to contribute to fund 100% of projected costs based on a tuition inflation rate of 5%, a

return on investment of 10% and four years' attendance at the University of Missouri-Columbia (where costs are currently estimated at \$8,700 per year):

- For a 13-year old child, assuming an initial \$5,000 contribution, a sponsor would need to contribute \$500 per month to cover 100% of projected costs.
- For a 5-year old child, assuming an initial \$5,000 contribution, a sponsor would need to contribute \$160 per month, or just under \$2,000 per year, to cover 100% of projected costs.

9. Can an organization "share" the sponsorship of a child or partner with another organization to sponsor a foster child?

Yes, any amount that an organization contributes to the BELIEVE program will greatly help a foster child defray the costs of higher education and is greatly appreciated. The amount of tax deduction that a sponsor can take is not affected if more than one organization helps sponsor a child. In other words, two organizations donating \$8,000 a year for the same child can each deduct up to \$8,000.

10. Who invests the money that we contribute to BELIEVE, and how do I know that our money is safe?

The MOST program offers several different investment options for sponsors, which they select. These investment options—which include a 100% Equity Option, a Guaranteed Option and a Managed Allocation Option which rebalances assets based on the age of the child—are professionally managed by TIAA-CREF, one of the largest asset managers in the nation. Like all investments that are invested primarily in the stock market, there is no guarantee for either the 100% Equity Option or Managed Allocation Option that these investments will maintain 100% of principal or provide a guaranteed return. However, over the long term, investments in these options should perform in line with broad equity returns.

For assistance regarding these options, please contact Jane Dudeck, Chief of Staff, State Treasurer's Office at (573) 751-4943 or Jane.Dudeck@treasurer.mo.gov.



PRESS RELEASE

Office of Missouri State Treasurer Sarah Steelman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- December 22, 2005

Stelman Launches "BELIEVE" Program to Help Get Foster Kids to College: Bass Pro is First Sponsor

SPRINGFIELD Mo. -- Christmas came a few days early for some special Missourians. State Treasurer Sarah Steelman today kicked off a statewide initiative to give crucial help to Missouri's foster children. The project, called BELIEVE, is a partnership between the Treasurer's office and the citizens and organizations of the state to provide college savings accounts for these children -- all at no cost to taxpayers.

Stelman, who oversees the state's tax-preferred 529 college savings plan, called MOST, said the program was a gift for all Missourians.

"There are thousands of precious children in foster care in Missouri today," Steelman said. "They are all special, they all were wondrously created and were given to us for a unique and important purposes. Today we have a new way to help them, to give them a way to fulfill their destinies, and a reason to hope."

Bass Pro Shops appeared with Steelman at the launch, and were announced as BELIEVE's first partners, having selected two foster children to sponsor, and will now work with the Treasurer's office to set up MOST accounts for them.

"We believe in this program, and in the potential it holds for these foster children," Bass Pro spokesman and Outdoor Educator Larry Whiteley said. "That's why Bass Pro Shops is proud to be the first to join this program to help these at-risk foster children."

BELIEVE is an acronym for Bringing Educational Leadership By Investing and Expecting Victory in Every Child, and Steelman says that is just what her program does.

"There is magic inside each of these kids. As a mother, I know that the key to a child's success is belief in themselves.

"For most kids, it's their parent who instills this confidence, but many foster children don't have anyone who believes in them. When they turn 18, most of them have nowhere to go. This is a wonderful way for Missourians to truly make a difference in these children's lives," said Steelman.

Stelman said the response from Missouri businesses, churches, non-profit organizations, and individuals has already been overwhelming and that additional sponsors would be announced soon. She said the initiative really is as simple as a Missouri organization or individual working with her office to select one or more of Missouri's foster children to sponsor, and then opening a MOST account for them.

Several foster children were expected to appear at the press conference as well as representatives from Boys and Girls Town of Missouri and the Missouri Baptist Children's Home who are helping spread the word about the BELIEVE program. The Missouri Department of Social Services is working with the State Treasurer's office to coordinate selection of the children.

Since 1999, Missouri has sponsored MOST, a tax-advantaged 529 college savings plan. Under this program, individuals and organizations can contribute up to \$8,000 per year into an account for a designated child. The amount contributed up to \$8,000 is not subject to state income tax. Federal law allows earnings on these accounts to be tax exempt as well, enhancing the program's ability to help students and families for college.

Contact: Mark Hughes, Director of Policy and Communications, (573) 751-7595
An electronic version of this release is available at <http://168.166.15.215/pressroom/press.asp>

Anchorage Daily News

COMPASS: *Points of view from the community*

Bill offers hope to kids in foster care

By SEN. JOHNNY ELLIS and CHIP WAGONER

With so much focus this year dedicated to the state's oil and gas resources, it is important that other issues concerning Alaska's future not be overlooked. According to the Department of Health and Social Services, there are nearly 2,000 children in Alaska's foster care system. Most of these children were placed in foster care because they were neglected or abused in their homes and it is unsafe for them to return.

Unfortunately, the reality of the situation for most foster children is that they will be in the custody of the state for a significant period of time, an average of 23 months, according to DHSS. Some of these children will be placed back in their primary homes and some will be adopted, but many remain in foster care until they turn 18, when they are released from the state's custody.

Foster parents around the state should be applauded for the job they do, providing positive role models for children in need. They take up the challenge of caring for children daily when no one else will. Acting as the primary caregivers for these children, foster parents sacrifice their time and efforts for children in need and expect little in return.

These foster parents, however, are usually not prepared or expected to shoulder the burden of caring for the children after they exit the foster care system. In many cases, foster children are ill prepared for life as adults, whether they choose to pursue education beyond high school or seek the necessary training to join the workforce. These children face significant barriers during the transition to adulthood and find a lack of support services available to them during their time of need.

It is troubling that Alaska has nearly 500 children in state custody that are high



Ellis

school age or older. Without a plan for their future, our fear is that many of these children will not be ready to lead responsible lives and be proud, productive members of our society and citizens of our state. It would be wise for Alaskans to help these foster kids make the most of their futures.

We believe the key to helping these young Alaskans realize their full potential lies in preparing them for life as adults through education and job training. Senate Bill 287 would establish a plan to assist foster children when they are released from state custody.

SB 287 allows churches, community organizations, nonprofits and businesses to establish education savings accounts in the name of a foster child. Our vision is to create a system in Alaska in which any individual or entity can make a tax-deductible donation that will directly impact the life of a foster child and provide that child with opportunities they would not otherwise have. Imagine a system in which a church or nonprofit organization could sponsor a foster child in Alaska who has faced difficult personal challenges.

As Alaskans, we are fortunate to have what many experts believe is the best education savings plan in the nation. Man-

SB 287 allows churches, community organizations, nonprofits and businesses to establish education savings accounts in the name of a foster child. ... The flexibility of these accounts gives children in foster care options when they leave the state's custody

aged by T. Rowe Price, the UA College Savings Program allows individuals and organizations to open 529 savings accounts for a beneficiary of their choice.

The beauty of the UA savings accounts is that they can be used for nearly all education-related expenses at any educational institution or program. If the key to successful youth is opportunity, this program is an excellent option. The money in these accounts can be used for college, university, technical and vocational education and all related expenses. The flexibility of these accounts gives children in foster care options when they leave the state's custody.

In many instances, foster children who have aged out of the state's foster care system have essentially been left by the wayside. SB 287 allows these children, with the help of local community organizations and businesses, to explore opportunities in education and vocational training that they normally would not have.

Our goal, as Alaskans, is to pass this important legislation for the children who represent the future of our state.

■ Sen. Johnny Ellis is the minority leader of the Alaska Senate. Chip Wagoner is the executive director of the Alaska Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Foster children need extra help at age 18

Senate Bill 287 could help them succeed

By ELISE PATKOTAK

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. This year, it's also the month in which Christians celebrate Easter, a time that honors the death and resurrection of a man who famously said in Mark 10:14, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

As a child growing up Catholic, I never doubted that those words were literally as well as figuratively true. Pictures hung all over our grade school of Christ sitting on a rock with little chubby boys and girls running towards his open arms with joy on their faces.

That picture brought great comfort to my childhood because it was accompanied in reality by a loving father and uncles whose arms were always open and welcoming to any child needing a hug or reassurance or just a moment feeling the warmth of their shirts, the roughness of their hands and the strength of their grip.

Not that any of my uncles would have ever admitted to this. They would grumble and gripe and say we were making too much noise or getting in the way of their bocce ball game or running too close to the grill. But we knew that they were all welcome havens so long as we didn't abuse the privilege and bother them while they were eating or the Phillies were on TV. And woe betides the child who did not remember to offer a kiss to them at the start and end of a visit.

The kids I work with in state custody through either social services or juvenile probation usually don't have such positive frames of reference when it comes to family. If they came from a home in which drinking, drug abuse and domestic violence were part of the problem, there is every chance a "hug" from an uncle, older brother, father or cousin holds a much more sinister meaning.

And the mothers, aunts, sister and other female relatives who choose to drink to the point of incapacitation so that little children are left on their own



to fend off sexual predators and physical abusers are equally at fault. While I am very aware that many of these women are also victims, the bottom line in these situations is that children have no escape. If the adults do not protect them, they have no protection.

The unfortunate result of the epidemic of violence and abuse in our families in Alaska is that children by the thousands are being raised in state custody. Many of these kids will never be able to go home because their parents will not take the steps needed to provide for their safety.

The state ultimately makes a lousy parent. Not only does it rarely take its turn in hosting the family holiday dinner, but it also tends to cut the apron strings rather abruptly when the child turns 18. One day you are considered dependent and in need of protection; the next day the door is opened and the state basically says, "It's been nice knowing you. Stay in touch."

More often than not, social workers, guardians and foster parents find themselves scrambling to help these kids make the transition to independence with little in the way of services available. Which is why I think the Legislature should drop everything else it is doing right now and pass SB 287 introduced by Sen. Johnny Ellis to allow churches, community organizations, non-profits, and businesses to establish education savings accounts in the name of a foster child.

This bill requires no money from state coffers. It demands no additional revenues be raised. It just gives people with big hearts and generous souls a way to help a kid. It might be a kid they know because the foster parents belong to that church or community organization. It might be a kid that shows some special talent and just needs some help getting the education needed to foster that talent.

Whatever it is, it makes sense that we do everything we can to help these kids make it as adults after we poured so much time and energy into them as children. The state can't do what a parent does when a kid turns 18. It can't provide a home for them to fall back on if things get rough. It can't provide a safe haven if the road to adulthood gets rockier than first imagined. If they blow it as adults, the only home the state provides for them is usually jail.

But the state can allow caring and concerned people to take on that role in some little way to let these kids know that they are not forgotten. And passing this bill would certainly live up to the spirit of the man whose death and resurrection is so widely observed this season.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage freelance writer and author of *Parallel Logic*, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd, a writing/graphics company. Her Web site is www.elisepatkotak.com.



Patkotak

Good Morning. My name is Michael Curran and I am the Program Coordinator with the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, Juneau Office. Thank you for the honor and opportunity to testify as well as represent the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in support of SB 76.

As a worker for social justice and community building, an ordained priest and former teacher for over twenty years in the rural, remote and small communities of Alaska, I am very aware of the challenges that face our youth in out-of-home care.

Prior to my position with the Alaska Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives I was an Associate Coordinator to the Program Director for the State of Alaska, Head Start program with the Department of Education and Early Development. A great deal of my time was spent doing research concerning the transition of young foster children's care in foster homes and out-of-home care to their lives of self-sufficiency. As a teacher, there were many students in my classrooms that were living in foster care and were about to, or had transitioned to, independent living outside their small communities. In my life as a parish priest I had opportunities in private, congregational and community ministries to pastor families who cared for foster children and also to the foster children who "aged-out" of foster care.

My experiences and my research revealed that those youth who did age out of foster care versus their counterparts who were not a part of the foster care system, all faced higher risks and the actual experiences of homelessness, unemployment, financial hardships, diminished physical health, criminal behaviors, psycho-social disorders, suicide and lower achievements in education.

Most of these precious children (young adults) want to pursue (ASPIRE to) education beyond high school but the financial roadblocks are too great for them to even begin, let alone complete a higher educational degree. Many studies have shown that nearly 75% of these young adults must abandon the idea of pursuing a degree or complete it.

This proposed Senate Bill, SB 76, and its program would effectively address this challenge that these young people face. It is a program that would bring the guiding principal of real community together. It would give the ability and opportunity for individuals, faith-based organizations, businesses, civic groups and other organizations to invest in our most precious commodity, the youth of our State. They are our future. This proposal will enable them to fulfill their dreams and live productive lives. These youth are our future investment, who will in turn; fulfill the visions of our great State.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting SB 76.

4/18/07
9:26:02 AM

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/7/07

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 3/1/07
 (in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
 IN TO OFFICE: 3/13/07

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 76

SB 76 TUITION FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN

"An Act establishing a higher education savings program for eligible children who were placed in out-of-home care by the state; and providing for confidentiality of identifying information of a beneficiary under the program."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS SB 76 (HES)
- adopt previous SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
<hr/>	
HOUSE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

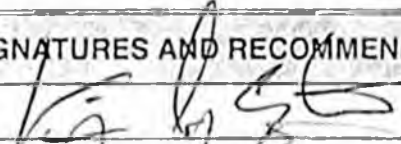

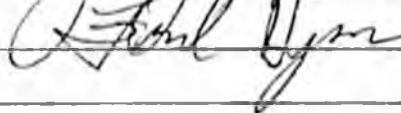
NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
VA1	3/2/07			✓	1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	Elton	✓			
	Thomas	✓			
	Dyan	✓			
CHAIR: <u>Betty Davis</u>	DAVIS	X			