

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1999-2000 8672

9816 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

Jeff Brand, M.D., P.C.

2841 DeBarr Rd., Ste. B2
Anchorage, AK 99508

Pediatrics & Adolescent
Medicine

Phone: 907-264-1457
Fax: 907-264-1008

Fax Cover Sheet

To the attention of: Mr FRED DYSON, ATTN WES	
Fax: 465-4587	Phone:
Date: 1/26/00	Number of pages:
Sent by: Dr JEFF BRAND, PRESIDENT ALASKA CHAPTER AAP	

Comments: IN REGARDS TO HB260 I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS SEVERAL POINTS

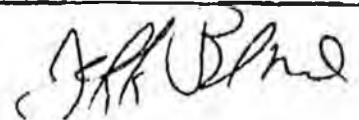
- ① PRIOR TO DENALI KID CARE MEDICAID WAS TRIGGERED AT 130% OF THE POVERTY LINE, THIS CUT WOULD FURTHER EROD COVERAGE.
- ② FOR 2.8 MILLION OF STATE MONEY, WE GET 5.4 MILLION OF FEDERAL MONEY
- ③ DENALI KID CARE COVERS WORKING PEOPLE WHO DONT HAVE INSURANCE BUT MAKE TOO MUCH FOR MEDICAID
- ④ WITH MORE & MORE JOBS BRING IN THE SERVICE SECTOR, WE HAVE LOWER WAGE JOBS & THUS LESS ABLE TO AFFORD INS.
- ⑤ INSURANCE COMPANIES DONT LIKE TO SELL INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE & ITS EXPENSIVE

Confidential Notice: This message is intended only for the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this in error, please notify us immediately by telephone and return the original message to us at the above address via the U.S. Postal Service. Thank you.

Confidential Medical Record Chart

(Please print in ink. Give complete information on each line.)

PATIENT'S NAME		DATE OF BIRTH:	
DATE SEEN	DOCTOR	MEDICAL HISTORY	PAGE NO.
(6)		MANY COMPANIES PROVIDE INSURANCE FOR THE EMPLOYER BUT TO ADD FAMILY MEMBERS IS EXPENSIVE	
(7)		I FEEL THAT IF OUR AIM IS TO GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK, PROVIDING A SAFETY NET OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THEIR CHILDREN IS THE BEST USE OF MONEY FOR INSURANCE → THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT ON WELFARE	
(8)		SOME EXAMPLES FROM OUR OFFICE a) PARENT WORKS AT WALMART, K-MART, KFC, BURGER KING OR SELF-EMPLOYED b) I PAY \$5000/YR FOR INSURANCE FOR A FAMILY OF 4, HIGH DEDUCTIBLE NO ROUTINE CARE NO OFFICE CARE; (c) FOR A FAMILY OF 4 AT 200% OF FPL (40,000/4) → THIS INS. WOULD COST 15% OF THEIR GROSS INCOME	
		POINTED BY MYSELF BECAUSE MY HANDWRITING IS POOR. I WOULD APPRECIATE A CHANCE TO TALK WITH YOU IN PERSON	

Jeff Brand


memorandum

DATE: 27 January
TO: HESS Committee Members
FROM: Michael G. Bricker MS, ICADC, CPC - Program Director
Kristine A. Bricker LCSW, NCAC-II - Clinical Director
Kuskokwim Native Association Community Counseling Center
RE: House Bill 260

Honorable Gentlemen:

This memo invites you to question your conscience regarding HB 260. It is my understanding that the Bill would effectively eliminate the Denali KidCare Program. We have not read the Bill, nor do we presume to be conversant with all its ramifications. But several points invite due reflection:

- ❖ Historical experience in other States suggests that this type of supplemental aid is cost-effective, and the reported cost in Alaska of \$472/child/year seems reasonable...
- ❖ Particularly considering the well-documented costs of NOT providing such services. Preventing a *single FAS birth* requiring life-long State supports (...considering not just Federal dollars for SSDI but the costs of Special Education, incarceration, multi-generational FAS/FAE etc...) in the hundreds of thousands *per child* may put this in perspective.
- ❖ If we are already among the 8 bottom states in our Educational Achievement scores, and the Legislature has mandated a controversial Academic Benchmark Test, how do we suppose HB 260 would *enhance* our children's ability to learn? It seems more likely to achieve the opposite.
- ❖ Think of a child with a diagnosed learning disability (for example, Attention Deficit Disorder) who is unable to access the healthcare system for appropriate medication. If she or he is ineligible for Alaska Native benefits and otherwise uninsured, how can the school system respond to the child's *legally mandated* special needs? (By the way, a month's supply of Ritalin costs roughly the equivalent of 3 hours wages for a Special Education Aide...pretty cheap!)
- ❖ How can we take care of the needs of the people of Alaska (our perhaps naïve concept of what Legislators and taxpayers are supposed to be doing...) without caring for ALL of our children?
- ❖ We understand the need to balance the State budget, hopefully without doing politically unpopular things (like income tax). But is THIS really the best way to do it? It is perhaps cynical to suggest that, since kids don't vote...oh, but the Legislature would NEVER think that way. Would you?

HL Menken once said: "For every complex problem, there is a simple answer...and it is WRONG!" Please forgive us for having more questions than answers. We appreciate your time and due consideration.

Fred -

Dr. Mark Stauffer called to voice opposition to HB 260. He is a child and adolscent psychiatrist. He was working in Alaska both before and after Denali Kid Care. Under the program he sees many kids getting the treatment they need instead of being 'bandaided' together. Now many get residential or hospitalization treatment that they need. He feels it will also help the school violence problem. He is an Eagle River resident.

561-0044

PEDIATRIC CONSULTANTS OF ALASKA, INC.

1200 Airport Heights, Suite 230, Anchorage, Alaska 99508

(907) 276-5517

26 Jan 2000

RE: HB 260

comment - kill itIf HB 260 passes, the state of Alaska will spend more

because:

- ① many single parents presently working at jobs without health insurance will quit and go back on welfare;
- ② without early recognition and treatment of illness, more kids wind up in hospital or use ER, which is very expensive;
- ③ many studies prove every dollar spent on prevention saves many fold on expenditures

Clinton B. Lillibridge, MD, FAAP

Subject: Oppose HB 260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 08:03:31 -0900

From: "Theresa and David Newell" <newell@alaska.net>

To: <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative Dyson:

My wife and I wanted to let you know that we are very opposed to HB 260. Denali KidCare assists Alaska's most vulnerable citizens, and we hope that you will continue to support this important insurance program. Please OPPOSE HB 260.

Thank you.

David P. Newell and Theresa L. Newell
7050 Serenity Circle
Anchorage, AK 99502-1848
907-243-9229

Subject: HB 260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 11:51:54 -0900

From: Kathy Monday <kmonday@lifequest.org>

To: "representative_Joe_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us" <representative_Joe_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_Joe_Green@legis.atate.ak.us" <representative_Joe_Green@legis.atate.ak.us>,
"representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us>,
"representative_Allen_Kemplin@legis.state.ak.us" <representative_Allen_Kemplin@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear sir:

I would like to take this opportunity to voice my opinion on House Bill 260. How can one justify the shutting down of this program? I am not a welfare mother, nor do my husband and I sit around and not work.

We came here six years ago to start our own business. We could not afford insurance then, and we cannot now. Without Denali Kidcare, our daughter would lack basic medical care such as dental check ups and even the ingrown toe nail problem she had a month or so ago.

Please reconsider this program. We are hard working people trying to make a living and provide for our family. However, when an employer does not provide insurance coverage (both of our employers don't) then we are stuck. (We are no longer in business for ourselves)

I just had surgery in October for a tumor in my face. Because we made only \$124.00 too much in the month of October of last year, I am supposed to pay the entire \$10,000. bill. I just don't see how anyone is supposed to have decent health care anymore.

Please vote in favor of KEEPING Denali Kidcare, the health of many children depend on it.

Thank you for listening to a discouraged mother and employee.

Sincerely,

Kathy Monday
kmonday@mtaonline.net

Subject: House Bill 260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 13:46:32 -0900

From: Michael New & Diane Rossmiller <drossmil@ptialaska.net>

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Allen_Kempen@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Chairman Dyson,

My name is Diane Rossmiller. My husband and I have three children, all of whom are participants in the Denali KidCare health insurance program. We enrolled in the program in April 1999, when I was pregnant with our third child, so I also received Denali KidCare pregnant woman coverage for a brief time.

We have lived in Juneau for five and a half years, and are co-owners of the Juneau Veterinary Hospital. My husband is a veterinarian, and I work part-time at the hospital as a business office manager. Our business is too small to qualify for group health insurance, and we cannot afford to purchase our own individual health insurance. Minimal family health insurance coverage with very high deductibles, no maternity coverage, no well-baby care, no dental care, no eye care, and only catastrophic care costs between \$800-\$1200 per month. We simply cannot afford this. Denali KidCare is our safety net for our children.

We feel the Denali KidCare program is vitally important because it provides an essential service to children and expectant mothers in the state of Alaska. As participants in the program, we feel very strongly that it would be a mistake to decrease the income eligibility for Denali KidCare from 200% to 100% of the federal poverty level. People who are at 100% of the poverty level have other programs for which they are eligible. The beauty of the Denali KidCare program is that it reaches working families whose children are uninsured. We are middle-class, self-employed people who, like many others working class families, do not earn enough to purchase our own health insurance, do not have access to group health insurance plans through our workplaces, and yet have incomes which exceed the eligibility requirements for Medicaid or other state or federally funded programs.

When I received pregnant woman coverage, I was able to see my midwife for regular prenatal care to insure the well-being of my unborn child. Many studies have shown the savings in health care costs which are realized when mothers receive

Subject: HB260**Date:** Thu, 27 Jan 2000 07:25:47 -0900**From:** Dianne Register <dregister@lifequest.org>

To: "representative_john_coghill@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>
 "representative_fred_dyson@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>
 "representative_joe_green@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,
 "representative_carl_morgan@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>
 "representative_jim_whitaker@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>
 "representative_tom_brice@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us>,
 "representative_allen_kemplin@legis.state.ak.us" <representative_allen_kemplin@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representatives Coghill, Dyson:Green, Morgan, Whitaker, Brice, and Kemplin:

I am against HB 260, which would effectively eliminate the Denali KidCare Program by rolling back program eligibility to 100% of the federal poverty guidelines. As a single mom who works full-time to support my children (with little help from their father, who is in jail for the sexual abuse of four of our daughters), I depend on Denali KidCare to provide my children with medical services and with mental health services. I, like many other single moms I know, work hard to support my children by myself. The only other State program I use is Energy Assistance. However, I just cannot afford the cost of medical care and the counseling my children need. They would end up going without vital care should Denali KidCare not be available. And if I, a single mom with post-secondary education and training and a reasonably good, full-time job, cannot afford health care for my children, how much more does the single parent without much education need this help for her children, especially if she is coming off Welfare and trying to do all she can to support her family.

My children, like all other children, deserve a good start in life. Health insurance is vital to the wellbeing of all of Alaska's children. If children have a healthy start in life, beginning with prenatal care for the pregnant mother and continuing with medical and mental health care during childhood, they will not only become better citizens who contribute to our society in the future, but it is also more cost-effective for the State to provide preventive care before the problems (medical or mental health) become larger and more expensive as children move into their teenage and/or adult years. The cost is only \$472 per year, per child, in State funds, as 72 cents of every dollar spent on Denali KidCare is from federal funds. Eliminating this program would cause Alaska to lose huge amounts of federal dollars. The State of Alaska cannot afford to lose these federal funds to promote the health of our children.

Please do not pass HB 260. Alaska's children deserve better than this.

Dianne Register
 951 E. Creekside #2
 Wasilla, AK 99654
 (907) 376-2693 (home)
 (907) 352-3204 (work)

good prenatal care.

It is certainly in the best interest of the state to continue to provide pregnant women with this coverage to help ensure that they and their babies have safe births and healthy beginnings.

We urge you not to amend the income requirements for participation in Denali KidCare.

This program benefits everyone, not just our own children. Denali KidCare also gives us tremendous peace of mind, knowing that if our children become seriously ill or injured, they will have health insurance coverage through this program. Please do not amend the Alaskan Statutes and deny us meaningful health insurance for our children. The money that is currently spent on insuring Alaskan children is money well spent.

Thank You,
Diane Rossmiller
8844 N. Douglas Hwy.
Juneau, AK 99901
tel. (907) 463-3761

Subject: Denali KidCare

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 22:46:12 -0900

From: Evangeline Beth Hoffman <psebh@UAA.ALASKA.EDU>

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us, representative_allen_keplin@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Members of HESS:

I hope that you will either reconsider or kill HB260. I believe that you will do many families a great injustice by eliminating Denali KidCare. This health care insurance is vital to the well-being of Alaska's children. If this bill passes, Alaska would be the only state or territory in the country without a State Child Insurance Program. Denali KidCare coverage for children is cost effective - only \$472. per year, per child, in state funds. Eliminating the program would result in a huge loss of federal funds for healthcare-72 cents of every dollar spent on Denali Kidcare is federal funds. We can spend that much money on Alaska children rather than the thousands of dollars for corporate welfare, this would only be fair to our children. Denali KidCare helps working families, such as mine, who work in jobs with no benefits to provide health care for their children. Denali KidCare also helps families who are moving off welfare because they can still provide for their children's health care needs. This coverage for pregnant women is also important to ensure a healthy start for Alaska children. PLEASE DO NOT ELIMINATE HEALTH CARE FOR ALASKA CHILDREN.

Subject:

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 17:21:16 -0500 (EST)

From: Phyllis Kiehl <pkiehl@pol.net>

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

As a pediatrician, I am well aware of the positive impact of the Denali KidCare program. I strongly urge you not to pass HB 260.

I have parents in my practice who have refrained both from getting regular well child checks for their children (important for disease prevention and for good health maintenance), and from seeking care when the children are ill, because of financial constraints. Many have been able to come in and get check-ups in the past year since Denali KidCare Insurance became available. Health maintenance visits address healthy lifestyles, prevention of disease-causing conditions; they provide behavioral counseling which can not only benefit some children in fostering emotional healthy growth and self-esteem, but in some cases prevent the perpetuation of behaviors that may otherwise readily lead to child abuse, injury both physical and emotional, and the costs of such behaviors on society (on the part of parents and of the children who grow up to continue unhealthy interactions).

Despite the absurd commentary published in the Anchorage Daily News by former Anchorage mayor (and insurance agent) Tom Fink, many families today just cannot afford to purchase health insurance. And the fact that almost 1/3 of my pediatric practice is made up of patients for whom Medicaid (as Denali Kidcare or the original program) is the primary payer indicates that those numbers are high.

Please continue to fund, and perhaps increase the funding for, Denali KidCare. It is an investment that is more than matched by federal funds, giving us an opportunity to expend little to gain such a great deal in the health of our future.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Phyllis Kiehl, M.D.

Subject: HB 260**Date:** Tue, 25 Jan 2000 12:02:47 -0900**From:** "Jeri Lanier" <fcsajeri@mosquitonet.com>**To:** "Tom Brice" <Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Pete Kelly" <Senator_Pete_Kelly@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Mike Miller" <Senator_Mike_Miller@legis.state.ak.us>,
"John Davies" <Representative_John_Davies@legis.state.ak.us>,
"John Coghill" <Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Jeannette James" <Representative_Jeannette_James@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Jim Whitaker" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Gene Therriault" <Representative_Gene_Therriault@legis.state.ak.us>,
"Gary Wilken" <Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us>**CC:** "Fred Dyson" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am disappointed to hear that there has been a bill proposed that would affect Denali Kid Care. HB 260 would significantly reduce the number of children eligible for health care in Alaska. When we are finally making great progress in getting families off of welfare and back into productive lives and jobs, this bill comes along that would effectively reduce the number of families that could afford to go back to work.

Just 3 years ago, I was a single parent raising 3 kids on a minimum wage job. I made house payments, kept up with food, utilities and necessities. There was no extra for any luxuries such as doctors bills. I had 2 special needs children. I made \$13.00 a month too much to be eligible for medicaid. I had the choice of being honest and hardworking and making it on my own, or showing my kids the easy way out. I could have reduced the number of hours I worked or lied about a couple of hours a week to receive medicaid. My daughter's psychiatric needs were such that it would take over 1/2 my take home pay weekly on a sliding fee scale. So she did without. Sadly she still needs care, when if she had been able to receive the help she needed then, she would have been much more likely to be a successful adult.

It is a proven fact that if children can receive the help they need at the first opportunity, whether medical or mental health, chances are that it will be much less costly in the long run. Mental Health services are proving to be the focus of many of the Denali Kid Care dollars, but all that tells us is that parents can finally get the help their childrer need earlier, when it is more cost effective, or finally getting help at all. Many providers will not take private insurance because of the short falls in mental health care parity. The fees on sliding fee scale are definitely a prohibitive factor for a family that is barely making it on lower paying jobs.

Please, consider the ramifications of more expensive, longer term treatment if people loose what has proven to be a very successful program. Let's not be short sighted when it come to the health and well being of children.

Thank you
Jeri Lanier

Subject: DO NOT ADOPT HB260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 16:17:25 -0800

From: "MD Christenson" <dr.pinky@hotmail.com>

Organization: HotBot Mail (<http://mail.hotbot.com:80>)

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us,
representative_allen_kemplin@legis.state.ak.us

It is important to maintain the Denali KidCare program.

Normal costs for a hospital birth are high enough, not to mention unexpected complications, which can result in unforeseen medical expenses.

For families without high paying jobs, or health insurance, these costs can be crippling.

The Denali KidCare program is effective in its 3 to 1 leveraging of Federal funds, and prenatal care is the single most cost-effective health care expenditure.

In all good conscience, how could you cut a successful, effective and needed program?

Michael Christenson
Juneau, Alaska
907.789.2096

HotBot - Search smarter.
<http://www.hotbot.com>

Subject: HB 260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 15:32:59 -0900

From: "Phillips, Tammy" <tphillips@alternativesmentalhlth.org>

To: "representative_Fred_dyson@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

I am overwhelmed at the thought of the legislature eliminating the Denali Kid Care Program that is primarily funded by the Federal Government. The Child Health Insurance Program was adopted by Congress to provide health care insurance for uninsured children in America. The other 49 states and territories have adapted this plan and receive Federal monies to support the program.

In Alaska the health care insurance coverage for children is only \$472 per year/per child in state funds. This is very low in comparison to the individual insurance coverage offered by most employers. I work for a non-profit agency and it would cost me \$275 each month to cover one child under my insurance. A McDonald's working parent would not be able to cover this cost and provide housing and food much less maintaining a vehicle if that is the case, entertainment, medical expenses, home repair and upkeep. Please remember as you sit in your legislative sessions that the decisions you make impact people on a personal basis. A family is eligible for ATAP for five years during an entire lifetime. I agree that welfare is not meant to be a lifetime crutch. Denali Kid Care assists families that are in the transition from public assistance to the "working world". The experience I have from listening to families and economic concerns is that families are more willing to go back to work if there are other basic services to assist in the process. An example is the single female raising young children and does not receive child support or other assistance from the father. If this mother is only educated enough to work for minimum wage, what is the incentive? She will have to pay for child care and medical/dental if she is off public assistance but her paycheck does not provide her with any discretionary income for the basic needs of the child. Denali Kid Care fills this hole in assistance and helps to ensure the children of Alaska are provided their basic needs.

I urge you to vote in such a way that Denali Kid Care continues to be funded through the State of Alaska. The Federal government wants this program and I think it would be detrimental to state funding if the State decided to cancel this program.

Sincerely,

Tammy Phillips, BSW
Care Coordinator Supervisor
Alternatives Community Mental Health Center

Subject: HB260

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2000 21:40:36 EST

From: DiveNome@aol.com

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Representative Dyson:

I want to express my opposition to HB260, which would change the eligibility guidelines for Denali KidCare. As one who works with and provides an array of services to low income children, youth and families, I know that it is very difficult for many Alaskans to provide the needed health insurance for their children. As the Chair of the Alaska Food Coalition, we have seen that, while welfare reform has encouraged many people to successfully find work, these families turn to food banks for additional assistance, and parents are still not able to provide for some of the other basic needs, such as child care and insurance, without programs such as Denali KidCare and the Child Care Assistance Program.

With 72% of the funding for Denali KidCare provided by the federal government, and the cost to the state being only \$472 per year per child, this seems like a program which can effectively meet some of the needs of the most vulnerable Alaska children at a very low cost. This is a small amount to pay for the health of our children and to give babies of pregnant teens a healthy start in life.

Please do not reduce the state budget by taking away basic services designed to improve the health of Alaska's most needy people.

Sincerely,

Douglas McCoy
Executive Director
Nome Community Center, Inc.
PO Box 98
Nome, AK 99762

Yes, please.

"Disanto, Diane" wrote:

Hi, I wasn't at Building Bridges, however I do have some information about Denali Kid Care, would you like me to send it to you?

-----Original Message-----

From: Rynnieva Moss [SMTP:Rynnieva_Moss@legis.state.ak.us]

Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2000 11:54 AM

To: diane_disanto@health.state.ak.us

Subject: Information wanted

Representative Coghill would like the information you supplied to
Jan
McGillivray at Building Bridges.

Our fax number is 907-465-3258.

Thank you.

Rynnieva Moss
Legislative Aide for Rep. Coghill

Southcentral Foundation

February 22, 2000

Honorable Fred Dyson, Chairman
House Health Education and Social Services
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 260

Dear Representative Dyson:

The Southcentral Foundation is a non-profit health care organization of Cook Inlet Region, Inc., which provides a wide range of health care and related services to Alaska Natives and American Indians in Anchorage and the surrounding areas.

We are writing to express our opposition to HB 260, which would callously eliminate access to essential health care services for approximately 30 percent of Alaska Native children. The bill proposes to lower eligibility from 200 percent of poverty to 100 percent of poverty. The federal government funds Medicaid health coverage for the Alaska Native populations. C.H.I.P. (Children's Health Insurance Program) provides access to health care coverage to children of families that are employed but unable to afford insurance. According to the Alaska Department of Labor, Alaska Native children (0-19 years of age) make up 45 percent of the total Alaska Native population.

Based on data from the Indian Health Service, Alaska Native health status is one of the worst in the United States. The Alaska Native sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) rate is 2.5 times (306.6) the U.S. All Races (120.3) rate. The postneonatal mortality rate for Alaska Natives (6.9) is twice as high as for the U.S. All Races (3.1).

The ability of the Alaska health care system to adequately treat this at-risk population relies on Medicaid funding. The Indian Health Service funding we utilize can only meet a portion of the health care needs of the Native community. The Denali KidCare Program offers a financially responsible avenue to address our health conditions and improve health status. Please consider the extremely adverse consequences to our at-risk children should this bill become law. We must speak for them; they are our future.

Sincerely,

SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION


Katherine Gottlieb, MBA
President/CEO

4501 Diplomacy Drive, Suite 200 • Anchorage, Alaska 99508
(907) 265-4900 • Fax (907) 265-5925





Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HHESS committee name

Committee on HB 260, dated 2/16/00
bill # / subject

I have a great interest in the livelihood of Denali Kidcare and feel it is a very important program. I have 4 children who benefit from this program. Two of these children have severe emotional handicaps. Without the help of DKC, we would not be able to get them the services we need to help them. We also would not be able to provide regular health coverage for any of them. DKC has helped our family receive medical care at very crucial times and it was the only way we could have done it. Taking this program away would hurt so many Alaskan families. Please don't let Alaska be the only state without a state child insurance program. Our children's health's well being is too important.

Signed: Rhonda Crawford
Testifier

Representing (optional)

P.O. Box 1524 Kenai 99141
Address

283-0960 Home 262-1331 work
Phone number

Written Testimony in opposition of HB 260**By Debra L. Shuey**

Have you ever tried to provide an income for a family of four and only are able to earn \$20,000.00 per year? That is what the poverty level is for Alaska. What do you each of you earn in a year? Could you provide quality health care for your children at \$20,000.00 per year?

Medical costs are at an all time high. What is a more important use of Federal money than to assure that our children will receive medical coverage not only for illness, but also for preventable service. For every dollar you spend, \$0.72 comes from Federal money and only \$0.28 cents comes from state general fund. Families that have health care coverage will receive well-baby/well-child care, adequate immunizations, and have health care problems discovered early which mean less medical costs in the long term.

Prenatal care is the single most cost-effective health care expenditure. Through education and medical visits, children are assured a healthier start.

Unemployment may be down, but what is the income level for those that are employed. Many people are not employed and are just not counted any more. There have been lower paying jobs available such as Wal-Mart that does employ people, but how does that income compare with ARCO?

Developing a loan program for families that are working and incur medical expenses is not an answer. When medical treatment is needed, it is usually costly and you can never make enough to pay your house payment, yet alone a loan. If a child has a developmental disability or a terminal illness, that loan would be so great and each time you pay it, the memories flood back. Sometimes in life, families are dealt difficulties that are overwhelming and they had no choice. What is wrong with helping these families that are trying as hard as they can and have a rough time?

Before you ever consider cutting this medical insurance for pregnant women and children, think of the families in your own community that it will effect. Put a name and a face to that dollar amount. Are you willing to be a part of a child not receiving medical care and possibly dying? Or what about a child having complications from a disease that they could have had an immunization, like chicken pox, but the parents couldn't afford the shot. Or what about the child that can't eat because their teeth are so rotten. Think about the child that is failing in school and the reason is poor eyesight.

By shutting off medical care to all of these families you are also limiting the changes that can occur through contact with medical professionals. Education is a big part of medical care. When pregnant women are at a doctor's office they are learning and communicating and hopefully seeing alternatives to what is happening in their lives. Medical care is more than a shot or a pill.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Health, Education & Social Services committee name

committee on HB 260, dated 2/15/00
bill/subject

I feel that cutting dental kid care benefits from the 200% policy level to 133% level would be completely unfair to the working families that have no access to acceptable health care insurance for their children.

The ones that would suffer would be the children and I feel this is an outrage. These working families are tax payers and deserve access to health insurance for their children. If this program suffers this cut it will force many people with sickly children to quit their jobs and become dependent on Medicaid, but on food stamps, job placement, etc.

Health care needs to be accessed from a preventative standpoint as opposed to waiting until the child is so ill they need extensive medical treatment.

Signed: Leslie Underwood Leslie Underwood
Testifier

St. Joe Community Hospital
Representing (Optional)

209 KWOILKE AVE. SITKA, ALASKA 99835
Address

907 747 3241
Phone No.



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

DATE: 2/14/00

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony
for the HHS teleconference hearing that was
scheduled on 2/15/00.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via
fax on 2/14/00.

Thank you,

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
Sitka Legislative Office
210 Lake Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
747-6276



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

DATE: 2/15/00

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony
for the HHS teleconference hearing that was
scheduled on 2/15/00.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via
fax on 2/15/00.

Thank you,

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
Sitka Legislative Office
210 Lake Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
747-6276

- HB-260 MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COVERAGE

- HOUSE HEALTH, ED, SOC. SERV. 02/15/00 TUES. 3pm

My name is Sandie Gilbert, Patient Access Manager and Denali Kid Care Coordinator for SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.

I am submitting my testimony against HB 260.

When Denali Kid Care began in March 1999, SEARHC expanded upon the State's efforts in enrollment. We saw an opportunity for native children and pregnant women who fit in this expanded health insurance program to remove any financial barriers from accessing a health care delivery system; especially in hard to reach or rural areas.

SEARHC has quickly completed a comparative analysis of Medicaid patients seen at our Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital facility. We compared March through September 1998 data to similar months in 1999. Pediatric ambulatory visits rose from 393 in 1998 to 2,223 visits in 1999.

The impact was tremendous. Denali Kid Care offers services that SEARHC does not provide. For example, DKC offers travel & lodging for patients who need to be seen by a specialist, dentist, hearing exams, Outpatient Mental Health counseling. It allows pregnant women to come from the villages to the hospital more frequently for prenatal care and counseling to insure a healthy child. It gives women the option to be seen at a hospital where more services are provided than at a village health clinic. Denali Kid Care provides coverage for a new mother up to six weeks after birth in case of complications or request for sterilization. This means for those non native women carrying a native child; aftercare is not an issue. And these newborns can be covered from birth: well baby checks, school physicals, immunizations until he/she reaches the age of 19.

SEARHC beneficiaries enrolled under this program costs the State of Alaska NOTHING! The Federal government matches this funding at the 100% rate for additional Native people covered by Denali Kid Care and served at tribal facilities. As you are aware, one of the benefits for the State to develop its CHIP program was the federal match money and is at very little cost to the State's budget.

SEARHC uses these medicaid funds to help supplement our Indian Health Service compact funds to expand and improve our current health care services. We are not fully funded by the Indian Health Service for our health care delivery system.

We are shocked and surprised of the about-face by legislators for recommending change to such a vital program for our children! It makes good fiscal sense to continue Denali Kid Care and to ensure healthy Alaskan children and pregnant women.

Thank you for your time to allow me to express our concerns.

Sandie Gilbert
Patient Access Manager / Denali Kid Care Coordinator
907-966-8396

Subject: Fw: H B 260 , Testimony

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 2000 07:02:17 -0900

From: "Jeri Lanier" <fcsajeri@mosquitonet.com>

Organization: Family Centered Services of Alaska

To: "Allen Kemplen" <Representative_Allen_Kemplen@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"Carl Morgan" <Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"Fred Dyson" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"Jim Whitaker" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"Joe Green" <Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"John Coghill" <Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us> ,

"Tom Brice" <Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us>

----- Original Message -----

From: wildwest <wildwest@mosquitonet.com>

To: <fcsajeri@mosquitonet.com>

Sent: Sunday, February 20, 2000 6:28 AM

Subject: H B 260 , Testimony

> My name is Tracy Pols, I have lived in North Pole AK since 1973. Both of
> my children were born here. I have worked steady since the age of 14 ,
> 17 of those years with the same employer. I have never been on welfare!
> Not one of my jobs has ever offered medical Ins. In 1993 my son was
> diagnosed with severe frontal lobe brain damage. My son takes these
> medications daily so he can function, DEPAKOTE 750 MG, ZYPREXA 10 MG,
> CYLERT 75 MG, TRAZODONE 200 MG, CLONODINE .3 MG , these medications have
> to be monitored closely, which means regular Dr. visits and lab work to
> check possible side effects such as liver damage.
> My son cannot function in a mainstream environment. He is in a special
> Ed classroom and has to have consistent high structure, and constant
> supervision . Three years ago I was unable to continue working, It was
> impossible to work and take care of him also. It is very hard for anyone
> else to take care of him, mostly they lacked the training. also, almost
> three years ago their father died. I have been able to support the
> house hold on SSI Death Benefit we receive monthly (you can not receive
> SSI Disability and have a Death Benefit or Trade one for the other.)
> Last summer my 7 1/2 year old daughter was brutally sexually assaulted
> by a neighbor hood boy . He was charged with 2nd degree sexual assault
> which tells you how severe the attack was. Due to the Trauma she was
> admitted to Charter North Hospital in Anchorage and Diagnosed with
> severe PTSD, (post traumatic stress disorder) She required long term
> residential treatment .She went to SunHealth Youth Treatment facility in
> Seattle WA . She was there two months and her treatment was just
> basically getting started when they went bankrupt. My daughter is back
> in Charter North Hospital awaiting a vacancy in Virginia to start her
> treatment all over again. My daughter will need extensive after care
> when her treatment in Virginia is completed, Weekly therapy and
> medication monitoring. She will be placed in a special ed. classroom
> when she returns to school due to her PTSD. Recovery will be long term.
> Her present medication to help her emotional state is LITHABID 300 mg,
> PAXCIL 10 mg, RESPERIDOL .1 mg . and she has been on a combination of
> four other medications for depression and anxiety in 5 months . Its
> trial and error until they find a combination that is beneficial. The
> medications my children are on is \$ 639.57 a month this would not be a
> problem except the good Lord requires us to eat. We have been on Denali
> Kid Care since day one. I Filled out and sent the application the same
> day they were available. It was truly a God send to my family. To Know
> that they could receive the medical attention they need instead of doing
> without , which is encompresibe, But how do you help your children
> when your finances aren't enough to cover costs.This was before my

Subject: HB 260

Date: Sat, 19 Feb 2000 16:25:39 -0900

From: "Ruth Mandsager" <mandsagr@alaska.net>

To: "Fred Dyson" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative Fred Dyson,

I am writing this letter to ask that you oppose HB 260. I am very concerned that this bill could gather momentum in the legislature. This bill is, in my opinion, a very bad idea.

Denali KidCare is one of the best developments in our state in quite awhile. I am both the Administrator of the Alaska Native Medical Center and a pediatrician. Let me relate a story from yesterday.

I saw a child in my pediatric clinic yesterday with asthma. His Mom had been using a nebulizer from a relative. This is a relatively inexpensive device that delivers asthma medicines directly to the child's lungs. She had used this for the preceding three nights and the child had quickly stopped coughing and wheezing and went back to sleep.

She asked me whether Denali KidCare would pay for this nebulizer. I said "yes"! I filled out a prescription and gave her a form that showed all of the places in Anchorage where she could buy a nebulizer. This purchase (with a cost of about \$100) will enable this family to treat this child's asthma attacks at home and will prevent both clinic visits and emergency room visits.

This mother then went on to tell me that she and her husband are employed and could not afford medical insurance. Denali KidCare has provided them medical insurance coverage for their children.

This story is, for me, the reason that Denali KidCare is such a wonderful program. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Richard Mandsager, MD
Pediatrician

Subject: HB260 Denali Kid Care

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 2000 09:14:46 -0000

From: "pat kouris" <pbkouris@alaskalife.net>

To: <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

CC: <Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>,
<representative_jjim_whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative,

PLEASE - it is absolutely imperative that Denali Kid Care continue at its present level of 200% because:

- (1) it is a very cost effective method of providing health coverage to Alaska's children, with the Federal government's large contribution. Longtime Alaskans for 42 years, my 66 y/o brother and his wife are raising their 9 y/o granddaughter. They join many Alaskan grandparents who have accepted this responsibility. How can they pay for insurance for a child on a fixed income, or afford to pay for even routine doctor visits and medication?
- (2) Keep Alaska truly the "Great State of Alaska" and not the ONLY state without health coverage for all its children.
- (3) Hundreds of Alaska's working families are struggling to make ends meet. \$40,000/year earnings for a family of four is NOT middle class in Alaska, particularly when you must pay in full for insurance coverage. Even having insurance coverage does not bring peace of mind, as who knows if your Plan will truly cover a child's particular health problem. For example, many insurance companies are decreasing their coverage for mental health care to 50%. No family ever thinks the devastation of a biological brain disorder will ever happen to them. Like all major illness, it strikes when you least expect it, and working families cannot possibly save enough money to cover the expenses incurred, I know from experience! If Alaska's children do not receive the help they need- when they need it, they suffer, their whole family suffers, YOUR community suffers, and we ALL will certainly pay at a later date. Must families give up their children to State custody to get them help????? Many children with brain disorders are going untreated today due to stigma, don't let lack of health care coverage add to THAT tragedy. I thank you for voting FOR Alaska's children, our future, and AGAINST HB 260.

Patricia Kouris
4102 Taft Drive, Apt 1
Anchorage, Alaska
1-907-245-5152

Subject: HB260

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 2000 09:19:02 -0900

From: Kathy Monday <kmonday@lifequest.org>

To: "representative_fred_dyson@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_john_coghill@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_joe_green@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,
"representative_carl_morgan@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>
"representative_jim_whitaker@legis.state.ak.us" <Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representatives:

Please let me take this opportunity to represent myself, Joe Public. We need Denali Kidcare!!!!

My husband and I both work, however, neither employer has insurance available to us. Without Denali Kidcare, my child would suffer through illnesses, accidents etc with no medical care.

PLEASE vote this bill down!! Many of Alaska's children depend on this program!!!

Thank you for you time and attention to this matter.

Kathy Monday
Palmer-Wasilla

Subject: Fwd: HB 260

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 2000 17:17:57 -0800

From: "MD Christenson" <dr.pinky@hotmail.com>

Organization: HotBot Mail (<http://mail.hotbot.com:80>)

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us,
Representative_Allen_Kemplen@legis.state.ak.us

Disregard, momentarily, that it is morally reprehensible to attempt to balance the budget on those most helpless and in need. Infants do not get to choose what income bracket into which they are born. All children deserve to be safe and healthy. Also ignore the fact prenatal care is the single most cost-effective health care expenditure.

This ill conceived action fails to make long-term fiscal sense. Reducing the income eligibility from 200% to 133% of the federal poverty guidelines will save \$2M in State matching funds • but at what cost?

Alaska will lose over \$5M in Federal funds for healthcare for Alaskan children in FY01, and \$7M in FY02. Denali Kid Care is very effective in leveraging federal funds.

What about long-terms costs to the State? There are both economic and social impacts to be considered.

Ensuring children and pregnant women who qualify get the health coverage they need can be linked to gains in emotional or cognitive development and improvements in the educational process and outcomes for the child. This would logically lead to increasing the child's later earnings and economic self-sufficiency. Studies also indicate that it may also reduce the government's spending on welfare, education and criminal justice.

Improvements in health-related indicators such as maternal reproductive health and maternal substance abuse can also be expected. A recent study links a single drinking binge by a pregnant woman during synaptogenesis to learning disabilities, memory loss and other brain disorders. These maladies may largely be ameliorated with appropriate prevention and treatment services.

I urge you to disregard this short-sighted and misguided measure.

Michael Christenson
Dr.Pinky@hotmail.com
Juneau, Alaska
907.789.2096

HotBot - Search smarter.
<http://www.hotbot.com>

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ANCHORAGE
P.O. Box 101345
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-1345

(907) 274-8477

February 18, 2000

Representative Fred Dyson, Chair
House Health, Education and Social Services Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK

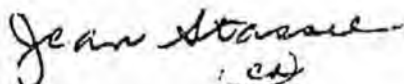
Dear Representative Dyson:

The start-up of the Denali KidCare Program in 1999 was a significant milestone in the protection of Alaska's most valuable resource - our children. By cutting back eligibility to 100% of federal guidelines, HB 260 is leaving the children of mothers trying to get off welfare without health care. These mothers have little choice but to stay on welfare to have health care for their children.

The next population of children who will be put at risk are children of families working in jobs that provide no health benefits. Alaska provides quality education to its children. It must not turn away from providing its children with health care.

This program is largely federally funded, and Alaska would lose about \$5,000,000 in federal funds should HB 260 pass. It is a poor choice to cut the Denali KidCare back to save a little money in the short term; it will cost Alaska much more in the long term.

Sincerely yours,



Jean Stassel, President
League of Women Voters of Anchorage

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

225 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 277-2554 phone • (907) 272-7370 fax • css@sinbad.net email

February 18, 2000

To: HESS Committee
Chair, HESS Committee – Fred Dyson

From: Karleen Jackson
Executive Director
Catholic Social Services

Sub: Denali Kid Care
HB 260

I am writing on behalf of the children and pregnant women of Alaska to express some grave concerns that Catholic Social Services has about the recently introduced HB 260 which would eliminate the current Denali Kid Care program. If not for this program, the many vulnerable children and pregnant women currently covered under this vital health insurance program would not receive access to health care.

It should be evident that the investment of \$472 of state funding for each Alaskan child currently enrolled in the Denali KidCare program will save millions of state dollars in future years. It also provides powerful leveraging of funds with 72 cents on every Denali KidCare dollar coming from federal funds. And, it ensures that pregnant women receive prenatal care to prevent needless and expensive health problems for their developing children.

Before Denali KidCare, many families struggled to provide health care for their children because they could not afford to pay for those services. Those currently using Denali Kid Care are often referred to as the "working poor". They do not qualify for Medicaid because they are working, but they are barely able to pay for essential housing and food, much less pay high medical bills. Most families who exit welfare for work do not have insurance provided by their employers and those working for minimum wages cannot afford to purchase company health insurance policies. We should do all we can to reduce rather than increase obstacles for those trying to productively contribute to our society.

Last year Catholic Social Services provided services to over 165,000 individuals, including pregnant women and their children, low-income families, families dealing with homelessness and poverty, adoptive families and refugees. On behalf of those we serve, I urge you to reconsider approving HB260. Our current Denali Kid Care program represents a comprehensive health plan that will produce healthy children and a healthy future economy for Alaska.

Adoption
Beyond Shelter
Special Needs Respite
Brother Francis Shelter/Kodiak
Immigration & Refugee Services



A United Way Agency

Clare House
McAuley Manor
St. Francis House
Brother Francis Shelter/Anchorage
Pregnancy Support Services

No. 9885 P. 2

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICE

Feb. 18, 2000 4:04PM

HB 260/Page 2

If HB260 is passed, Alaska will be the only state in our country without a State Child Insurance Program. The investment the current Denali KidCare program represents for the many children and women served is minimal compared to the great value all Alaskans receive from this program, for these children are the future of our state. We have an ethical and moral obligation to ensure that all Alaskan children have access to adequate health care. Children have no choice in the matter, and parents struggling to provide basic necessities should not be forced to choose between providing food and a home or medical care for their children. As good Alaskan neighbors, we have the ability to step forward and make a difference in the current and future lives of children and their parents.

I ask that the Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee not change the eligibility requirements for Denali KidCare as outlined in HB 260. The future of Alaska is at stake.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

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

February 16, 2000

Joseph Simpson
460 Daily Ave. #1-C
Anchorage, AK 99515

FEB 17 2000

Dear Mr. Simpson:

Thank you for your letter of February 9, 2000. Any problem an individual has with the process of applying for Denali KidCare is of concern to me. We have worked very hard to provide the customer the best service possible. I requested staff to investigate your situation and found out the following according to our records:

You stated that you received and completed a Denali KidCare application in August 1999. The application we have on file was signed and dated on September 20, 1999 and received in our office on October 6, 1999.

During this time, the Denali KidCare office was in the process of moving to the Frontier Building. The move began August 16, 1999 and the office did not open to the public until Oct 11, 1999 due to construction and the lack of clerical staff to assist customers in a timely manner. It is likely that the lobby construction was still in process and the front counter not installed at the time you came into the office. Because the office was not open to the public, it is possible that you were in the lobby for some time before you were noticed. If a customer did come into the office during the construction period, staff assisted them as quickly as possible.

We cannot address what you may have been told when you dropped off the application, since we do not have a staff member that meets your description of him, however standard policy requires all requests for additional information be made via letter. History of the case shows that we did in fact request verification of your income by letter on October 12, 1999. We did not receive a response either providing income verification or an update on your employment situation and the application was denied on Oct. 21, 1999. The application indicated that you were working at Costco; we were not informed that you were no longer employed.

Both the request for information and denial notices inform the customer of his/her right to appeal within 30 days any decision or action that has been taken. We do not have any record, outside of

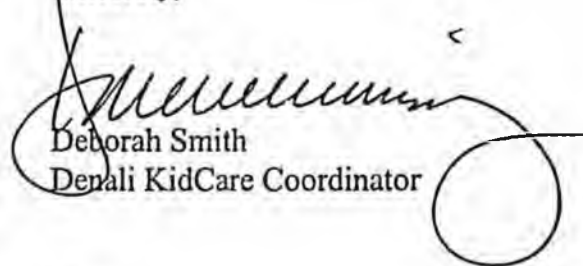
your call on February 7, 2000, that the denial was being disputed. The information that you received in your December 1999 call to our office is routine in nature. Clerical staff review the letters and actions taken by the case worker and relay that same information to the customer. If the customer wishes to discuss the issue further, the call would be forwarded to Clarissa Ridgway, ET III, or Brenda Johnson, ET IV. Again, review of case history, does not indicate the customer wished to dispute the denial.

You indicated that you reapplied sometime between your call in December and February 8th. We do show a second application received in the Denali KidCare office on February 8th, but show no other applications received between 10/99 & 2/00. We are in the process of determining eligibility, however we have requested in writing additional information before an eligibility determination can be made. We have requested that this information be provided by February 28th. If you do not respond to our inquiry, your application will be denied.

I understand your frustrations and apologize for any inconveniences you may have experienced. One of Denali KidCare's top priorities is quality customer service and we make every effort to ensure that customers are treated with respect and receive expedient service. We are reviewing your complaint and our office procedures to ensure that our customers receive the service they deserve.

Since the inception of Denali KidCare we have processed 15,156 applications and fielded 50,172 phone calls. Every one of these contacts with the public is important to us. I trust that your situation will be resolved favorably and your children will be covered by the health care coverage they need. Please let me know if I can help you with anything further.

Sincerely,



Deborah Smith
Denali KidCare Coordinator

cc: Ken and Verna Simpson
Members, Alaska State House of Representatives
Members, Alaska State Senate
Denali KidCare Office



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HHESS Committee
committee name
Committee on HB 260 - Denali Kidcare, dated 2/15/2000
bill # / subject

Please do not support HB 260.

More long term research needs to be done before any cuts are made as this affects a very vulnerable population.

Thank you.

Signed: M. Waldorf
Testifier

Representing (optional)

Address
262-6331 wk.
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H HESS

committee name

Committee on HB 260, dated 2/15/2000
bill # / subject

I do not support HB260. Children + others will be negatively affected by this change. Therefore, only to the worst. This change needs to be researched + researched before making a change that will affect thousands of families who need help with medical bills, etc especially for those like myself who/when both parents work but cannot afford to add their children to their insurance policy leading to children without any health care coverage.

Signed: [Signature]
Testifier

FCS/Early Intervention
Representing (optional)

Address
907-262-3144
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H HESS committee name

Committee on HB 260, dated Feb. 15, 2000
bill # / subject

Please do not support HB260. The St. of Alaska has many families that are unable to afford health insurance and have no health coverage at all. With Denali kid care -- families can access preventive health services. Without this coverage we can't ensure that our children are growing up healthy as all children deserve to. Even with the 133% level -- we will miss families that still cannot afford

Signed:

Testifier

LYNNETTE HAAS

Representing (optional)

SOLDOTNA, AK 99669
Address

Phone number

Wynette Hiras
Cynthia

Please do not support HB260.

aged better.
finding out how it could be man-
US from studying the program and
nasty changes that would keep
it would be a shame to make
ported by the federal government,
pilot program and is highly sup-
Being that Dental Kid Care is a
issue of under ~~covered~~ covered families
families, but doesn't resolve the
the income guidelines eliminates
inabilities to pay. Increasing
are overlooked due to families
Too often, health conditions
change.

Private insurance.
Please keep Dental Kid Care
as a 200% plan. If a co-pay
is needed - I will support that



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H HESS
committee name

Committee on HB 260, dated Feb 15, 2000
bill # / subject

HB260 is a bill that should never have been written & certainly should not even be considered. Our children are the future of Alaska & they need to be healthy. Denali Kid Care has given our children a healthy future ... to take it away would be criminal.

Signed: Karen L Stout
Testifier

Representing (optional)
1545 Stellar Drive Kenai, AK 99611
Address
(907) 283-3326
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H HESS

committee name

Committee on HB 260, dated FEB 15, 2000
bill # / subject

Do not allow H.B. 260 to pass in your Committee.
Instead, Please support the continuation of
Denali Kid Care State Health Care Insurance at 200%.
As a service coordinator for Early Intervention -
I have witnessed first-hand the success
of Denali Kid Care. Children who would not otherwise
get much needed therapies to address and
correct their delays are now receiving them
through Denali Kid Care. This early prevention is
money very well spent as ~~is~~ all surveys show.

Signed:

Shannon Kohler

Testifier

Representing (optional)

Address

Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HHESS Committee
committee name
Committee on HB 260/, dated 2/15/2000
bill #// subject

Please do not allow HB260 to pass.
Remember the children of this great state
are the future. Would we want them cutting
the funds for our retirement, our health care,
and our own funds for needs to care for us in
our homes, think before you pass this vote!!
I know the success of Denali Kid Care is for
our healthy children. PLEASE RE-CONSIDER!!

Signed: Carlitta Gemmell
Testifier

Representing (optional)

Address

Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Hess
committee name
Committee on HB 260, dated FEBRUARY 15TH 2000
bill # / subject

Denali KidCare Program

Health insurance coverage is vital to Alaska's families, especially Alaska's children. Children who do not have health care coverage often forgo cost effective preventative health care measures, and are only seen by a physician when medical problems become more serious and expensive. Preventative health care enables Alaskan children to grow up strong and healthy.

Denali KidCare, the children's insurance program for the State of Alaska, provides health care insurance to uninsured children and pregnant women. Assisting Alaskan families who work at jobs without benefits, Denali Kidcare enables those who qualify the opportunity to receive health care coverage that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

Signed:

Scott Manninen

02/15/2000

Testifier

Representing (optional)

Address

Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HHESS

committee name

Committee on HB # 260, dated 2-15-00
bill # / subject

Health insurance coverage is vital to Alaska's families, especially Alaska's children. Children who do not have health insurance or health care coverage often forgo cost effective preventative health care measures. Preventative health care enables Alaskan children to grow up strong and healthy.

Denali KidCare enables those who qualify the opportunity to receive health care coverage that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

Signed: Shannon M. Parker
Testifier

Frontier Community Services / Early Intervention
Representing (optional)

43335 K-Beach Rd. #36 Soldotna
Address

262-3144
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HC#SS FINANCE
committee name

committee on House Bill #260, dated 2-15-00
bill # / subject

Continuing Denali Kid Care as the act was originally written is essential for middle income families to maintain the health of their children. Preventative medicine has been proven cost effective in the long run. The high cost of health insurance puts it out of reach of many families – often even the 20% co-insurance for those with children with major health issues can be devastating financially. Often those families who have private insurance have policies that limit services like physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech, and have no service to address children’s mental health issues.

A review of expenditures of the current program shows a large percentage of funding went for children’s mental health or behavior issues. Why? Because this is a health problem that is seldom addressed under private insurance.

At the 200% level = a family income of approximately \$40,342 (annual gross) if the employer doesn’t pay toward insurance; average family policy about \$525 per month, leaving the family \$34,000 (before taxes) for all other expenses – NOT a lot! The newly proposed 133% is unacceptable.

I urge you NOT to pass HB 260. If it is passe it will burden families currently just surviving in a state where high-paying jobs are fast disappearing.

Signed: Wini Crosby
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

43335 K-Beach Rd #36 Soldotna AK 99669

Address

907-262-6331

Phone number

Subject: HB 260 Denali Kids Care

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 2000 11:44:17 -0900 (AKST)

From: one_t_wheat@hotmail.com

To: Representative Fred Dyson <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear House and Senate HESS committee members,

In the testimony I have heard so far from constituents and comments made by the sponsor and house committee members a recurring assumption has been expressed that is damaging to many of us that fall into the poor or working poor category: EVERYONE GETS A PFD.

For those of us who have struggled on the lower tiers of income it is quite normal to run up debts with medical facilities, IRS, school loans, and CSED all who then garnish our PFDs. In my case, I have been paying the State of Washington CSED for the AFDC payments made on behalf of my daughter to the tune of \$30k; when they are done in five years or so, the ACPSE is lined up for \$10k and growing with the interest accumulating.

Today I have \$1200c in uncovered medical costs looking me in the face. I hope it is clear that to cut a program that is preventative and cost effective figured over the life of a child in Alaska is a counterproductive move that wil cost us more money in the long run.

Please let this program have a chance; it has not even had one year to prove itself. The time spent re-debating this issue that was settled less than a year ago is wasted; the upset to pregnant women and working families is criminal. If you think abortion or welfare is a better option than Denali Kids Care you may not understand that our family values are being attacked in this bill.

People need hope that they can reach stability by working and Denali Kids Care as it stands can help in that way.

Thankyou for your time,

Scot L. Wheat

Mental Health Consumer Advocate
POB 2353
Homer, AK. 99603-2353
Ph/Fx: 235-6840
Email: One_t_Wheat@hotmail.com

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/22 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M _____

OF _____

PHONE FAX MOBILE 4300 AREA CODE Tk 15442 NUMBER 907 553-5334 EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE No Sliding Scale for AB260 - PLEASE CALL NO

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/18 TIME 10:30 A.M. P.M.

M Williams, Marissa

OF _____

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ AREA CODE _____ NUMBER _____ EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE Oppose AB260 - Start 17 wk old

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/17 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M Franki Adventure

OF _____

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ AREA CODE _____ NUMBER _____ EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE Oppose AB260

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/17 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M Money & Don's Lane

OF _____

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ AREA CODE _____ NUMBER _____ EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE Oppose AB260

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/17 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M John Russi

OF _____

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ AREA CODE _____ NUMBER 729-3250 EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE Oppose AB260

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/17 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M _____

OF my phone

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ AREA CODE _____ NUMBER _____ EXTENSION _____

MESSAGE Oppose AB260

SIGNED _____ Office DEPOT Item OD1154

PHONED _____
 RETURNED YOUR CALL _____
 PLEASE CALL _____
 WILL CALL AGAIN _____
 CAME TO SEE YOU _____
 WANTS TO SEE YOU _____

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 5/22 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M _____

OF _____ PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE Oppose NB260 PLEASE CALL

_____ WILL CALL AGAIN

_____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/21 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M Mary Ann Mills

OF _____ PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE Do not pass NB260 out of center PLEASE CALL

_____ WILL CALL AGAIN

_____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/21 TIME 4⁴⁵ A.M. P.M.

M SPANISH COUNCIL

OF WASILLA PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE NB260 NOTE PLEASE CALL

DO _____ WILL CALL AGAIN

No pass out of center _____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/21 TIME 4⁴⁵ A.M. P.M.

M PAULY SMITH

OF Arch! PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE NB260 NOTE NO PLEASE CALL

Can. Health of At Children _____ WILL CALL AGAIN

_____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

FOR _____ DATE 2/21 TIME _____ A.M. P.M.

M William O. Searns

OF _____ PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE Oppose NB260 PLEASE CALL

_____ WILL CALL AGAIN

_____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

PHONE CALL

FOR _____ DATE 2/21 TIME 8³⁰ A.M. P.M.

M Pat Kovels

OF 1414 Ave. PHONED

PHONE FAX MOBILE _____ RETURNED YOUR CALL

MESSAGE NB260 PLEASE CALL

NOTE Against _____ WILL CALL AGAIN

_____ CAME TO SEE YOU

_____ WANTS TO SEE YOU

SIGNED _____ **Office DEPOT** Item OD1154

PHONE CALL

Subject: Please Save Denali KidCare

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 23:52:47 -0900

From: David Galla <dmgalla@seapac.net>

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@Legis.state.ak.us

Dear Representative Dyson,

I'm saddened to hear that under the guidance of Representative Coghill, possible cuts may be made to Alaska's Denali KidCare program. As a teacher in Wrangell, I've personally seen how children without access to

health care suffered from untreated medical conditions in the past. One student was legally deaf due to early ear infections which were left unmedicated because her parents' finances couldn't allow steady access to doctors. Others have sat in the first row for months because without the eye-glasses they needed but could not afford, these children were unable to see the chalkboard.

Many times over the years, I've seen children denied basic medical treatments for the sole reason that it was unavailable financially to their families, though their parents held full-time jobs and struggled to provide their best for these children. I imagine those supporting this bill haven't spoken with parents who had to deny children glasses, dental work, and medicines because they could not afford them. If you had any idea of the misery and frustration parents feel when they lack the means to provide help for their children, I doubt you'd choose to reduce this program.

Denali KidCare has provided essential medical services for many families

I know. For example, three former students proudly showed me the glasses

their families were able to purchase for them due to the Denali KidCare program. Two children with severe allergies were finally able to get help. Other students talked to me about needed asthma medicines, antibiotics, and dental treatments they've received. These young children deserve the best care our state can offer. It is unfair to them

for us to deny essential health services which can impact their future well-being simply because we selfishly choose to concern ourselves merely with "our own" children. I believe all Alaskan children are our children: certainly, as a representative, all Alaskan children are your

children to safeguard.

Mr. Coghill has written in an article last week that this is a purely "philosophical" issue to him. I suppose for some people discussions of "philosophy" may include the will to withhold needed medical treatment from children, but to me this is a chilling and inhumane excuse for this

measure. Parents who have to debate whether they can afford to bring their sick toddler for another trip to the doctor don't have "philosophical" discussions while their child's fever soars. Denying them Denali KidCare will force many parents without insurance to the one

desperate choice they are still allowed: they will bring their children to the emergency rooms in our state at more extreme stages of their illnesses and at much greater costs to us, the taxpayers. Of course, we,

the taxpayers, will still be paying our federal dollars to provide these

health services for the children of the other forty-nine states, while

our own neighbors are denied them. All this, so as Mr. Coghill states, Alaskan parents can have the rewarding experience of having to "sacrifice" to provide necessary health care for their families. I wonder what sacrifices our children will have to make to their health, vitality, and potential in order to satisfy Mr. Coghill's philosophical yearnings.

You have the privilege and the duty to take care of all Alaska's sons and daughters. Particularly, those children whose parents struggle to provide basic health care needs are dependent on your help to assist them in becoming strong, able adults. It is a sacred trust you have been

given: Alaskans are entrusting you with the livelihoods of their children to maintain the integrity of this worthy program. Please do not

undermine the potential health of our state's most vulnerable people: poor children from hard-working families. Frankly, you should be appalled at the mere notion of withdrawing the health services provided for these families. I trust you will think more about Alaska's children than you do about an arcane notion of "philosophy" when you weigh your decision. Our children are literally depending on you.

Sincerely,
Michele Galla
Wrangell, Alaska

Subject: HB 260**Date:** Mon, 14 Feb 2000 12:45:42 -0900**From:** "LHS" <stazz@email.msn.com>**To:** <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>**CC:** <Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>,
<Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us>,
<representative_Allen_Kemplin@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear HESS Committee Members:

Health care insurance is vital to the well-being of Alaska's children. Currently I work with the Maternal and Child Health Program in the Public Health Department at the Municipality of Anchorage. I work with many clients who are pregnant and receiving Denali KidCare (DKC) coverage for their pregnancies. Without DKC, many of these young women would not receive vital prenatal care. Coverage for these women is important to ensure a healthy start for Alaskan children.

House Bill 260, by rolling back program eligibility to 100% of the federal poverty guidelines, effectively eliminates the Denali KidCare program. Eliminating the program would result in a huge loss of federal funds for health care. Working families would be left without health care for their children.

Nothing is more important then the health and welfare of Alaska's children. It would be unfortunate if Alaska were the only State in the Country without a State Child Insurance Program. This would not be something for Alaskan's to be proud of.

Please vote to continue the DKC program and to maintain the federal poverty guidelines at 200%.

Thank you for your support on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Sharon C. Stiassny
stazz@msn.com
(907) 345-8585

Subject: Fwd(3): Re: Fwd: I support Denali Kid Care

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 2000 15:44:15 -0900

From: jdewey@avcp.org (Joan Dewey)

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED FROM MS. LEOTA UNOK, WHO WORKS WITH FAMILIES HERE IN THE YK DELTA REGION (Kotlik) : She is expressing the need for DENALI KID CARE TO CONTINUE:

Yeah find ways to keep this program going because there are villages that cannot travel because the cost of travel. Like for instance Kotlik to Bethel is like 270.00 for an adult and child is 240.00 and parents will not pay just to travel that much for medical reasons. It is very helpful for those families that are living pay check by pay check to make ends meet. There is also high costs living in the villages. The lower portion of the Yukon pays alot from gas, stove oil at 2.45 per gallon while urban people pay alot less than 2.40 for a gallon. Food costs like crazy. Try comparing rural and urban cost of meat there is a huge gap between them. And most families in the rural have more than 3 children at the most 6 while most urban families have at the most 4 children.



LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE
119 N. CUSHMAN, SUITE 101
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701
452-4448

FEB 15 2000

DATE: 2/9/00

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written
testimony for the

HHESS (HB 260) teleconference scheduled on

2/8/00. A copy of this testimony was
transmitted to your committee via fax.

Thank you,

Fran/Flax LIO



Alaska State Legislature

FEB 15 2000

House HESS

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

committee name

committee on

HB 260

, dated

2/8/2000

bill/subject

I am in attendance at the (H)HESS hearing on 2/8 and want to express my opposition to HB260. I agree with the testimony I am hearing that reflects the great need for DKC, and do not believe I can add to it — those testifying have done a wonderful job of defending a program that should not be called upon to defend itself. There is no good enough reason to cut DKC, if anything, it should be expanded as it has been in ten other states, beyond 200% FPL. As a lifelong Alaskan, I know that I want to live in a community that cares for its children, not a state that disregards their needs.

Signed:

Sammye Pokryfki

Testifier

Representing (Optional)

2231 Skwentna Bay Wasilla 99654

Address

373-1352

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS
 committee name
 committee on HB 260 , dated 2/8/2000
 bill/subject

Signed: Orani Welch
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)

Hc 33 Box 3104 Wasilla Alaska
 Address

376-4731
 Phone No.

attn: Chris VanCleave

TANAINA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Joani Welch, R.N. - School Nurse
2250 Lucille Street
Wasilla, Alaska 99687
(907) 376-7117

2/8/00

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in concern of the reduction in the Denali Kid Care Program. As a school nurse, this program has benefited many children in my school. Children who normally would not be able to gain from dental, medical, and vision services have been able to take care of their needs without further delay. As we all know, education is less impacted when health issues are taken care of. Without this resource, the health of these children will not be attended to.

I regret the reduction in Denali Kid Care as it is an essential resource to many families at Tanaina Elementary.

Sincerely,
Joani Welch, R.N.

David ~~Joani~~ Welch - Submitted, alumna duty, 1/2000, 1/2001.

FEB- 8-00 TUE 15:27
FEB- 8-00 TUE 10:56

GLACIER VIEW SCHOOL
TANAINA ELEMENTARY

FAX NO. 7465560
FAX NO. 9073731744

P. 02
P. 01

FEB-08-00 TUE 11:43 AM NATSU LTO

FAX NO. 9073788180

P. 01



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House, HESS
committee name
committee on MB 260, dated 2/8/2000
bill/subject

Signed: Christina C. VanCleave
Testifier

Representing (Optional)
PO Box 366 Sutter AK 99674
Address
745-5038 Fax 7465560
Phone No.

900 Legislature Information Office

attn: Chris VanCleave

February 8, 2000

To whom it may concern, in opposition to House Bill 260:

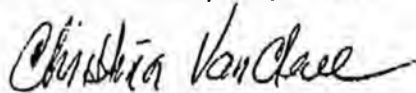
As a health care professional and as a community member, I have seen children whose lives have changed because of medical and dental care received that their parents were unable to afford prior to their enrollment in The Denali Kid Care Program. Many Valley parents are employed by small businesses, self employed, or otherwise have no access to family health insurance. These are hardworking, self-sufficient people that want the best for their children, but are unable to afford hundreds of dollars a month for health insurance premiums.

Because of the Denali Kid Care Program, I have seen children who are able to see and read better because they now have glasses. I have seen children receive prompt emergency medical care in situations where they would previously have gone without. Most dramatically, I have seen children with serious dental disease receive urgently needed care. I think all School Nurses in Alaska would agree that the Denali Kid Care Program is directly responsible for many of our students receiving badly needed care.

Please don't cut this essential program. It is an important investment that will not only prevent future health care expenditures, but will also help insure that our youth are healthy and able to do their best at school and in their communities.

Sincerely,

Christina VanCleve, RN, CSN



*this was prepared and sent during my duty -free lunchtime, at my own expense





ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS
Committee Name
 Committee on House HESS / HB 260 Dated _____
Bill / Subject

As a working Alaskan, I resent the implication that "poor people" are ~~are~~ only those without jobs or that changing the definition of poor will increase or decrease the quality of life for families. You are playing with words and ignoring the reality of life. Having a portion of the usual amenities of middle class life does not mean you can provide all the needs of a family especially where routine health care is concerned. I would ask that you reconsider your stance on the eligibility level and retain the current level.

SIGNED: Velata Murphy
Testifier
private citizen
Representing
270 Ester Dr. Ft. W., AK 455-9075
Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

H+SS

Committee on

HB 260

Bill / Subject

Committee Name

Dated

2/8/00

I feel this ~~bill~~ bill would severely affect our next generation. I am a mother of three. I feel that you should continue Denali Kid care. The healthier the child, the more prosperous the family. When you cut funding to our kids you are hurting our state.

SIGNED:

Mona Jones
Testifier

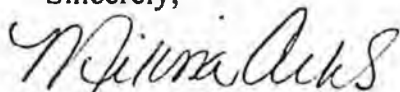
Representing

PO Box 72722
Address / Phone Number

907-452-2989

I am writing in response to HB260. I am a full-time working single parent with two wonderful children ages 6 and 9. While I am lucky enough to have employment with health care coverage for my children, and myself being the sole provider for my children is financially difficult. I agree that the absent parent should help provide for my children and I do have a case on file with C.S.E.D. – but they have not been able to collect child support since December 1998. In November of 1999, I took my youngest daughter in the clinic, at that time they stated she just had a virus and I did not have Denali Kid Care. My primary insurance did not cover the visit stating it was a well child visit. One week later, I took her back and another Physician diagnosed her with Pneumonia. In conclusion of 2 office visits, 3 x-rays, blood-work, rental of a Nebulizer Machine and medication. My medical bills for December where over \$800.00. I applied for Denali Kid Care and was approved in December. Had I not been fortunate enough to have this program available to my children, I honestly can say I may not have been able to take my daughter in for the recommended follow up care. 20% co-pay may not seem that much but when it's the difference between paying a medical bill or having groceries it can seem very large. Plcase do not limit this program to Medicaid precipitants only, the working class is very dependent on it to ensure our children grow up safe, healthy and happy.

Sincerely,



Melissa Ackels
4753 Princeton Drive
Fairbanks, Ak 99709



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Hess
Committee Name
Committee on Denali Kid Care Dated 2-8-00
Bill / Subject

On behalf of the City of Anaktuvuk we oppose Bill 260. Denali Kid Care is very helpful. Eliminating this program would be a detriment to our people. Thank you for considering our testimony.

SIGNED:

Steve Wells Steve Wells

Testifier

CITY OF ANAKTUVUK PASS City Clerk
Representing

Box 21030 907 661-3612
Address / Phone Number

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages	1
To	STEVE WELLS	From	FBKS LIO
Co.	CITY ANAT. PASS	Co.	
Dept.		Phone #	
Fax #	661-3613	Fax #	456-3346

FAXED URGENTLY TO: 907-456-3346

2-8-00

TO: House HESS Committee
FROM: Stacey Stancill
RE: Have a heart. Don't pass bill 260

Dear Representatives Coghill, Brice, Whittaker...


Please note that life is tough enough in Alaska for single working mothers without taking their health insurance away from them, too.

My friend Shiella West is struggling to provide for her son Wes's needs every day, already, and just made it under the income eligibility line (of 2X 'poverty level'). If you pass the new bill she will have to find \$300 somewhere to pay for Wes to be healthy. She makes so little from her desk job that she is seriously considering quitting altogether so she can qualify for all-out WELFARE, in order to maintain health coverage for her 4 year old boy.

That would not exactly cut costs for the Alaskan government, now, would it? Wait and see how many others follow suit if you are insensitive enough to pass this new rule. And wait to see how many of you are re-elected by women.

I was going to move to Alaska myself but I keep getting more and more indications that the Alaskan government is not exactly supportive of new families.

Sincerely,



Stacey G. Stancill (410) 468-3485 4 Lancewood Lane Baltimore, MD 21234

PS- This is how we all know about it. EMAILS have been spanning the globe about it. My fax to you is also being emailed to a Bulletin Board.

Tomorrow is the vote on whether Wes will lose his health insurance. House bill 260 if adopted will decrease the income eligibility from 200% over poverty level to 100% of poverty level. I just make the cut off. John Coghill from North Pole (doesn't he run the breast cancer detention center) proposed this. I just sent off my letters to Tom Brice and Jim Whitaker and John Coghill explaining how important this is to my peace of mind and my son's health. Public Opinion msgs are accepted at (907) 452-4448 Coghills number :8774653719 Brice 465-3466 Whitaker 18774653004 Politicians! Freaks!

9072582157

Copied to Anchorage Times + other papers

FAXED URGENTLY TO: 907-456-3346

2-8-00

TO: House HESS Committee
FROM: Stacey Stanell
RE: Have a heart. Don't pass bill 260

Please see clarification.



Dear Representatives Coghill, Brice, Whittaker...

Please note that life is tough enough in Alaska for single working mothers without taking their health insurance away from them, too.

My friend Sheila West is struggling to provide for her son Wes's needs every day, already, and just made it under the income eligibility line (of 2X 'poverty level'). If you pass the new bill she will have to find \$300 ^{month} somewhere to pay for Wes to be healthy. She makes so little from her desk job that she is seriously considering quitting altogether so she can qualify for all-out WELFARE, in order to maintain health coverage for her 4 year old boy.

That would not exactly cut costs for the Alaskan government, now, would it? Wait and see how many others follow suit if you are insensitive enough to pass this new rule. And wait to see how many of you are re-elected by women.

I was going to move to Alaska myself but I keep getting more and more indications that the Alaskan government is not exactly supportive of new families.

Sincerely,

Stacey G. Stanell (410) 468-3485 # Lancewood Lane Baltimore, MD 21234

PS- This is how we all know about it. EMAILS have been spanning the globe about it. My fax to you is also being emailed to a Bulletin Board.

Tomorrow is the vote on whether Wes will loose his health insurance. House bill 260 if adopted will decrease the income eligibility from 200% over poverty level to 100% of poverty level. I just make the cut off. John Coghill from North Pole(doesn't he run the breast cancer detention center) proposed this. I just sent off my letters to Tom Brice and Jim Whitaker and John Coghill explaining how important this is to my peace of mind and my son's health. Public Opinion msgs are accepted at (907) 462-4448 Coghills number 18774653719 Brice 465-3466 Whitaker 18774653004 Politicians! Freaks!

Fax 465-2937 907 465-2070 907 465-3258



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Please enter into the record my testimony to the _____
Committee on HB 260 Committee Name _____
Subject: HB 260 Dated 2-8-00
Bill / Subject _____

My dear elected Representatives,

I am a Mental Health & Substance Abuse professional on the front lines in Interior villages. I get the calls when teens are suicidal, and every once in awhile one of them pulls it off, ripping the fabric of a village apart, sending ripples of depression and despair through several villages, resulting directly in more substance abuse and other forms of abuse and neglect. This year I became aware of Denali KidCare and how to get a kid in a life-threatening crisis on it immediately and into quality, safe treatment. In Allakaket, this resulted in getting a kid the whole village was sure was going to suicide, into treatment and today that kid is doing well in aftercare and in the custody of family. In studies of the cost-effectiveness of quality psychiatric and substance abuse care, it has been shown that this treatment saves every bit as much money as quality med/surg care, preventing costlier problems later. This has resulted in the rise of the Party movement. Quite possibly saving that kid's life has been worth plenty enough to Allakaket, Alatna, Hughes and Huslia. Why is it important to be the only state without a State Child Insurance Program, a program that brings needed federal money to Alaska? Most jobs in the nine (9) villages I visit have no insurance benefits. Do we want to reinforce working or welfare? I see Fetal Alcohol Syndrome everywhere I go in the Interior; do we want to prevent the pregnant women, some of whom are FAS themselves, that most need health and Dual-Diagnosis substance abuse care in order to prevent this incurable disaster, from the chance to get that care? I urge you to continue this ray of hope. Thank you.

Dennis E. Hojna MSW, LCSW
Tanana Chiefs Conference
Yukon Tanana Counseling Services
Program Director/Clinician

SIGNED: Dennis E. Hojna MSW, LCSW
Testifier
Tanana Chiefs Conference, YTCS
Representing
1302 21st AVENUE FAIRBANKS, AK
Address: Phone Number 99701

(907) 452-8251 x: 3462

FEB 15 2000



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee
committee name
 committee on HB 297 , dated 2/10/00
bill/subject

<See attached letter>

Signed: *W. Platt*
Testifier
Valley Hospital Association, Inc.
Representing (Optional)
515 E. Dahlia St. Palmer, AK 99645
Address
907-352-4835
Phone No.



HES Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

February 10, 2000

Gentlemen:

I am writing in opposition to HB297 which proposes to raise the threshold for certificate of need (CON) from \$1 million to \$7 million. There are numerous reasons this bill should not be passed. However, I believe the bill should be opposed because the long-term result of its passage would be reduced access to quality healthcare by Alaskans.

First, it should be noted that this bill represents de facto repeal of the CON law for healthcare expenditures since most services other than construction of an inpatient hospital can be established for less than \$7 million.

Proponents of this bill state that it will promote competition and improve healthcare. Such reasoning is flawed relative to the delivery of healthcare, because the healthcare market is not a free market. Laws and regulations require hospitals to treat any patient presenting in the emergency room. In addition, hospitals treat indigent patients and those covered by government programs (such as Medicare and Medicaid) which typically pay less than commercial insurance plans. It is the margins generated by commercially insured patients that allow the state's hospitals to treat the indigent citizens of Alaska and those for whom payment is highly discounted.

The "competition" that would be fostered by this bill would be subject to neither the regulations nor the mission of community benefit that govern most hospital operations. For example, a group of physicians could open an ambulatory surgery center without a CON and would, through selective self-referral, send commercially insured patients to their center while using the hospital to perform surgeries on patients for whom payment would be inadequate. It is my understanding that the main citizen supporter of this bill envisions a similar scenario with him as developer of such a surgery center.

The result of such "competition" would be erosion of the financial health of Alaska's hospitals, culminating in elimination of unprofitable services and hospital closures. Access to the highest quality healthcare would then become unavailable to those lacking the financial resources to pay.

Do not give in to the greed of certain individuals who would profit from this legislation. Do not limit access to high quality healthcare services to Alaskans. Do not pass HB297.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wilson P. Patteson III".

Wilson P. Patteson III
VP- Finance



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee
committee name

committee on HB 297, dated _____
bill/subject

please see attached

Signed: Patsy Crawford
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

Address

Phone No.

908 Legislature Information Office

February 10, 2000

Working in a local healthcare institution and living in the Mat-Su Valley, I am concerned with House Bill 297 currently before you. The Certificate of Need process assists in controlling unneeded health expenditures and minimizes excessive duplication of services for the public.

I lived and worked in the state of Arizona years ago when they did not have a certificate of need process. The result of this was uncontrolled building with multiple duplication of services within blocks of one another. Numerous acute care hospitals and freestanding surgical and imaging centers were constructed. What was felt to be a positive change for increasing choice for the consumer, ultimately ended in disaster for those consumers with insufficient or no insurance. The freestanding medical/clinical centers accepted only patients with commercial insurance, depleting these customers from the acute care hospitals. This left the Medicaid, Medicare, and self-pay, and charity care customers seeking service at the hospitals with an insufficient 'balance' of commercial insurance customers to meet expenses. The result? Numerous hospital closures, the elimination of many wonderful charity care programs and services to the community, and for-profit centers satisfying their stockholders. The same could happen in our community. If it does, many of the mission-oriented programs will be eliminated. These programs address the greater health of our community in many tangible ways.

Although the current Certificate of Need process in our state isn't perfect, it's certainly better the way it is than raising the threshold to \$7 million or eliminating the process entirely. I thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Patsy Crofford
VP, Employee Development & Resource Services
Valley Hospital Association
515 E. Dahlia, Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 352-4855





STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

FEB 15 2000

DATE: 2/8/00

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony
for the House HES teleconference hearing that was
scheduled on 2/8/00.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via
fax on 2/8/00.

Thank you,

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
Sitka Legislative Office
210 Lake Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
747-8275

Post-It [™] brand fax transmittal memo / 0 / 1 / # of pages: 2	
To: Teri Lundy	FROM Sitka, AK
Co.	Co.
Dept: 907-8437	Phone # 747-5807
Fax # 907-8605	Fax # 747-5807

State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES
committee name
committee on HB 260, dated 2/8/00
bill/subject

It is extremely important that women and children continue to receive quality medical and dental care in our rural communities! Densli Kid Care is a wonderful resource in reaching families who could otherwise be overlooked or forgotten due to financial considerations. It is a pleasure to offer families a way to get their children treated in a timely manner. This is especially true for single parent households.

Respectfully,

Signed: Teresa Lundy
Testifier
SEARCHC/ADMITTING OFFICE
Representing (Optional)
PO BOX 2975 SITKA AK 99835
Address
907-747-5072
Phone No.

February 1, 00

FEB 07 2000

Dear Rep. Fred Dixon

My name is Bessie Lincoln and I work at Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation. I supervise the Medicaid & Medicare Enrollment Program and have been with this program for about 8 years. I travel to the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta villages enrolling everyone of all ages to Medicaid & my primary focus has always been children, pregnant women & elders over 65 years of age.

I oppose the bill that was recently introduced in Alaska Legislature to decrease income eligibility for Denali KidCare. Denali KidCare is one of the best things that has ever happened in this region. I am asking you to please - Don't take it away from our children & Pregnant women that need it the most !!

Imagine yourself in the village of Kotlik, about 160 air miles east from Bethel, and you need to bring your child to go see a Doctor for a very

bad bronchitis. For a mother & a child to travel to Bethel - the airfare will cost \$540.00, with taxi, lodging and meals this will add up to about \$750.00.

This is a lot of money and I know for a fact that ^{the} most people in the Bush just do not have that kind of money.

I have personally witnessed parents very happy with Denali kids! Their children finally have health insurance with very good benefits! This definitely means our children will live long, healthy lives and this is important for our generation!

A few nights ago, I was listening to ~~the~~ President Clinton's speech, and he got my attention when he was talking about Health Insurance for Americans. One of his comments were: "We will meet quality health care of all Americans." "No kid will live in Poverty!" These to me are very powerful words.

Bessie Lincoln, ~~YKHC~~
YKHC
Box 528
Bethel, AK 99559

Very sincerely,
Bessie Lincoln

Thank you for your time + I hope yours.
I consider the bird + leave. I really had care
alone.

Many of us believe that children are our
future, and children come first! Without
giving adequate health care for our children -
this could change our future.



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

DATE: 1/28/00

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony for the House HESS teleconference hearing that was scheduled on 1/27/00.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via fax on 1/28/00.

(HB 260 was dropped from the agenda.)

Thank you,

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
Sitka Legislative Office
210 Lake Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
747-8276

Chairman and Members of the House Health, Education, and Social Services Committee,

My name is Patricia MacPike. I have two reasons for testifying before you today. The first and most important is that my daughter currently receives health coverage from the Denali Kid Care Program (DKC). The second reason is that I work with severely emotionally disturbed children who are able to receive vital services through being DKC recipients.

Personally and Professionally it saddens me that the issue to terminate the DKC Program is even up for consideration. As a parent, a children's mental health associate and a child advocate I feel it is vital to the health of Alaska's children and economy to maintain the DKC Program.

DKC allows many hard working families the privilege to continue working without the added stress of paying unwieldy medical bills or foregoing taking their child to the doctor due to an inability to pay. Certain professionals do not accept DKC because it is not cost effective. Did you know that there are no dentists in Sitka who accept Medicaid because it does not cover their expenses? Think of all the children at the poverty level in Sitka alone who go without vital dental assistance because the families can't afford it.

Added to this dilemma would be the severely emotionally disturbed children who would no longer receive the vital services they need to keep them from being institutionalized. Sitka Mental Health Clinic currently serves 16 severely emotionally disturbed children. If your proposal passes only 3 children would be eligible for services. This would also mean that the agency would have to lay off approximately 10 people who work either full or part-time. I can assure you this is only a small portion of children, families, and employees across the state, who will be affected.

I would now like to shift gears and give you a personal story.

My daughter, Hannah, faces challenges which require physical therapy. My husband, who is a state employee, is only eligible for insurance coverage for five months of the year. If we should choose to keep this limited coverage it would cost \$586.00 per month. Based upon the pure economics, this is cost prohibitive. Our only option, as Hannah has a pre-existing condition, is to obtain DKC to assist with her therapy bills which average over \$2000 per year. Please note this does not include doctor's visits for ear infections, accidents, dental, etc.

My husband and I both work very hard. I would encourage you to look at the expenses for raising one child in this state. Child care alone costs between \$475-\$680 per month. Add this cost to health insurance, \$586 per month, and your average cost per month is \$1187 dollars. This is equal to over 50% of my monthly net income. This does not even take into account the cost of rent, food, student loans, etc.

It is crucial that the DKC Program remain intact. DKC buys a far more important insurance than just health care. DKC ensures that my child and many others will receive the necessary services they need to become a productive member of society.

I thank you for your time and energy you will give to this issue. I encourage you on behalf of my child and the many other DKC recipients to maintain or increase the current level of funding and support for the Denali Kid Care Program.

Show the children of Alaska you care about them and their future. Support the DKC Program.


Patricia A. MacPike



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

Committee on HB 260 Committee Name
Subject: HB 260 Dated 2-8-00
Bill / Subject

My dear elected Representatives,

I am a Mental Health & Substance Abuse professional on the front lines in Interior villages. I get the calls when teens are suicidal, and every once in awhile one of them pulls it off, ripping the fabric of a village apart, sending ripples of depression and despair through several villages, resulting directly in more substance abuse and other forms of abuse and neglect. This year I became aware of Denali KidCare and how to get a kid in a life-threatening crisis on it immediately and into quality, safe treatment. In Allakaket, this resulted in getting a kid the whole village was sure was going to suicide, into treatment and today that kid is doing well in aftercare and in the custody of family. In studies of the cost-effectiveness of quality psychiatric and substance abuse care, it has been shown that this treatment saves every bit as much money as quality med/surg care, preventing costlier problems later. This has resulted in the rise of the Parity movement. Quite possibly saving that kid's life has been worth plenty enough to Allakaket, Alatna, Hughes and Huslia. Why is it important to be the only state without a State Child Insurance Program, a program that brings needed federal money to Alaska? Most jobs in the nine (9) villages I visit have no insurance benefits. Do we want to reinforce working or welfare? I see Fetal Alcohol Syndrome everywhere I go in the Interior; do we want to prevent the pregnant women, some of whom are FAS themselves, that most need health and Dual-Diagnosis substance abuse care in order to prevent this incurable disaster, from the chance to get that care? I urge you to continue this ray of hope. Thank you.

Dennis E. Hojna MSW, LCSW
Tanana Chiefs Conference
Yukon Tanana Counseling Services
Program Director/Clinician

SIGNED:

Dennis E. Hojna MSW, LCSW
Testifier
Tanana Chiefs Conference / YTCS
Representing
1302 21st Avenue Fairbanks, AK
Address / Phone Number
99701
(907) 452-8251 x73462

Subject: HB260 - Elimination of Denali KidCare

Date: Mon, 7 Feb 2000 09:16:55 -0900

From: "Al & Barb" <turnings@gci.net>

To: <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

I urge you to oppose this HB260. I do not receive Denali KidCare, but I believe it is an extremely valuable program. This expanded health insurance for children and pregnant women is both cost-effective and compassionate, so it should be supported by both fiscal conservatives and social liberals.

Subject: HB 260**Date:** Mon, 7 Feb 2000 19:34:46 -0900**From:** Dennis E Hojna <dhojna@juno.com>**To:** Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us, representative_allen_kemplin@legis.state.ak.us

My dear elected Representatives,

I am a Mental Health & Substance Abuse professional on the front lines in Interior villages. I get the calls when teens are suicidal, and every once in awhile one of them pulls it off, ripping the fabric of a village apart, sending ripples of depression and despair through several villages, resulting directly in more substance abuse and other forms of abuse and neglect. This year I became aware of Denali KidCare and how to get a kid in a life-threatening crisis on it immediately and into quality, safe treatment. In Allakaket, this resulted in getting a kid the whole village was sure was going to suicide, into treatment and today that kid is doing well in aftercare and in the custody of family. In studies of the cost-effectiveness of quality psychiatric and substance abuse care, it has been shown that this treatment saves every bit as much money as quality med/surg care, preventing costlier problems later. This has resulted in the rise of the Parity movement. Quite possibly saving that kid's life has been worth plenty enough to Allakaket, Alatna, Hughes and Huslia. Why is it important to be the only state without a State Child Insurance Program, a program that brings needed federal money to Alaska? Most jobs in the nine (9) villages I visit have no insurance benefits. Do we want to reinforce working or welfare? I see Fetal Alcohol Syndrome everywhere I go in the Interior; do we want to prevent the pregnant women, some of whom are FAS themselves, that most need health and Dual-Diagnosis substance abuse care in order to to prevent this uncurable disaster, from the chance to get that care? I urge you to continue this ray of hope. Thank you.

Dennis E. Hojna MSW, LCSW
Tanana Chiefs Conference
Yukon Tanana Counseling Services
Program Director/Clinician

YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR THE INTERNET!

Juno now offers FREE Internet Access!

Try it today - there's no risk! For your FREE software, visit:

<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/taqj>.

Subject: HB260 - Denali Kid Care

Date: Tue, 8 Feb 2000 06:10:10 -0900

From: "Nicholas Charles" <ncharles@matnet.com>

To: <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

I am urging you to stop HB260 from being passed into law. If you pass this bill it would effectively eliminate the Denali Kid Care program so vital to working parents like myself with no health benefits for my children. I am a stakeholder on this issue. I have children I wouldn't be able to afford to provide medicine, therapy and treatment that they need. My income is marginal, I have a mortgage, car payments, other loans, household bills to pay. We are practically at the borderline. And, my employer doesn't have any coverage because we are so small that even trying to get limited coverage is simply unaffordable for the organization. Because of the condition of two of my special needs children the premiums would be extremely high. To top it off my wife and I are in school. I am taking full-time credits through the University of Alaska to get a degree and my wife is in training so that she can become qualified for a job. I work very hard to support my family. But as hard as I am working, I am still not able to afford insurance on my own for my kids. I don't think that I am the only parent with special needs children that will be affected by this. I understand that across the country, all the other states are providing coverage for parents without insurance for their children. If Alaska were to eliminate the eligibility of children who are in similar situations as myself, it will have the honor of being the only state in the union without a children's insurance program.

The program is cost effective and brings in a significant amount of federal dollars to the state. I understand that the program is funded primarily with federal dollars and a small amount of state dollars. Cutting it would amount to a huge loss of federal funds for health care (72 cents of every dollar spent on Denali KidCare is federal funds). With the state's fiscal budget deficit, you don't start dealing with it by cutting off other sources of revenue, particularly programs like Denali Kid Care. You have to look at it in real terms. It brings federal health care revenue for the state, and with a small state investment, helps to cut future health care costs. It makes absolutely no sense to cut a program that brings in outside federal funds. Because you would be creating higher future health care costs and put more people into welfare. You don't need to add to the state's budget deficit by eliminating this program. I am urging you to do the right and sensible thing today at your House HESS meeting by not passing HB 260.

Subject: HB 260

Date: Tue, 8 Feb 2000 08:54:09 -0900

From: Dick Wilson <dw99835@worldnet.att.net>

To: "Dyson, Fred" <Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Please help kill HB 260.

This bill would deny health insurance for children in low and moderate income families. If it passes, the state will economically destroy many families.

Even high-income families, if uninsured, can be economically devastated if a child has a serious accident or develops a serious physical or mental illness. Alaska should join the other state that are working toward universal health insurance coverage for children. Higher-income families should pay for the insurance, but to deny access to insurance is short sighted.

I worked on both national and state committees seeking to provide health insurance for children. The Denali KidsCare is a good deal for children, families and the state.

Primary I have been working to improve early identification and treatment for the 20 percent of our children that have psychiatric disorders. The National Institutes of Health have urged these programs since the mid-1980, but Alaska does not as yet have effective programs. Having good health insurance coverage is critical to developing these services, which commonly have very positive benefit/cost ratios - anywhere from 3 to 1 to 13 to 1.

It costs the state a lot of money to not have universal health insurance for children. Don't make matters worse!

Dick Wilson, President
NAMI of Sitka, Alaska

Subject: HB 260

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 2000 10:18:46 -0900

From: Polly Smith <pkpsmith@alaska.net>

Organization: Anchorage Literacy Project

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

Representative Dyson:

I am asking you to oppose HB 260. As a former family literacy educator and now as Director of ImPACT, an Even Start Family Literacy pProgram, I know health care insurance coverage is vital to the well being of Alaska's children and families. I know many families that are in the workforce and uneligibile for Medicaid but have found security and safety for their children through Denali Kid Care, the only way their children could possibly have health coverage. Healthy children are eager and ready to learn. I urge you to continue to provide for optimal learning for all Alaskan children, please do not eliminate the Denali KidCare.

Polly Smith
Executive Director
Anchorage Literacy Project

Subject: House Bill 260

Date: Thu, 27 Jan 2000 16:57:07 AKST

From: "Rhonda Petrey" <r_petrey@hotmail.com>

To: Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us

CC: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Representatives,

I am writing in reference to House bill 260. I have a great interest in the livelihood of Denali KidCare. Not only am I employed by an agency who helps several families in the community who have children with disabilities, and who need screenings, tests, etc. I am also a former single mother who worked to put myself through school to get a better job and support my two wonderful children independently. I now have a permanent, full time job. I made the decision to remove myself from receiving ATAP and Food Stamp benefits, feeling that I made enough money to support us on my own. It was important for me to keep the medicaid benefits for my children, as my employer at that time did not offer those benefits for my children. I was recently married and there are 4 children between the two of us. Our household income is too high for regular medicaid and the loss of Denali KidCare would be devastating to us. To insure my family would cost me half of my salary. My husband's employer does not offer insurance. This is a vital program for the children of Alaska. I understand that it costs \$472 per year to insure these children. I feel that this is a very reasonable amount.

I don't understand why you feel that the damage that could be done to families like mine and other families similar to mine would benefit this state. I will be paying very close attention to this issue and will fight in whatever way I can to keep this very important program.

Sincerely,
Rhonda Crawford
P.O. Box 1524
Kenai, AK 99669

Get Your Private, Free Email at <http://www.hotmail.com>

Subject: HB 260

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 2000 13:13:43 AKST

From: "Norma Strickland" <normastrickland@hotmail.com>

To: Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Carl_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Jim_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us, Representative_Allen_Kemplen@legis.state.ak.us

WE MUST BE RESPONSIBLE. Children must always receive whatever help the State can give to ensure the basics. HB 260 is irresponsible when you consider the following:

- * Health care insurance coverage is vital to the well being of Alaska's children.
- * If HB 260 passed, Alaska would be the only state or territory in the country without a state-sponsored child insurance program.
- * Denali Kid Care coverage for our children is cost effective--only \$472 per year, per child, in state funds. Eliminating the program would result in a huge loss of federal funds for health care - 72 cents of every dollarspent on Denali KidCare is federal funds.
- *Denali KidCare helps working families who work in jobs with no benefits to provide health care for their children. Denali KidCare also helpsfamilies who are moving off welfare because they can still provide for their children's health care needs.
- * Coverage for pregnant women is important to ensure a health start for Alaskan children.

I urge you to reconsider saving money in this fashion. In the end we pay much more for a poor start.

Norma Strickland
790-2960

Get Your Private, Free Email at <http://www.hotmail.com>