

SCR

19

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Co-chair, Joint Armed Services
Committee

•
Resources Committee

•
Judiciary Committee

•
Transportation Committee



State Capitol, Rm. 115
Juneau, AK 99801
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SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

March 5, 2008

Senator Bettye Davis, Chair
Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee
Room 30, State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

I respectfully request a hearing on SCR 19, a resolution supporting implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on Early Learning.

Recent studies indicate that nearly half of Alaska children enter school unprepared to be successful learners, setting them up for failure before they even start kindergarten. Experts attribute this in large part to the lack of preschool education available in Alaska. Alaska is one of only 10 states without a state-funded, statewide early childhood system. Nationally the trend is towards voluntary pre-kindergarten for all children.

Study after study documents the benefits of quality preschool education, including significantly less grade repetition; major reductions in special education placements; substantially higher rates of high school graduation; dramatic increases in college attendance; substantially fewer arrests; much less reliance on public assistance; and higher rates of employment.

In addition, key workforce skills (e.g., motivation, persistence and self-control) are developed most cost-effectively and efficiently in preschool children. All of these factors combine to make returns from investments in preschool far greater than those from most public economic development projects.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Wielechowski", written in a cursive style.

Senator Bill Wielechowski

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session
State Capitol, Rm. 115
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Co-chair
Joint Armed Services Committee

Member
Resources Committee
Judiciary Committee
Transportation Committee

Senator_Bill_Wielechowski@legis.state.ak.us

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SCR 19: Support for Alaska's Early Learners

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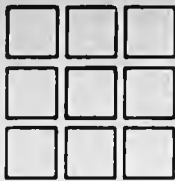
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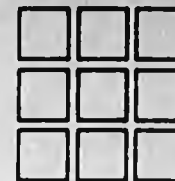
In 2007, Alaska was one of ten states awarded a prestigious grant from the National Governors Association to hold a Governor's Summit on Early Learning. More than 150 legislators, other policymakers and statewide leaders participated in the summit to ensure Alaska's future economy will be supported by an educated, productive workforce.

Attendees at the Summit drafted recommendations to ensure that all children, especially those most in need, have access to quality early learning opportunities.

SCR 19 calls on Governor Palin to work closely with the legislature to review and implement the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on Early Education. It also expresses support for incremental development of a statewide system of voluntary and affordable early education with options available for children and families in all communities.



Alaska
GOVERNOR'S SUMMIT
ON EARLY LEARNING
2007



Recommendations

The Alaska Governor's Summit on Early Learning brought together over 150 Alaskans from a wide variety of sectors across the state to develop recommendations for Governor Sarah Palin's early learning policy agenda. Participants were asked to address these goals:

- Goal A** All children, especially those most in need, have access to early literacy and learning opportunities in their home or in out-of-home settings;
- Goal B** These services are coordinated; and
- Goal C** Parents, grandparents, and extended family are engaged in young children's learning with needed support, resources, and incentives.

After hearing from national speakers on early learning and economic development, brain research and early learning, and early learning public policy, and from Alaskan leaders, participants broke into small groups. Participants discussed how to create a **System Infrastructure** for early learning in Alaska and how to provide early learning opportunities to children **In the Home** and to children in **Programs Outside the Home**. Their top recommendations include the following:

- **Implement a voluntary Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)** which is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings (addresses all three goals, and is a priority in the areas of both "System Infrastructure" and "Programs Outside the Home")
- **Conduct a comprehensive public engagement campaign** to inform parents, extended families, community members, and business about the economic and social "return on investment" in the early years and what they can do to support early learning (addresses Goal C, and is a priority in the area of "In the Home")
- **Increase funding for Head Start** to enable more low-income children to participate (addresses Goal A, and is a priority in the area of "Programs Outside the Home")
- **Increase the child care assistance reimbursement rates** (addresses Goal A, and is a priority in the area of "Programs Outside the Home")
- **Increase the eligibility guidelines for child care assistance** so more families can participate in the workforce (addresses Goal A, and is a priority in the area of "Programs Outside the Home")

Supported By



BEST BEGINNINGS
Alaska's Early Childhood Investment

Other Recommendations

System Infrastructure

- **Provide sustainable state resources** to support early learning (examples are an early learning endowment, a formula for funding, trust fund, or savings account)
- **Develop a public-private entity** to oversee and coordinate early learning activities (examples are the Denali Commission, cabinet level structure, new department, or single coordinating office with multiple departmental linkages)
- **Develop community-level database & coordinated system** to identify services and organizations that provide early learning services across Alaska
- **Conduct community needs assessments** to develop system of support for families and children (multi-agency system and strong community buy-in)

In the Home

- **Encourage employer flexibility and financial assistance** for parents of young children. (examples are tax credits, paid parental leave, parenting resources, flexible schedules, and other family-friendly policies)
- **Provide all parents with access to home-based education and support** (examples are expansion of home visiting, parenting classes, and financial supports)
- **Develop culturally relevant materials** (listening to groups, using technology, have incentives and mechanisms to share, template to produce own materials)

Programs Outside the Home

- **Create a statewide professional development plan** that ensures there are adequate supports to build an early care and education workforce (examples are wage incentive programs and financial supports for education and training)
- **Create a liability insurance pool for child care centers and a health insurance pool for child care workers, with financial support**
- **Provide incentives to businesses** to support the creation and maintenance of quality early care and education programs

Supported By



BEST BEGINNINGS
Alaska's Early Childhood Investment



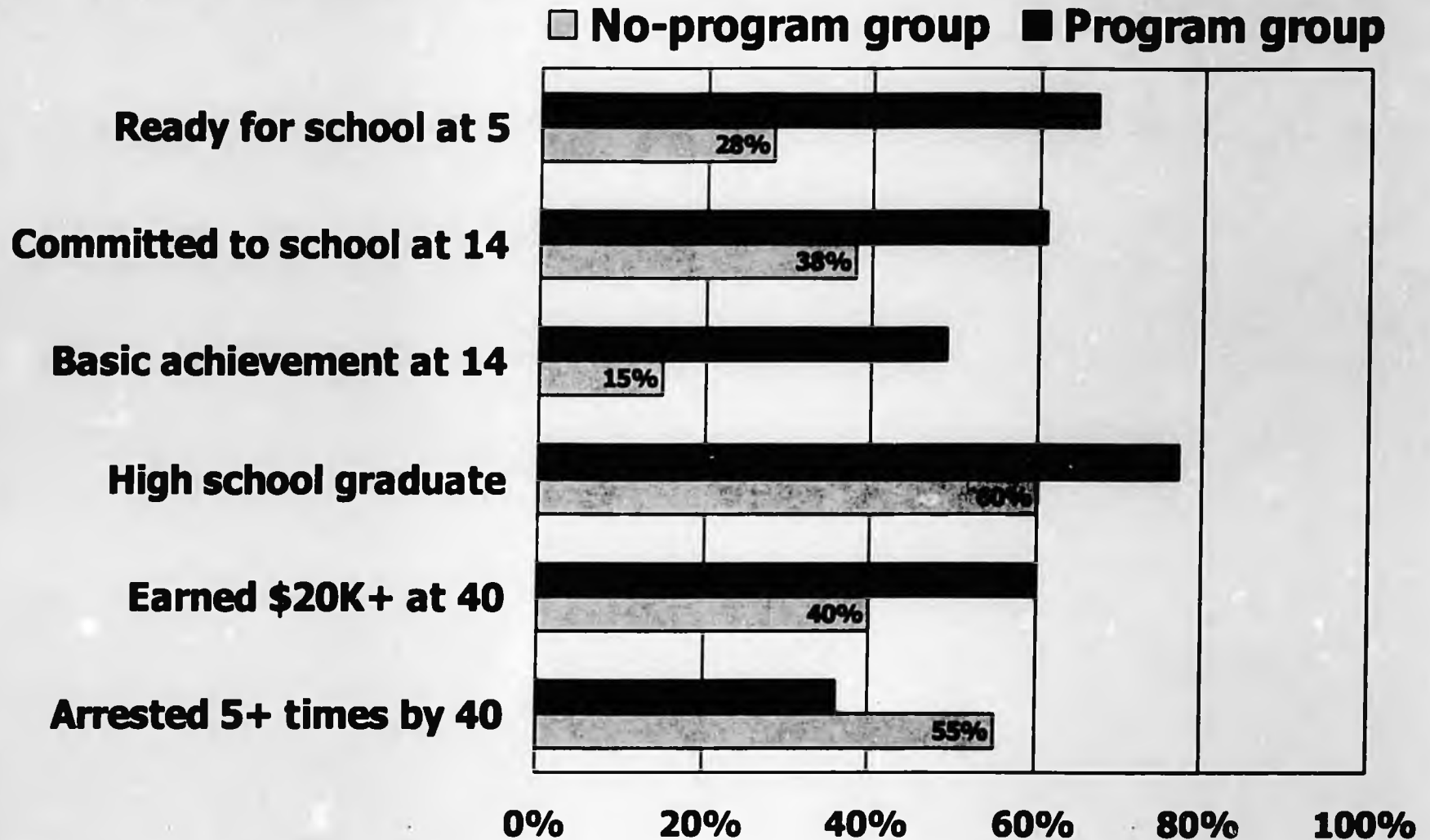
The High/Scope
Perry Preschool
Study to Age 40

Larry Schweinhart

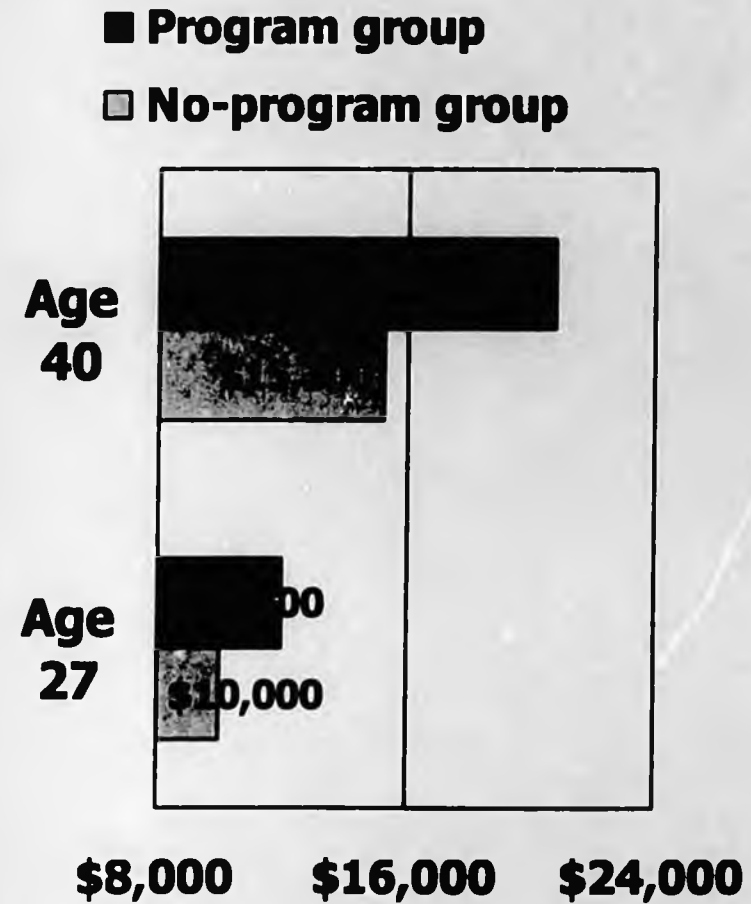
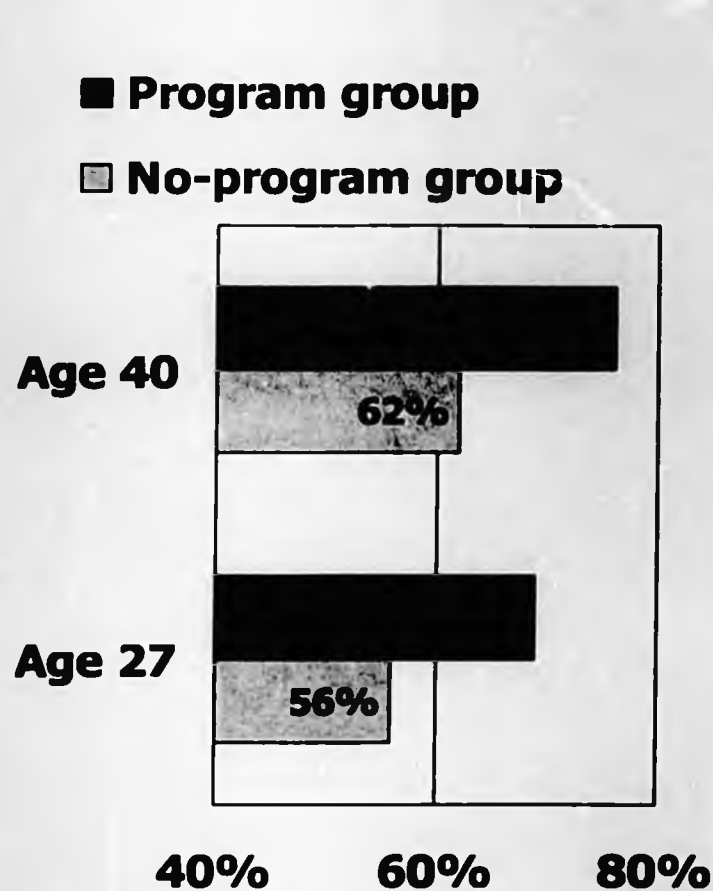
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

www.highscope.org

Major findings over time



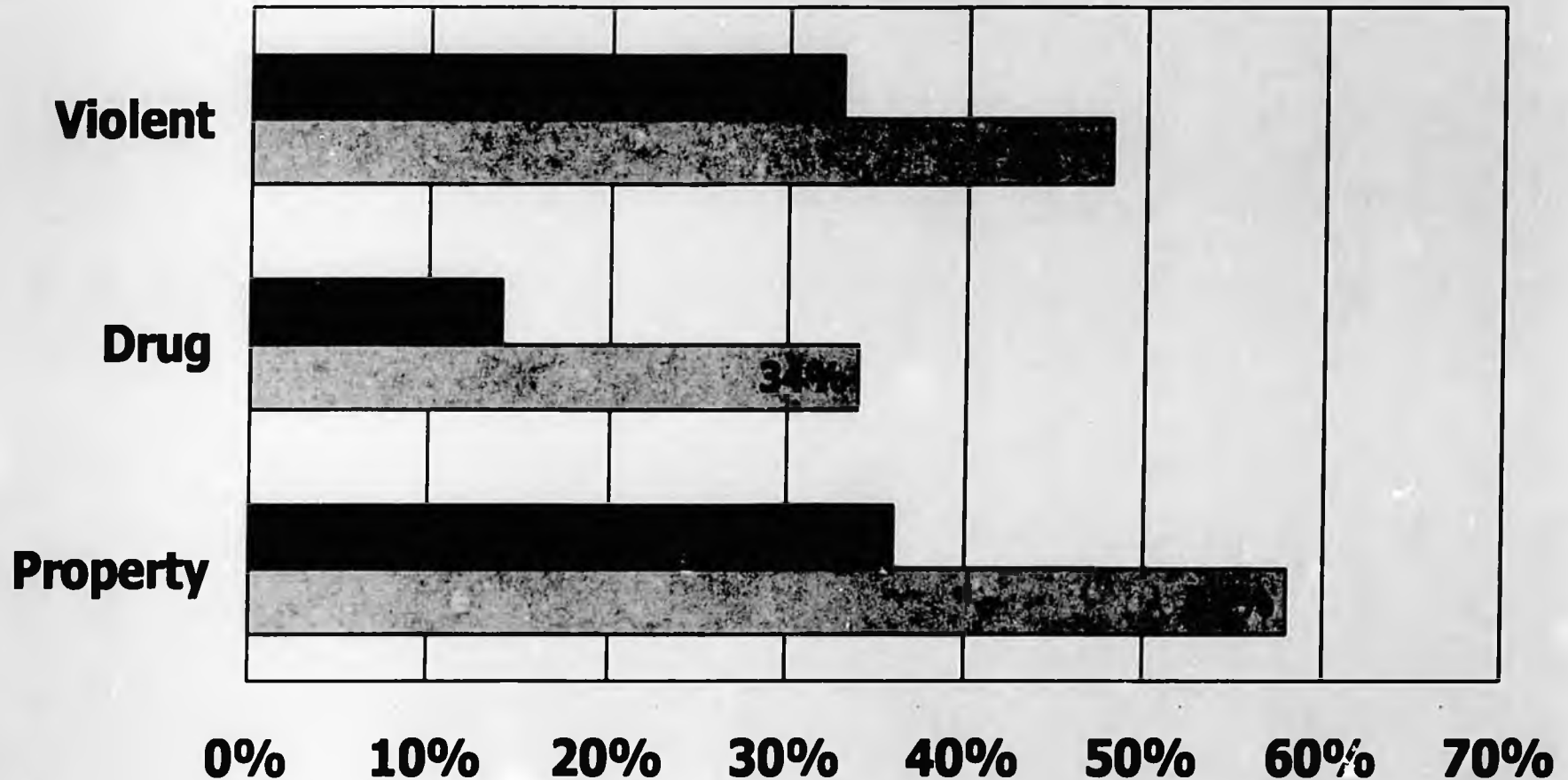
More employed, higher earnings



Fewer arrested for various types of crimes

■ Program group

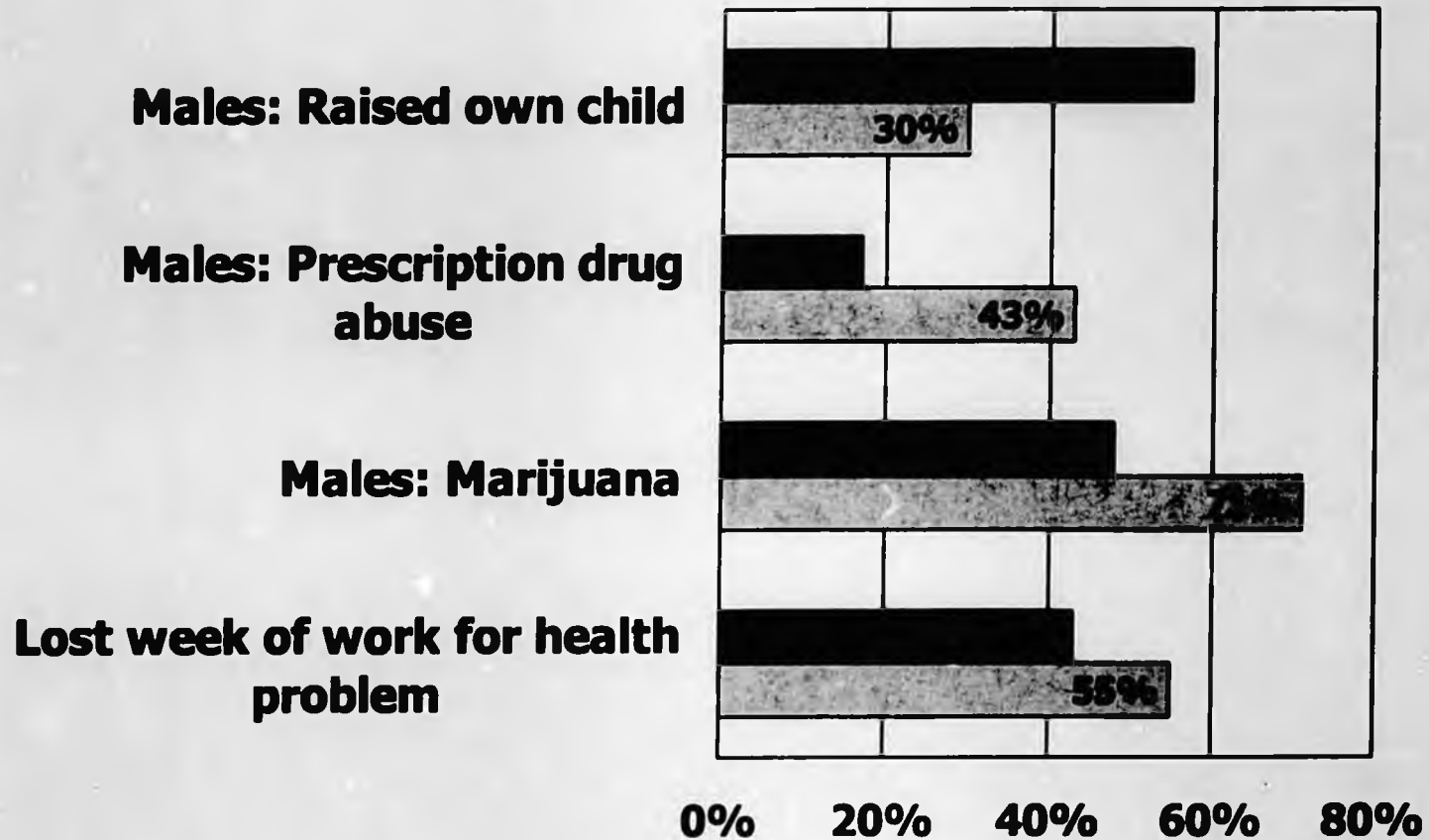
▣ No-program group



Better health and family relations

■ Program group

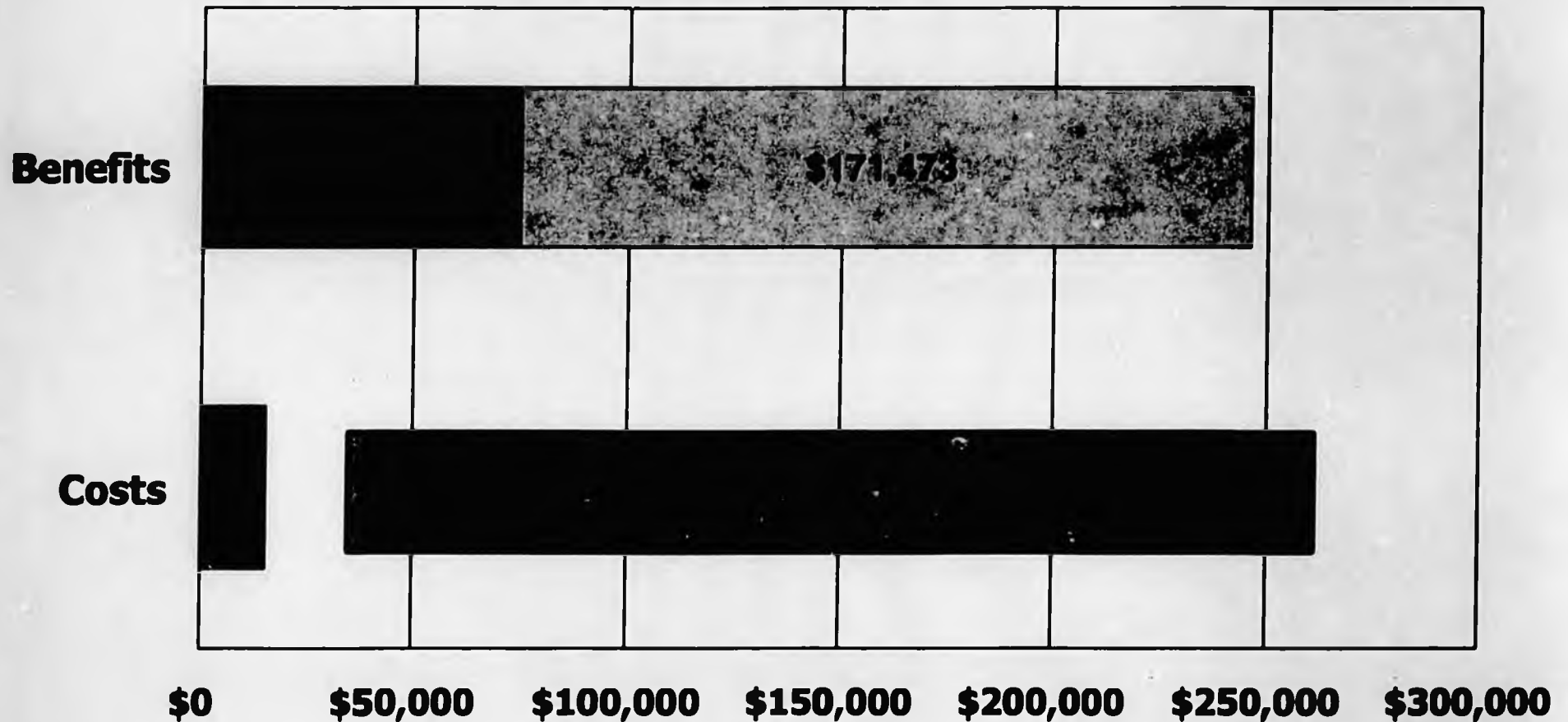
▣ No-program group



Large return on investment

(Per participant in 2000 constant dollars discounted 3% annually)

■ Welfare ■ Education ■ Earnings ■ Taxes paid ■ Crime





Official Business

Alaska State Legislature

Senate

Office of the Secretary

State Capitol, Room 213
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3701
Fax: (907) 465-2832

Email: senate_secretary@legis.state.ak.us

FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

DATE: March 10, 2008

TO: Health, Education and Social Services Committee
(Don, Room 30)

FROM: Office of the Senate Secretary

SUBJ: Sponsor Substitute

A Sponsor Substitute has been introduced on the following bill/resolution pending in your Committee:

RETRIEVE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19
Relating to implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on
Early Learning.

Please pull this bill/resolution folder from your files and give to the page. The bill/resolution folder will be returned to you with the Sponsor Substitute.

Thank you.

MEMO
Please Deliver Immediately

To: State of Alaska Senate HESS Committee Members
From: Susan A. Anderson, M.Ed.
Date: 10 March 2008
RE: Testimony for Senate HESS Committee meeting today at 5pm

Dear Senate HESS Committee Members,

More than 150 Alaskans generated recommendations about enhancing early learning opportunities in the State of Alaska during the *Governor's Summit on Early Learning* in December 2007.

As a participant of that forum I hope the Governor and legislature will work closely together to see that they are implemented for the future of our biggest resource - our littlest Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Anderson, M.Ed.

Cell: 907.360.7158

Email: sanderson@gci.net

**SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 3/10/08

FURTHER:

Date of 5-Day Notice: _____
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 3/11/08

Health, Education & Social Services Cmte considered SS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19

SCR 19 GOVERNOR'S SUMMIT ON EARLY LEARNING

Relating to implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Summit on Early Learning.

and recommends:

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

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


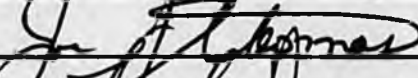


NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

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	✓			
	DYSON	✓			
CHAIR: 	DAVIS	✓			

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SCR 19
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): _____ Dept. Affected: DHSS
 Title SCR 19 Governor's Summit on Early Learning RDU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor Senator Wielechowski
 Requester (S) Health, Education and Social Services Committee Component Number _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
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	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 Interagency Receipts								
TOTAL		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
 Division: _____
 Approved by: /s/ Senator Davis, Chair

Phone 465-3822
 Date/Time 3/11/2008 1:00 p.m.
 Date 3/11/2008

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SCR 19
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): _____ Dept. Affected: DEED
 Title SCR 19 Governor's Summit on Early Learning RDU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor Senator Wielechowski
 Requester (S) Health, Education and Social Services Committee Component Number _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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