

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES, 2003-2004 8672
11134 SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

1 year.

2 * **Sec. 25.** AS 14.43.420 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

3 (c) A student may receive not more than a total of \$8,000 in grants awarded
4 under AS 14.43.400 - 14.43.500.

5 * **Sec. 26.** AS 14.43.740(a) is amended to read:

6 (a) The provisions of AS 14.43.100, 14.43.120(a) - (c), (m), and (r) - (u),
7 14.43.122 [14.43.110, 14.43.120(a) - (d), (m), AND (r) - (u)], 14.43.135, 14.43.145 -
8 14.43.155 [14.43.145 - 14.43.150], and 14.43.910 - 14.43.990 apply to a loan made
9 under AS 14.43.710 - 14.43.750.

10 (a) The provisions of AS 14.43.100, 14.43.120(a) - (c), (m), and (r) - (u),
11 14.43.122 [14.43.110, 14.43.120(a) - (d), (m), AND (r) - (u)], 14.43.135, 14.43.145 -
12 14.43.155 [14.43.145 - 14.43.150], and 14.43.910 - 14.43.990 apply to a loan made
13 under AS 14.43.710 - 14.43.750.

14 * **Sec. 27.** AS 14.43.740 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

15 (g) The commission may, by regulation, set loan limits for loans made under
16 AS 14.43.710 - 14.43.750.

17 * **Sec. 28.** AS 14.43.990 is amended by adding new paragraphs to read:

18 (5) "AlaskAdvantage" means the service mark registered by the
19 commission under 15 U.S.C. 1051 (Trademark Act) that is used to describe financial
20 aid and higher education outreach programs and services provided by the commission;

21 (6) "education loan" means a loan made to finance the cost of
22 attendance in a postsecondary education program that is made by the commission or is
23 a loan received through the federal guaranteed student loan program.

24 * **Sec. 29.** AS 14.44.040(c) is amended to read:

25 (c) If a program participant defaults on the repayment obligation, the
26 provisions of AS 14.43.145 - 14.43.155 [AS 14.43.145 - 14.43.150] apply to collect
27 on the obligation as if it were a defaulted loan under AS 14.43.

28 * **Sec. 30.** AS 36.30.850(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

29 (44) contracts of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
30 or the Alaska Student Loan Corporation for the guarantee and disbursing of financial
31 aid money to institutions of postsecondary education under the financial aid programs

1 under AS 14.43.091 - 14.43.750 and AS 14.44.025.

2 * **Sec. 31.** AS 14.42.110, 14.42.220(f); AS 14.43.122(b), 14.43.300(g), 14.43.405(b),
3 14.43.420(b), 14.43.500(1), and 14.43.500(2) are repealed.

4 * **Sec. 32.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
5 read:

6 **TRANSITION: REGULATIONS.** The Alaska Student Loan Corporation may
7 proceed to adopt regulations to implement the changes made by sec. 6 of this Act. The
8 regulations take effect under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act), but not before the
9 effective date of sec. 6 of this Act.

10 * **Sec. 33.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
11 read:

12 **REVISOR OF STATUTES INSTRUCTIONS.** (a) The revisor of statutes is
13 instructed to change the heading of Article 5 of AS 14.43 from "Article 5. Alaska Advantage
14 Loan Program." to "Article 5. AlaskAdvantage Loan Program."

15 (b) The revisor of statutes is instructed to change the heading of Article 8 of AS 14.43
16 from "Article 8. Educational Incentive Grant Program." to "Article 8. AlaskAdvantage
17 Education Grant Program."

18 * **Sec. 34.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
19 read:

20 **REGULATIONS ATTORNEY INSTRUCTIONS.** Wherever in the Alaska
21 Administrative Code the term "Alaska advantage" is used, it shall be read as
22 "AlaskAdvantage" when to do so would be consistent with the changes in this Act. Under
23 AS 44.62.125(b)(6), the regulations attorney is instructed to make changes in the Alaska
24 Administrative Code consistent with this section.

25 * **Sec. 35.** Section 6 of this Act takes effect January 1, 2005.

26 * **Sec. 36.** Except as provided in sec. 35 of this Act, this Act takes effect immediately under
27 AS 01.10.070(c).

(S) HES amendments to SB277:

page 4, line 1, new Sec. 5: 14.42.220

AS 14.43.120 is amended by adding new subsection to read:

(g) The corporation may issue bonds pursuant to (a)(3) in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$280,000,000.

RENUMBER ALL SUBSEQUENT SECTIONS

Sec. 21, page 10, beginning on line 28:

Following the word "in" delete "a health, human services, education or public safety" and insert "an" to read "...study that is preparatory for employment in an occupation or profession...."

Sec. 24 page 11, line 15 (conforming change): strike paragraph (3) and renumber remaining paragraphs (4) and (5) as (3) and (4).

Line 26, strike "10" and insert "15" to indicate the job vacancy rate percentage that will be deemed "severe shortage",

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/23/04

FURTHER: Finance

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

DATE TURNED
 IN TO OFFICE: 2.10.04

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 277

SB 277 STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS

"An Act relating to the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education; relating to the Alaska Student Loan Corporation; relating to bonds of the corporation; relating to loan and grant programs of the commission; relating to an exemption from the State Procurement Code regarding certain contracts of the commission or corporation; making conforming changes; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS for SB 277 (HES)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
House Bill:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
EED	1/30	X			

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
ADM	12/15			✓	1
CED	12/12			✓	2

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>Lyle Mear</i>	✓			
<i>Erny Wille</i>	✓			
CHAIR: <i>Paul Brown</i>	✓			

SB

285

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Interim:
600 East Railroad Avenue
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
(907) 376-3370
(907) 376-3157 Fax

Session:
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
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SENATOR LYDA GREEN SENATE DISTRICT G

Sponsor Statement for SB285

"An Act Providing for Medicaid coverage for certain case management services; relating to payment under the Medicaid program for certain rehabilitative services furnished or paid for by a school district for eligible children; and providing for an effective date."

Targeted Case Management

Targeted case management services are those which assist individuals in gaining access to needed medical, social, educational and other services. It allows the state to reach out beyond the bounds of the Medicaid program to coordinate a broad range of activities and services necessary to the optimal functioning of a Medicaid client. Medicaid allows states the option to cover targeted case management services. Current Alaska law restricts these targeted groups to substance abusers, chronically mentally ill adults, and severely emotionally disturbed children. The proposed change would let the Alaska Medicaid Program offer targeted case management to various groups of Medicaid recipients, potentially refinancing existing general fund expenditures.

The Department of Health and Social Services would begin by using targeted case management to fund family preservation services for children who are subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect. Further expansion of the service would be contingent on successful implementation of family preservation services.

School-Based Rehabilitative Services

In 2002, the Alaska Legislature amended the state Medicaid statute to allow school districts to enroll as Medicaid providers and offer rehabilitative and other services. The Department of Health and Social Services is unable to reimburse school districts for rehabilitative services due to the restrictive definition of rehabilitative services in 47.07.900, which limits providers to community mental health centers and drug and alcohol treatment centers.

By clarifying and making the definition of rehabilitative services as inclusive as the federal definition, this legislation will allow school districts to bill Medicaid for more of the services they provide to children with Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB285-DHSS-HCS-01-28-04

() Publish Date: _____
 Dept. Affected: Health & Social Services

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____
 Title MEDICAID FOR SCHOOL BASED SERVICES
AND TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT

RDU Health Care Services
 Component Medicaid Services

Sponsor GREEN
 Requester SENATE (HES)

Component No. 2077

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
CHANGE IN REVENUES (0)						

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: _____
 Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)
 The Department of Health and Social Services anticipates no fiscal impact from this legislation relating to Medicaid payments for rehabilitative services provided by school districts.

This legislation is necessary to clarify the statutory authority of the department to offer school-based rehabilitative services.

Prepared by: Sherry Hill, Special Assistant Phone 465-1618
 Division Office of the Commissioner Date/Time 01/28/2004
 Approved by: Joel S. Gilbertson, Commissioner Date 01/28/2004
 Agency Department of Health and Social Services

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB285-DHSS-OCS-1-28-04
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____

Dept. Affected: Health & Social Services

Title: MEDICAID FOR SCHOOL BASED SERVICES AND TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT

RDU: Children's Services

Component: Family Preservation

Sponsor: GREEN

Requester: SENATE (HES)

Component No.: 1628

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES (0)						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: _____

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The proposed legislation will expand Medicaid options to fund family preservation services through Targeted Case Management for children who are subject to, or at the risk of abuse and neglect. This offers the best long-term prospects for sustaining or building these services over time. The 2003 Office of Children's Services Federal Review Program Improvement Plan (PIP) submitted by the Office of Children's Services speaks directly to the need for additional support services for families, and this is one avenue for addressing this need.

Prepared by: Sherry Hill, Special Assistant
 Division: Office of the Commissioner
 Approved by: Joel S. Gilbertson, Commissioner
 Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

Phone: 465-1618
 Date/Time: 01/28/2004
 Date: 01/28/2004

FISCAL NOTE

FN #

**STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

BILL NO. SB285-DHSS-OCS-1-28-04

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

Initially this option proposes to address funding for tribal partners, but is likely to be utilized with a broader group of services providers in following years. The three largest family preservation service grantees, Kawerak, Maniilaq and Tlingit/Haida, are all tribally affiliated organizations. The Targeted Case Management will first be implemented in the tribal agencies that are currently receiving general funds.

This legislation may result in a savings of \$270.0 in General fund and it is reflected in the FY 2005 Governor's Budget request.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/28/04

FURTHER: Finance

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

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 2.10.04

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 285

SB 285 MEDICAL ASSISTANCE COVERAGE

"An Act relating to medical assistance coverage for targeted case management services and for rehabilitative services furnished or paid for by a school district on behalf of certain children; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

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

Senate Bill:
 Same Title
 New Title

House Bill:
 Same Title
 Technical Title Change
 New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
HSS	1/28			✓	
HSS	1/28			✓	

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	Do PASS	Do NOT PASS	No REC	AMEND
<i>Lyle Green</i>	✓			
<i>Conny Wells</i>	✓			
CHAIR: <i>Paul [Signature]</i>	✓			

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2 8 8

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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Session:
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
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SENATOR LYDA GREEN SENATE DISTRICT G

SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR SENATE BILL 288

“An Act relating to certain determinations concerning placement of a child in emergency custody and temporary placement hearings in child in need of aid proceedings; and providing for an effective date.”

Current state law provides for the Court to determine, within 48 hours of removal from the home, whether probable cause exists for believing a child is in need of aid and to authorize a child's temporary placement out of the home. However, the language used by the courts in making determination varies and is often not in compliance with federal requirements. Senate Bill 288 mandates the Court to specifically use the language that continued placement in the home is “contrary to the welfare” of the child when exercising its authority to remove a child in need of aid. This legislation ensures that state law complies with federal requirements.

By requiring Contrary to the Welfare language in the first Court order following removal, the Office of Children's Services has the opportunity to increase federal reimbursement through the Title IV-E program for the care of the child and associated expenditures incurred by OCS for managing the foster care program. The Office of Children's Services estimates that passage of this legislation will result in an increase in federal Title IV-E receipts of \$500,000 in fiscal year 2005.

SB 288 INFORMATION SHEET

IV-E Funding

- Title IV-E funding consists of federal reimbursement for a percentage of the foster care payments and adoption subsidies that the Office of Children's Services (OCS) provides for Title IV-E eligible children.
- Title IV-E funding also pays for some of the administrative costs associated with case management services for children in state custody.

Eligibility Requirements

A Title IV-E Foster Care eligibility determination is made for each child who is taken into state custody.

- The child must have been removed from the home of a relative within the fifth degree of kinship, and lived in the home of such a relative within six month of the removal; and
- **At the first court hearing that addresses the removal, a judicial determination must be made that remaining in the home would be contrary to the child's welfare; and within 60 days of the removal, a judicial determination must be made that reasonable efforts were made to prevent or eliminate the need for removing the child from the child's home; or**
- A voluntary placement agreement must have been signed and within 180 days of the beginning of the placement a judicial determination must be made that it is in the best interest of the child to be placed out-of-home; and
- The child must meet AFDC relatedness criteria, deprivation and need, as defined in the AFDC policy which was in effect 7/16/96; and
- The child must be in state custody and a U.S citizen or qualified alien; and
- Within 12 months of the date the child is considered to have entered foster care and at least once every 12 months thereafter while the child is in foster care, a judicial determination must be made that the OCS has made reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan.

Critical Nature of Court Findings

- If the court does not make the contrary to the welfare finding at the **first** court hearing, the child is not Title IV-E eligible for that entire out-of-home placement episode.
- **The federal definition of the first hearing is the first day that the court addresses a child's custody and/or placement.**
- **If the first hearing is continued to another day and a contrary to the welfare finding is not made on the first day, then the requirement is not met.**
- Contrary to the welfare findings also affect a child's eligibility for Title IV-E adoption subsidies, since most children's eligibility for a Title IV-E adoption subsidy is based on their eligibility for Title IV-E Foster Care.

Fiscal Impact

- In FY2003 there was a 3.2% increase in children who received benefits from the foster care base rate program.
- The OCS anticipates that the foster care caseload will increase another 3% in FY2004 and FY2005.
- With passage of SB 288, the OCS projects an increase of approximately 5% in its Federal Title IVE penetration rate, which may equate to an estimated \$500,000 in federal revenue for costs necessary to care for the child.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
Bill Version: SB288-DHSS-OCS-03-03-04
() Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____

Dept. Affected: Health & Social Services

Title: DETERMINATIONS OF COURT IN CINA PROCEEDINGS

RDU: Children's Services

Component: Foster Care Base Rate

Sponsor: GREEN

Requester: SENATE (HES)

Component No.: 2236

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES (0)	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
Other(Specify Type-do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: _____

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This legislation would clarify language regarding the findings that a court is required to make at an initial hearing for a child that is removed emergently from his/her home by the Department of Health and Social Services. Currently, the court hears these cases and determines whether or not the Department has acted prudently in removing the child from his/her home. The court issues findings as to whether or not it is contrary to the welfare of the child to remain in his own home; however, the language in the court order may not reflect the exact wording that includes "contrary to the welfare" language. In order for the Department to receive federal reimbursement for the costs associated with the care of the child, the court must issue findings that specifically state that it is

Prepared by: Sherry Hill, Special Assistant
Division: Office of the Commissioner
Approved by: Joel S. Gilbertson, Commissioner
Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

Phone 465-1618
Date/Time 02/03/2004
Date 02/03/2004

FISCAL NOTE

FN #

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB288-DHSS-OCS-02-03-04

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

"contrary to the welfare" of the child to remain in his/her current home. These findings must be made at the first court hearing. Including this language in the court's initial findings will enable the Department to increase federal reimbursement for a significant number of children who enter state custody, emergently. The OCS projects it may see an increase of approximately 5% in its federal Title IV-E penetration rate, which may equate to an estimated \$500,000 in federal revenue for costs necessary to care for the child.

The Office of Children's Services has identified an upward trend in the foster care base rate caseload. In FY2003 there was a 3.2% increase in children who received benefits from the foster care base rate program. The Office of Children's Services anticipates that the foster care caseload will increase another 3% in FY2004 and FY2005. With the additional federal receipts, the OCS intends to continue to cover the basic ongoing costs of raising a child, as well as ensure continuity of foster care base rate payments and the continued success of the foster care program.

23-LS1567AD
Mischel
2/5/04

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 288()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATOR GREEN

A BILL
FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to certain determinations concerning placement of a child in**
2 **emergency custody and temporary placement hearings in child-in-need-of-aid**
3 **proceedings; and providing for an effective date."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 *** Section 1.** AS 47.10.142(d) is amended to read:

6 (d) The court shall immediately, and in no event more than 48 hours after
7 being notified unless prevented by lack of transportation, hold a temporary custody
8 hearing at which the child, if the child's health permits, and the child's parents or
9 guardian, if they can be found, shall be permitted to be present. If present at the
10 hearing, a parent or guardian of the child may request a continuance of the hearing for
11 the purpose of preparing a response to the allegation that the child is a child in need of
12 aid. The court may grant the request on a showing of good cause for why the parent or
13 guardian is not prepared to respond to the allegation. During a continuance, the child
14 remains in the emergency custody of the department. At the first hearing under this

1 subsection, regardless of whether a continuance is granted, the court shall
2 determine whether continued placement in the home of the child's parents or
3 guardian would be contrary to the welfare of the child [WHEN THE
4 TEMPORARY CUSTODY HEARING IS HELD, THE COURT SHALL
5 DETERMINE WHETHER PROBABLE CAUSE EXISTS FOR BELIEVING THE
6 CHILD TO BE A CHILD IN NEED OF AID, AS DEFINED IN AS 47.10.990. THE
7 COURT SHALL INFORM THE CHILD, AND THE CHILD'S PARENTS OR
8 GUARDIAN IF THEY CAN BE FOUND, OF THE REASONS GIVEN AS
9 CONSTITUTING PROBABLE CAUSE AND THE REASONS GIVEN AS
10 AUTHORIZING THE CHILD'S TEMPORARY PLACEMENT].

11 * Sec. 2. AS 47.10.142(e) is amended to read:

12 (e) When the temporary custody hearing is held, the court shall
13 determine whether probable cause exists for believing the child to be a child in
14 need of aid, as defined in AS 47.10.990. If the court finds that probable cause exists,
15 it shall order the child [MINOR] committed to the department for temporary
16 placement, or order the child [MINOR] returned to the custody of the child's
17 [MINOR'S] parents or guardian, subject to the department's supervision of the child's
18 [MINOR'S] care and treatment. The court shall inform the child, and the child's
19 parents or guardian if they can be found, of the reasons for finding probable
20 cause, authorizing the child's temporary placement, and, if applicable, finding
21 that continued placement in the home of the child's parents or guardian would be
22 contrary to the welfare of the child. If the court finds no probable cause, it shall
23 order the child [MINOR] returned to the custody of the child's [MINOR'S] parents or
24 guardian.

25 * Sec. 3. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
26 read:

27 APPLICABILITY. The changes made in secs. 1 and 2 of the Act apply to emergency
28 custody and temporary placement hearings under AS 47.10 conducted on or after the effective
29 date of this Act.

30 * Sec. 4. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/2/04

FURTHER: Judiciary

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

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 2.10.04

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 288

SB 288 EMERGENCY CHILD CUSTODY PLACEMENT

"An Act relating to certain determinations concerning placement of a child in emergency custody and temporary placement hearings in child-in-need-of-aid proceedings; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

be replaced with _____ CS for SB 288 (HES)

adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)

attached amendment(s)

adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee

further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:

- Same Title
 New Title

House Bill:

- Same Title
 Technical Title Change
 New Title w/
SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
HSS	2/03	✓			

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>Lyle Green</i>	✓			
<i>Conny Will</i>	✓			
CHAIR: <i>Paul Ryan</i>	✓			

SB

289

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Interim:
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Session:
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Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-6600
(907) 465-3805 Fax

SENATOR LYDA GREEN SENATE DISTRICT G

SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR SB289

"An Act extending the termination date of the special education service agency; and providing for an effective date."

The Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) in 1985 to help schools and infant learning programs provide required services for children with severe disabilities where there is no local expertise. SESA makes it possible for services to be delivered to districts that could not otherwise hire specialists; for instance small and low attendance remote areas, or in a district where there was only one disabled child.

SESA employs professionals specializing in severe disabilities such as blindness and visual impairment, deafness and hearing impairment, autism, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, and significant physical and emotional disabilities. SESA offers school-wide and district-wide consultations and support, local and regional services and workshops, statewide workshops and courses, technical assistance newsletters, and an extensive library and website. As intended by the legislature, student-specific service is targeted to small school districts, but SESA's workshops, courses, library, newsletter and website are provided to all schools.

SESA receives core funding through the Department of Education and Early Development. The appropriation for FY2005 is included in the Governor's proposed budget. SESA received positive performance reviews from the Division of Legislative Audit and was extended by the legislature in 1987, 1989, 1992, and 1995. The Division again recommends continuation. The Alaska Association of School Boards, The Alaska Association of School Administrators, The National Education Association-Alaska, The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, and the Department of Education and Early Development each support the extension of SESA.

The availability of specialized personnel in Alaska has decreased at the same time the incidence of severe disabilities has increased. SESA provides important functions for Alaskan children who would otherwise have to leave their families and communities to receive services in costly residential programs. SB289 reauthorizes the Special Education Service Agency for another nine years, to June 30, 2013.

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
POOR
ORIGINAL
COPIES

Alaska Association of School Administrators

Resolution #3

SESA Reauthorization

Continuation and funding of the Special Education Service Agency

Originated by: the Alaska Association of School Administrators at the Fall Meeting in Girdwood, Alaska, October 5, 2003.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities, and

WHEREAS, most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, evidenced-based educational approaches for affected students, and

WHEREAS, access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law, and

WHEREAS, SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation, and

WHEREAS, SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents, and

WHEREAS, the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status, and

WHEREAS, the Agency has been reauthorize by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now

THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED that the Alaska Association of School Administrators supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.

Adopted: Girdwood, October 5, 2002



June 16, 2003

Chris Robinson, Executive Director
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Rd., Suite 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

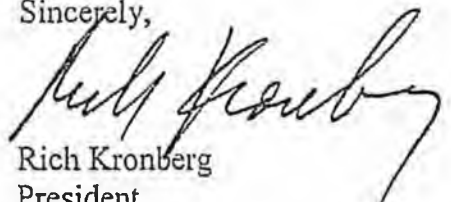
Dear Mr. Robinson:

NEA-Alaska worked for the establishment of the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) in the 1980s. Since that time, our members have appreciated the support SESA has provided in educating students with low-incidence handicapping conditions. In 1993, our Delegate Assembly passed a New Business Item to support its continued existence.

Since the passage of that New Business Item, SESA has proven to be an even more critical component in the educational infrastructure of Alaska. The delegates to our Delegate Assembly have recognized this by changing the New Business Item that supported SESA to a Resolution in support of SESA. Unlike New Business Items, which are specific and time sensitive, Resolutions are statements of our core organizational beliefs and are not time limited.

The following is the relevant text of NEA-Alaska Resolution E-7:
NEA-Alaska shall continue to support the Special Education Service Agency (SESA), a statewide agency that assists rural schools serving low incident students with disabilities. NEA-Alaska shall continue to support appointment of a member of the NEA-Alaska Special Education Committee...to be on SESA's Board of Directors.

On a personal level, I have always felt that the schools and students of Alaska have always been well-served by SESA staff. I have only heard positive reports about their work in the schools around our state.

Sincerely,

Rich Kronberg
President



FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR
State of Alaska

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

P.O. Box 240249 • Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249 • Phone: 907-269-8990 • Fax: 907-269-8995 • Toll Free 800-709-8990

A Resolution on the Continuation and Full Funding of the Special Education Service Agency

Whereas the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities; and,

Whereas most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, research-based educational approaches for affected students, and,

Whereas access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law; and,

Whereas SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering specialized supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation; and,

Whereas SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents; and,

Whereas the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and,

Whereas the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now

Therefore BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Edmands

Elizabeth Edmands, Council Chair

October 15, 2003

Unalaska City School District



Resolution 04-03

CONTINUATION and FUNDING of the SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY

Whereas the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities; and,

Whereas most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, research-based educational approaches for affected students; and,

Whereas access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law; and,

Whereas SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation; and,

Whereas SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents; and,

Whereas the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and,

Whereas the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Unalaska City School Board of Education supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY A DULY CONSTITUTED QUORUM OF THE UNALASKA CITY SCHOOL BOARD THIS 30TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2003.

Tammy Fowler-Pound
Board President

Sonia Handforth-Kome
Clerk/Treasurer



**WRANGELL
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT OFFICE**

P.O. BOX 2319
WRANGELL, ALASKA 99929
Telephone (907) 874-2347
Fax # (907) 874-3137

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

Resolution 04-01

**A Resolution of the Wrangell Public School Board Supporting Continuation
and Funding of the Special Education Service Agency**

Whereas the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities, and,

Whereas most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, research-based educational approaches for affected students, and,

Whereas SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation, and,

Whereas SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents, and,

Whereas the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status, and,

Whereas the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now

Therefore **BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Wrangell Public Schools supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.

ENACTED THIS 20th DAY OF October, 2003.

Wrangell, Alaska

Lorrie Barlow
School Board President

October 29, 2003
Date

Penella McLachlan
School Board Secretary/Treasurer

12/1/03
Date

Kake City School District

*P.O. Box 450
Kake, Alaska 99830
(907) 785-3741*

October 21, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Vaile,

I have received notification that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset at the close of this next school year and without reauthorization by the Legislature, SESA will be dissolved.

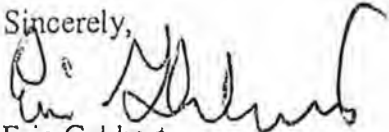
As Superintendent of the Kake City School District, I want to put my full support for the reauthorization of SESA on record. The services that SESA makes available to Kake are vital to the effectiveness of our special education programs. Students with low incidence disabilities deserve the best we can give them. The services SESA helps our district provide give us a degree of specialization and expertise that we would not be able to replace.

If SESA is not re-authorized I am concerned that we would not be able to maintain adequate services and students with severe disabilities would be forced to leave their homes and the village to receive appropriate services.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided for districts like ours. I would encourage the Legislature to apply the SESA model to other statewide needs rather than allowing it to expire.

To this end, the Kake City School District Board of Education submits the enclosed Resolution unanimously approved at our regular board meeting on October 14, 2003. We fully support the continuation of SESA for the benefit of the students of Kake and all students in Alaska.

Sincerely,


Eric Gebhart
Superintendent

Kake City School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Kake City School District

*P.O. Box 450
Kake, Alaska 99830
(907) 785-3741*

Resolution #101403

Continuation and Funding of the Special Education Service Agency

Whereas the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities; and,

Whereas most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, research-based educational approaches for affected students; and,

Whereas access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law; and,

Whereas SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation; and,

Whereas SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents; and,

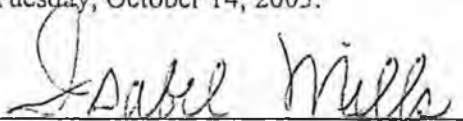
Whereas the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and,

Whereas the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now

Therefore BE IT RESOLVED THAT the school board of the Kake City School District supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.

Adopted by the Kake City School District Board of Education at a regularly scheduled meeting held on Tuesday, October 14, 2003.

Signed:


Isabel Mills, School Board President

10-14-03
Date

Kake City School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer



**Kodiak Island Borough School District
Office of the Superintendent
722 Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
907-486-9220**

November 17, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 - 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to the Kodiak Island Borough School District must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We have a very difficult time finding special education and related service personnel for our district openings. Low incidence professionals would be even more difficult if not impossible to find. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

I am concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation, or would be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs, at district expense.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,

Betty Walters
Superintendent
Kodiak Island Borough School District

VALDEZ CITY SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
P.O. Box 398 - 1112 West Klutina
Valdez, AK 99686
TEL# (907) 835-4357, FAX# (907) 835-4964
www.valdezcityschoools.org

Resolution 04-03 Of the Board of Education

Concerning: Continuation and Funding of the Special Education Service Agency

Whereas, the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities; and,

Whereas, most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, researched-based educational approaches for affected students, and,

Whereas, access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law; and,

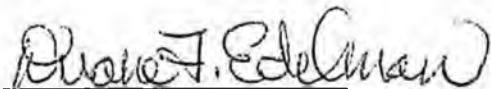
Whereas, SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation; and,

Whereas, SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipient and parents; and,

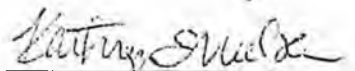
Whereas, the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and,

Whereas, the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now,

Therefore be it resolved that the Valdez City School District Board of Education supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.



Board President



Vice President

September 22, 2003

Date

VALDEZ CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the Superintendent
P.O. Box 398 - 1112 West Klutina Street
Valdez, AK 99686
TEL# (907) 835-4357, FAX# (907) 835-4964
www.valdezcityschools.org

September 26, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

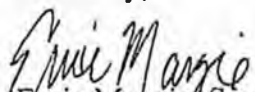
It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

I am concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation, or would be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs, at district expense.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,


Ernie Manzie, Superintendent
Valdez City School District

EM:dfs

VALDEZ CITY SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
P.O. Box 398 - 1112 West Klutina
Valdez, AK 99686
TEL# (907) 835-4357, FAX# (907) 835-4964
www.valdezcitieschools.org

Resolution 04-03
Of the Board of Education

Concerning: Continuation and Funding of the Special Education Service Agency

Whereas, the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide mandated special education programs for students with low incidence disabilities; and,

Whereas, most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and experienced personnel to design and support effective, researched-based educational approaches for affected students, and,

Whereas, access to personnel with specialized training and experience is essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these students in their home districts as required by law; and,

Whereas, SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering significant disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen years of operation; and,

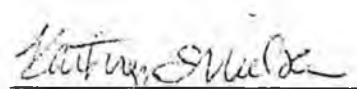
Whereas, SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents; and,

Whereas, the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and,

Whereas, the Agency has been reauthorized by the Alaska Legislature four times since 1986, each time with formal support from school boards, superintendents, teachers, parents, and school districts, now,

Therefore be it resolved that the Valdez City School District Board of Education supports the continuation and full funding of the Special Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset status.


Board President


Vice President

September 22, 2003
Date



FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

520 Fifth Avenue

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4756

(907) 452-2000

October 22, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Ste 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

I am writing on behalf of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to express our support for the reauthorization of the Special Education Service Agency by the state legislature and to extend or eliminate the June 30, 2004 sunset date.

The services of SESA to our district need to be continued and enhanced if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We are finding it to be more and more difficult to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs. Please consider increasing services, not eliminating them.

While we are trying to do more for students with less revenue, it only makes sense to keep any economical services that have been successful. SESA has been that successful and efficient model for sharing of scarce resources. They also offer an economy of scale for districts. The state must consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to sunset in June 2004.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann E. Shortt". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ann E. Shortt, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

/plh

Yupiiit School District
P.O. Box 51190
Akiachak, Alaska 99551
(907) 825-3600 phone; (907) 825-3655 fax

Ms. Gayle Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle,

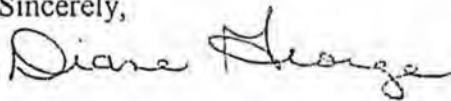
It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As the special education director for the Yupiiit School District, I want to put my full support for SESA's reauthorization on record. The services that SESA provides to my district have proved invaluable over the last several years. Without these services it would be nearly impossible for us to meet the needs of our students with low incidence disabilities. In addition, with the continuing shortage of special educators it is becoming even more difficult to hire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement programs for students with severe disabilities.

Without the supports that SESA provides our district would be forced to consider out-of-district or out-of-state placements for some students. This is not only very costly, but in direct violation of IDEA which requires home school placement to the greatest extent possible.

SESA has been a successful model for supporting districts in their attempts to meet the educational needs of their most significantly disabled students. It would be a shame to lose this support in this time of shrinking financial resources.

Sincerely,



Diane George
Special Education Director

Cc: Representative Mary Kapsner,
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Commissioner Roger Sampson



**WRANGELL
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT OFFICE**

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

P.O. BOX 2319
WRANGELL, ALASKA 99929
Telephone (907) 874-2347
Fax # (907) 874-3137

September 19, 2003
Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

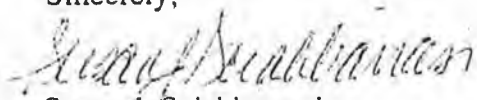
It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

I am concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation, or would be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs, at district expense.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,

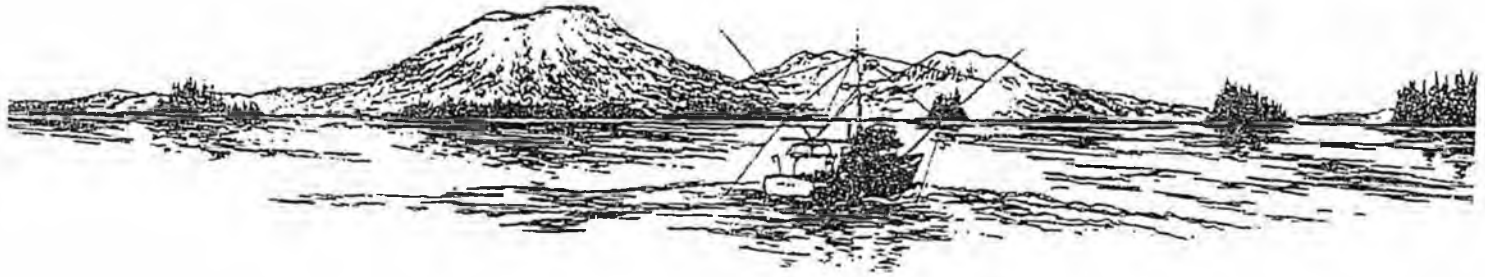

Susan J. Sciabbarrasi
Superintendent

CC. Representative Peggy Wilson
Roger Sampson, Alaska Commissioner of Education
State Board of Education

SITKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.ssd.k12.ak.us

300 Kostrometinoff
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Phone: (907) 747-8622
Fax: (907) 966-1260



September 19, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road Suite 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Valle,


When the Alaska Legislature established Special Education Service Agency (SESA) to help school districts provide mandated services in special education, this was a terrific decision. Now it is my understanding that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, SESA will be dissolved.

With the decline in enrollment, which in turn means a decline in budget, districts are faced with difficulties in meeting the needs of all special education students. Even though the enrollment is decreasing, in many areas the percentage of students with low incidence disabilities is increasing, which creates difficulties. Besides the decrease in enrollment it is becoming increasingly difficult to find educators that have the qualifications needed to work with many of these students. SESA is a great resource for this reason.

If SESA was dissolved there would definitely be a cost increase to the district due to providing special education services to students in out of district facilities or also due to litigation. Both of which would be at district expense.

I strongly encourage you to give your highest consideration to continue and to fully fund SESA in any possible manner.

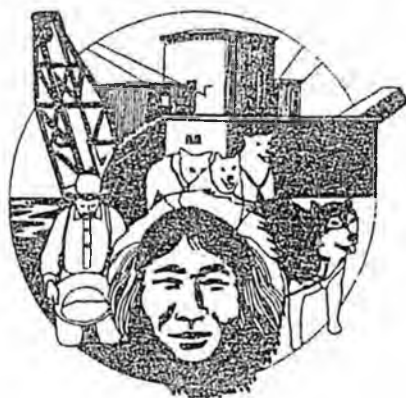
Sincerely,



Steve Bradshaw
Superintendent

NOME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Box 131, Nome, Alaska 99762 • FAX: (907) 443-5144 • Telephone (907) 443-2231



September 17, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

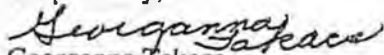
As Director of Special Education in a school district receiving SESA services, I would like my support for reauthorization noted on record. The services SESA makes available to my district and our students with low incidence disabilities must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated by law. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

I am very concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers, aides and parents, we will find ourselves in costly special education hearings and/or litigations. There is also the possibility that it would become necessary to place students in out of district residential programs that would be extremely costly to the district.

In addition to the highly qualified personnel SESA provides to our districts, they also offer an array of resources through their lending library. This service alone has saved our district a huge amount of money.

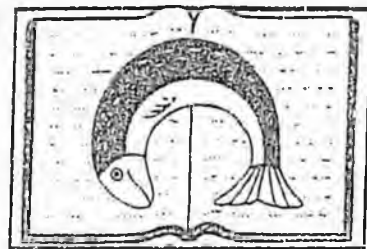
Please support the renewal of the above statute and allow us to continue receiving the support afforded us by SESA.

Respectfully,


Georganna Takacs

Director of Special Education
Nome Public Schools

Cc: Representative Richard Foster
Senator Donald Olson
Commissioner of Education Roger Sampson
State Board of Education Richard Mauer, Chair



Lower Kuskokwim School District

Special Education Department
P.O. Box 305 • Bethel, Alaska 99559-0305
907 543-4871/4872 FAX 907 543-4931

September 15, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

It has come to our attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

We currently receive services from SESA in the specialized areas of Assistive Technology and Deaf/Hard of Hearing. These services are extremely beneficial for some of our special education students with low incidence disabilities. Given the present market, we are not always able to hire special education teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement these programs. By providing training to our teachers and paraprofessionals, SESA helps us provide the required elements of a compliant special education program for these low incidence students. Another important benefit our district receives from SESA is their participation as speakers in our regional special education inservice each fall. Professionals and parents from throughout the region benefit from the SESA staff's expertise in the areas of low incidence disabilities.

Over the years, SESA has been a successful and efficient resource for both direct services and staff development in our district. Lower Kuskokwim School District wants to emphasize the benefit of SESA's services and document our support for SESA's reauthorization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William A. Ferguson".

William Ferguson, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linae Sanger".

Linae Sanger, Special Education Director

cc: YOUR DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
Alaska Commissioner of Education
State Board of Education

North Slope Borough School District



September 10, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low-incidence disabilities. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement sever disability programs.

I am concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation, or would be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs, at district expense.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael M. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Michael M. Smith,
Superintendent

H:\ann\michael\letters\04-28.doc



THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive
P.O. Box 498
King Salmon, Alaska 99613
Phone (907) 246-4280 / Fax (907) 246-4473



Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

September 11, 2003

Dear Ms. Valle:

Recently I learned that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-600, that created the Special Education Service Agency, is scheduled to sunset at the end of June, 2004. I am writing to the SESA Board of Directors to share my observations of what SESA has provided to our school district and to express my support for the reauthorization of SESA.

The Lake and Peninsula School District serves a small number of students spread across a large number of widely separated sites. Sprinkled among our isolated school sites, each year, are children who experience intensive disabilities or severe challenging behavior. A district of our size cannot afford to hire the specialized staff who are needed to build effective programs for these children. SESA program specialists provide our district with expertise in autism, positive behavior supports, specialized instruction, specialized materials and adaptive equipment. In addition, the SESA library provides our special educators and parents with a cost-effective way to access special education materials that are too expensive for a small district or individual family to purchase.

Without the support of SESA program specialists and the SESA library, the special education programs for children with intensive needs and severe challenging behavior in our district would not be as effective as they are today. Interestingly, by providing specialized support to small districts such as ours, SESA saves Alaska money. Programs for students with intensive needs that are ineffective become targets of legal challenge. School districts embroiled in legal challenges from advocates for children with disabilities must divert significant resources to defend themselves. SESA helps even small districts offer the highest quality programs that we can to our disabled students.

The Lake and Peninsula School District supports continued funding of the Special Education Service Agency. SESA provides essential services that make a difference.

Please share this letter with legislators and other individuals involved in determining SESA's future. Thank you for the many years of high quality support that SESA has provided to students, teachers and parents in the Lake and Peninsula School District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Atwater".

Steve Atwater, Superintendent

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

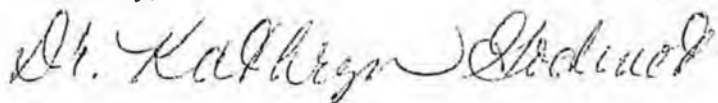
I have recently become aware that Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004. Without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be no more. This is a great concern to small and large school districts here in Alaska.

I support SESA's reauthorization. Being the school superintendent for St. Mary's City Schools, I have found that the services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. Here in the bush, districts cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs. We desperately need these critical services which are provided to us by SESA!

There is no doubt that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face huge new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation. We could be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs. These are expenses that our district can ill afford.

SESA is a successful and efficient organization to share scarce resources and offers quality services provided to small and rural districts. Please assure that this critical service to bush Alaska school districts is continued.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kathryn Godinet,
Superintendent

cc: Alaska Commissioner of Education
State Board of Education



Klawock City School District

P.O. Box 9 Klawock, Alaska 99925 907-755-2220 Fax: 907-755-2913

Richard E. Carlson
Superintendent

Donald H. Busse
K -12 Principal

September 3, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

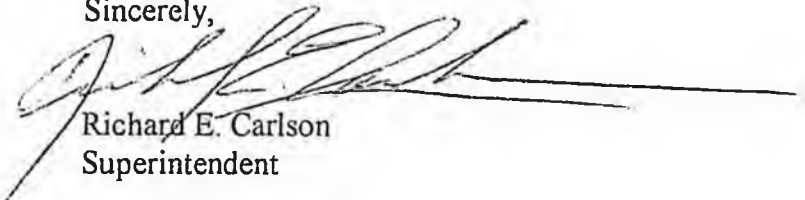
Dear Ms. Valle:

As you are aware the Alaska Statute 14.300.600 – 660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004 and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As superintendent of a small school district, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,



Richard E. Carlson
Superintendent

Cc: Cindy Mills, Board President
Alaska Commissioner of Education



SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 19569 Thorne Bay, Alaska 99919

(907) 828-8254 Fax: (907) 828-8257 darensman@sisd.org

President Gayla Valle
Board of Directors
Southeast Education Service Agency

Dear Ms. Valle:

The Special Education Service Agency has provided excellent services to the low incidence students in Alaska. In my role as superintendent and special education director for Southeast Island School District I am writing to urge the reauthorization of Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660, which will sunset on June 30, 2004.

My district is small and has only a few low incidence students. It would seem to be impossible for small districts such as SISD to provide the high quality services now performed by SESA. Even when I was in Bering Strait School District, a large school district, we relied on SESA for services.

To pull the SESA services from districts will be an injustice to the students who benefit now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dorothy Arensman".

Dorothy Arensman, Ed.D.

Cc: Legislative delegation
Alaska Commissioner of Education
State Board of Education



BRISTOL BAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. O. BOX 169
NAKNEK, ALASKA 99633

KELLY W. CASTLEBERRY
PRINCIPAL
PHONE: (907) 246-4265
FAX: (907) 246-4447
E-MAIL: kcastleberry@nnk.gcisa.net

RICHARD D. HEBHARDT
SUPERINTENDENT
PHONE: (907) 246-4225
FAX: (907) 246-6857
E-MAIL: rhebhardt@nnk.gcisa.net

October 27, 2003

Ms. Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

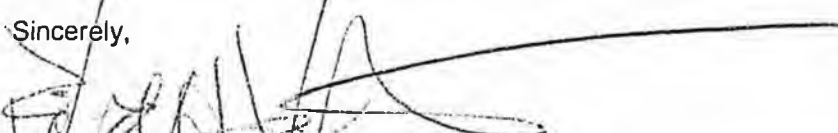
It has come to my attention that Alaska Statute 14.300.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to put my support for SESA's reauthorization on the record. The services SESA makes available to my district must be continued if we are to provide appropriate special education programs as mandated for our students with low incidence disabilities. We cannot be expected to acquire teachers with the specialized training and experience needed to design and implement severe disability programs.

I am concerned that without the in-district and distance support SESA provides our teachers and aides, we would face new costs for special education hearings and/or litigation, or would be forced to place students in very costly out-of-district or out-of-state residential programs, at district expense.

SESA has been a successful and efficient innovation for sharing of scarce resources and offers an economy of scale rarely provided small and rural districts. If anything, the state might consider applying the SESA model to other statewide needs, rather than allow it to expire.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Hebardt
Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Alaska Commissioner of Education



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools
148 North Binkley Street Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7553
Phone (907) 262-5846 Fax (907) 262-9132

September 9, 2003

Ms Gayla Valle, President
Board of Directors
Special Education Service Agency
2217 East Tudor Road, Suite 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Ms. Valle:

I have been told that Alaska Statute 14.30.600-660 is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2004, and without reauthorization by the Legislature, the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) will be dissolved.

As a school district superintendent, I want to support SESA's reauthorization. However, that support is contingent on SESA's services being available to all school districts within the state. Currently, SESA restricts its services to small rural school districts. Many districts in this state, this one included, serve both urban and rural communities. We have children located in rural communities with low incidence special education needs who require specialized services that are not available in these communities. Because of the low incidence of these children, they are not easily served by this district, and yet, SESA's services have not been available to us.

SESA has been a successful and efficient model for sharing scarce resources and has offered an economy of scale for small and rural districts. SESA needs to expand its scope of services to include all Alaska school districts. We believe there is nothing in AS 14.30.640 which would prohibit this expansion of services. However, it will take an intentional act on the part of the Board and Administration to make this expansion happen.

In summary, KPBSD supports the concept and model represented by SESA. It offers an effective model of service for small and rural communities. We however, support its continuation only if its services are made available to all Alaskan school districts.

Sincerely,

Donna Peterson
Donna Peterson, Superintendent
Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Roger Sampson, Commissioner of Education
State Board of Education
Legislative Delegation

1 **Alaska Association of School Administrators**

2
3 **Resolution #3**

4
5 **SESA Reauthorization**

6 **Continuation and funding of the Special Education Service Agency**

7
8
9 Originated by: SESA for the Alaska Association of School Administrators at the
10 Fall Meeting in Girdwood, Alaska, October 5, 2003.

11
12 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Legislature established the Special Education Service
13 Agency (SESA) for the primary purpose of helping school districts provide
14 mandated special education programs for students with low incidence
15 disabilities; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, most school districts in Alaska are unable to obtain qualified and
18 experienced personnel to design and support effective, evidenced-based
19 educational approaches for affected students; and

20
21 **WHEREAS**, access to personnel with specialized training and experience is
22 essential if local schools are to provide effective special education to these
23 students in their home districts as required by law; and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, SESA is the only Alaskan resource offering [specialized] significant
26 disability program supports to schools and parents, and SESA services have
27 proven to be both educationally effective and fiscally efficient during seventeen
28 years of operation; and

29
30 **WHEREAS**, SESA was cited for commendation by the U.S. Office of Education in
31 a past review of the state's special education system, and receives consistently
32 excellent ratings of satisfaction from service recipients and parents; and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, the most recent performance review of the agency by the Division of
35 Legislative Audit strongly supported its current design and operations, and
36 recommended the Legislature consider removing SESA from sunset status; and

37
38 **WHEREAS**, the Agency has been reauthorize by the Alaska Legislature four
39 times since 1986, with formal support from school boards, superintendents,
40 teachers, parents, and school districts; now

41
42 **THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED** that the Alaska Association of School
43 Administrators supports the continuation and full funding of the Special

- 1 Education Service Agency as in A.S. 14.30.600, including reporting requirements
- 2 to the Department of Education, and supports removal of the agency from sunset
- 3 status.
- 4
- 5 Adopted: Girdwood, October 5, 2003

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB 289
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: EED
 Title: _____ RDU: K-12 Support
 Component: Schools for the Handicapped
 Sponsor: Senator Green
 Requester: Health, Ed., and Soc. Serv., Finance Component No. 151

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

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

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

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2005 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This is a zero fiscal note.

Prepared by: Barbara Thompson, Director Phone 465-8727
 Division: Teaching & Learning Support Date/Time 2/6/04 9:31 AM
 Approved by: _____ Date 2/6/2004
 Agency: _____

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/2/04

FURTHER: Finance

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

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 2.10.04

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 289

SB 289 EXTENDING THE SPECIAL ED SERVICE AGENCY

"An Act extending the termination date of the special education service agency; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

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

Senate Bill:
 Same Title
 New Title

House Bill:
 Same Title
 Technical Title Change
 New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
EED	2/6			✓	

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓			
CHAIR: <i>[Signature]</i>	✓			

SB

294

Alaska State Legislature

Interim: (May - Dec.)
716 W. 4th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 269-0144
Fax: (907) 269-0148



Session: (Jan. - May)
State Capitol, Suite 7
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3822
Fax: (907) 465-3756
Toll free: (800) 770-3822

Senator_Betty_Davis@legis.state.ak.us
<http://www.akdemocrats.org>

Senator Bettye Davis

Memorandum

Date: April 5, 2004
To: Senate Health Education and Social Services Committee
From: Senator Bettye Davis
Re: Request for hearing of Senate Bill 294

This is a request for a hearing of Senate Bill 294. I have enclosed for the packets:

- Current version of Senate Bill 294
- Sponsor statement
- Sectional analysis
- Request for teleconferencing and list of witnesses and sites
- Pertinent background information
 - Research
 - Legal opinions
 - Letters of support

Alaska State Legislature

Interim: (May - Dec.)
716 W. 4th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 269-0144
Fax: (907) 269-0148



Session: (Jan. - May)
State Capitol, Suite 7
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3822
Fax: (907) 465-3756
Toll free: (800) 770-382

Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us
<http://www.akdemocrats.org>

Senator Bettye Davis

Senate Bill 294: "An act adding licensed birthing centers to the list of health facilities eligible for payment of medical assistance for needy persons."

Sponsor Statement

Currently in Alaska, Medicaid does not cover licensed birthing center facility fees, often forcing pregnant woman to choose a hospital birth where costs to the state are significantly greater than those at a birthing center. The average cost from four hospitals in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau of a "natural" birth is \$3,667.00. This figure does not include epidural anesthesia or the use of pitocin to enhance the strength of labor, internal fetal monitoring, and forceps or vacuum assisted deliveries. A cesarean section on average would cost an additional \$4,385.75. The facility fees for three birthing centers in Alaska averages \$1,400.00.

Given the current state budget and predicted shortfalls, it only makes sense to reimburse the facility fee for birthing centers. If birthing center facility fees were to be reimbursed by Denali Kid Care, the option of a birth center birth could be made available to even more women. It's a logical step towards saving the state money and allowing families on the Denali Kid Care program to choose their preferred location to give birth. I urge you to support the passage of this legislation.

LEGAL SERVICES

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

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

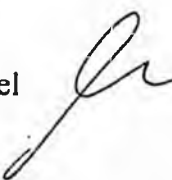
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

February 16, 2004

SUBJECT: Birthing Centers (Work Order No. 23-LS1625\A)

TO: Senator Bettye Davis

FROM: Jean M. Mischel
Legislative Counsel 

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

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

Section 1. Adds birthing centers to the definition of "health facility" for medical assistance purposes.

JMM:lmb
04-037.lmb

Alaska State Legislature

Interim: (May - Dec.)
716 W. 4th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 269-0144
Fax: (907) 269-0148



Session: (Jan. - May)
State Capitol, Suite 7
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3822
Fax: (907) 465-3756
Toll free: (800) 770-3822

Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us
<http://www.akdemocrats.org>

Senator Bettye Davis

Memorandum

Date: April 5, 2004
To: Health Education and Social Services Committee
From: Senator Bettye Davis
Re: Request for teleconferencing and list of witnesses and sites of Senate Bill 294

This is a request for a teleconferencing during the hearing of Senate Bill 294.

Testifiers in Juneau:

- Kaye Kanne, Juneau Family Birth Center Executive Director

Online:

- Barbara Norton, Geneva Woods Birth Center (Anchorage)
- Dana Brown, Alaska Family Health and Birth Center (Fairbanks)
- Katherine Piatt, Frontier Midwifery (Soldotna)
- Judi Davidson, Mat-Su Midwifery, Inc. (Wasilla)
- Laura Gore, Moonlight Midwifery (Anchorage)

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
POOR
ORIGINAL
COPIES

THE BIRTH CENTER EXPERIENCE

Birth Centers Lead Cost Containment Efforts While Providing Quality Care

"Few innovations in health service promote lower cost, greater availability, and a high degree of satisfaction with a comparable degree of safety. The results of this study suggest that modern birth centers can identify women who are at low risk for obstetrical complications and care for them in a way that provides these benefits."

New England Journal of Medicine, 12/28/89

What is a birth center?

- The birth center is a homelike facility, existing within a healthcare system with a program of care designed in the wellness model of pregnancy and birth.
- Birth centers are guided by principles of prevention, sensitivity, safety, appropriate medical intervention, and cost effectiveness.
- Birth centers provide family-centered care for healthy women before, during and after normal pregnancy, labor and birth.

What is the birth center experience?

- The quality of care in birth centers reported in the "The National Birth Center Study" reflects the low overall intrapartum and neonatal mortality rate of 1.3/1000 births; 0.7/1000 if lethal anomalies are excluded. These rates are comparable to studies of low risk, in-hospital births.¹
- The cesarean section rate for women receiving care in birth centers averages 4.4%, approximately one half that in studies of low risk, in-hospital births.¹
- Birth centers nationally have consistently displayed charges for care for normal birth that average up to 50% less than regular hospital stays and 30% less than short stays - including practitioner fees.^{2, 3}
- More than half of birth centers include routine laboratory exams, childbirth education, home visits, extra office visits, and initial newborn examinations in their charges.
- Most major health insurers reimburse contract with birth centers for reimbursement. Because charges reflect cost and since the birth center is a single service unit, there is no opportunity for cost shifting or operating the birth center as a "loss leader" to other services.
- 98.8 percent of women using the birth center would recommend it to friends and/or return to the center for a subsequent birth.¹

What are the potential benefits to families?

- The birth center approaches pregnancy and birth as a normal family event until proven otherwise. The program encourages family involvement and provides a safe environment for families to experience the social, emotional, and spiritual renewal inherent in birthing forth new life -- while attending to the possibility that a problem may arise that will require medical intervention or care in the acute care setting of the hospital. This is in opposition to the view that pregnancy is an illness and birth a medical/surgical event that needs to be cured.
- The birth center program of education encourages parents to become informed and self-reliant; to assume responsibility for their own health and the health of the family.
- The birth center brings generations together to celebrate new life by encouraging grandparents and children to participate in the birth center program.
- Birth centers have demonstrated that they are a viable alternative to unattended home birth and to costly hospital acute care for 20 years. It is now time to mainstream these services.

What are the benefits to business and industry?

- Birth centers offer business and industry direct savings in the cost of health benefits. If only 100,00 births were attended in birth centers, annual savings could be almost \$314 million.^{2, 3}
- The birth center program provides a starting base for the wellness and prevention programs being established in industry.
- The family in the hinge pin of the employee. Industry's support of a program that encourages family unity, self-determination and responsible health can only improve employee performance.
- Birth center care encourages childbearing women (who may also be employees) to be confident in the design of their bodies. Such confidence, in turn, builds self-esteem and starts the young family off on thinking of pregnancy, birth and family health as wellness, not disease.
- The nine-month intensive focus on improving family health by promotion of lifestyle changes in pregnancy can have a significant ripple effect in the long-term improvement of family health.

How will it affect the hospital acute care service?

- Birth centers have had a major impact on humanizing the acute care maternity services provided by hospitals. Note the rise in hospital birthing rooms, in privileges for nurse-midwives, in childbirth education programs, and in more liberal attitudes about family participation.
- Birth centers are showing that the majority of women can safely proceed through pregnancy and birth using acute care services only as needed. In a wellness orientation to pregnancy and birth, birth centers would be the managed care gatekeepers for the acute care obstetric newborn services.
- Birth centers eventually will help to reduce the number of costly hospital beds and expand primary care services.
- Birth centers will help to reduce dependency fostered by institutional confinement and strengthen the family's ability to share responsibility for maternity care and family health.
- Birth centers will help to develop a system of care based first, on the needs of the family and second, on the needs of medical education or product promotion.

How will it affect the obstetricians?

- Birth centers provide an opportunity for obstetricians and family physicians to learn and practice midwifery - time and education intensive, "with woman" - care.
- Birth centers provide an opportunity for obstetricians to invest in a service in which they can expand their interests.
- Birth centers offer obstetricians an opportunity to develop teams of professional care providers that will improve primary care services to families and better use their specialist skills.

How is the quality of care assured in birth centers?

- Through the promotion of state regulations for licensure (37 states currently license birth centers).
- Through established National Standards (adopted 1985).
- Through a Continuous Quality Improvement Program for Birth Centers (model program available).
- Through accreditation by the Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers.

How do birth centers contain costs?

- By retaining autonomy (control) over birth center operations and program regardless of ownership (some hospitals own freestanding birth centers).
- By providing "high touch" rather than "high tech" care, birth centers minimize the overuse of technology.
- By providing a program of primary care that emphasizes education, wellness, prevention, self-help and self-reliance in family health maintenance.
- By using staff efficiently; staff are only in-house when a mother is in-house. Since birth centers do not compete with emergency services or hospital acute care, levels of staff are used efficiently and appropriately.
- By sharing responsibility with the childbearing family for health and prevention of illness.
- By using existing community services when available (instead of creating costly duplications) for transport services, social services, medical consultation, laboratories, etc.
- By using established policies and procedures for screening and transfer of women with problems to acute care services.
- By using low cost construction that meets safety codes.

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4. Rooks, J., et al., "The National Birth Center Study: Part I - Methodology and Prenatal Care and Referrals", *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*, Vol. 37, No. 4: 222-253, July/August, 1992
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6. Rooks, J., et al., "The National Birth Center Study: Part III - Intrapartum and Immediate Postpartum Neonatal Complications and Transfers, Postpartum and Neonatal Care, Outcomes and Client Satisfaction", *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*, Vol. 37, No. 6: 361-397, November/December, 1992

The Birth Center

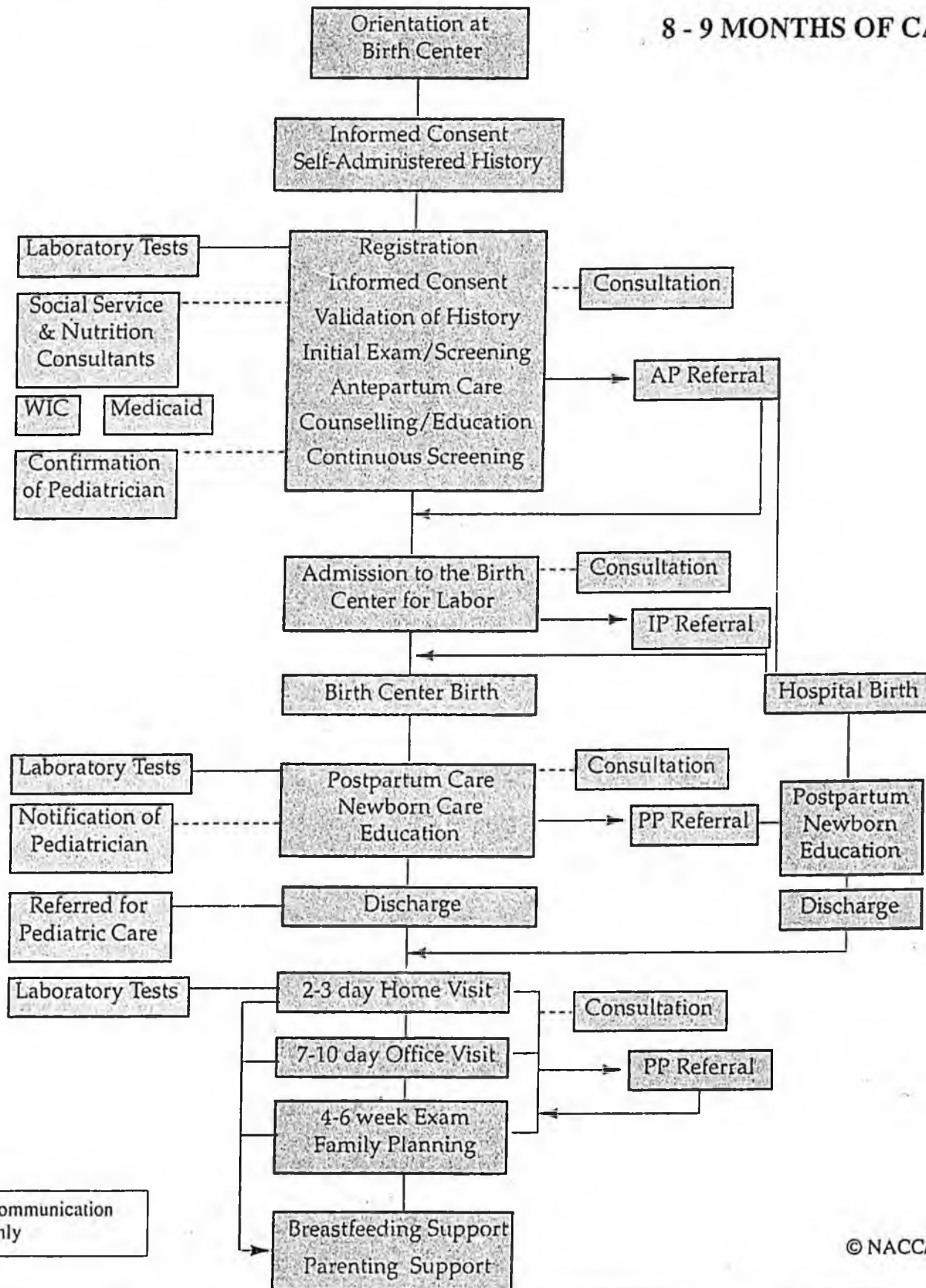
Primary Care in an Integrated Health Care System

Ancillary Services

Birth Center/Primary Care

Hospital/Acute Care

8 - 9 MONTHS OF CARE





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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

[◀ Previous](#)

Volume 321:1804-1811

December 28, 1989

Number 26

[Next ▶](#)

Outcomes of care in birth centers. The National Birth Center Study

JP Rooks, NL Weatherby, EK Ernst, S Stapleton, D Rosen, and A Rosenfield

Abstract

We studied 11,814 women admitted for labor and delivery to 84 free-standing birth centers in the United States and followed their course and that of their infants through delivery or transfer to a hospital and for at least four weeks thereafter. The women were at lower-than-average risk of a poor outcome of pregnancy, according to many but not all of the recognized demographic and behavioral risk factors. Among the women, 70.7 percent had only minor complications or none; 7.9 percent had serious emergency complications during labor and delivery or soon thereafter, such as thick meconium or severe shoulder dystocia. One woman in six (15.8 percent) was transferred to a hospital; 2.4 percent had emergency transfers. Twenty-nine percent of nulliparous women and only 7 percent of parous women were transferred, but the frequency of emergency transfers was the same. The rate of cesarean section was 4.4 percent. There were no maternal deaths. The overall intrapartum and neonatal mortality rate was 1.3 per 1000 births. The rates of infant mortality and low Apgar scores were similar to those reported in large studies of low-risk hospital births. We conclude that birth centers offer a safe and acceptable alternative to hospital confinement for selected pregnant women, particularly those who have previously had children, and that such care leads to relatively few cesarean sections.

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Source Information

Center for Population and Family Health, School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York.

Juneau Family Birth Center

The JFBC midwives have attended **392** (as of September 30, 2003) births since opening in April 1998. This number includes all women who started their labor intending to deliver at the birth center or at home.

1998 77 women served

30 women prenatal care only

6 hospital support

41 births attended **Births in Juneau 407**

11 home births

27 birth center births

3 hospital transports

0 cesarean sections

1999 118 women served

36 women prenatal care only

5 hospital support

79 births attended (18.8% of Juneau births-421)

17 home births

46 birth center births

16 hospital transports

9 cesarean sections

2000 101 women served

39 women prenatal care only

5 hospital support

68 births attended (16.2% of Juneau births-421)

12 home births

48 birth center births

8 hospital transports

7 cesarean sections

2001 118 women served
45 prenatal care only
10 hospital support
73 births attended (17% of Juneau births-435)
9 home births
56 birth center births
8 hospital transports
4 cesarean sections

2002 125 women served
42 prenatal care only
14 hospital support
83 births attended (20.5% of Juneau births-405)
14 home births
55 birth center births
14 hospital transports
6 cesarean sections

2003 140 women served (as of September 30, 2003)
6 hospital support
48 births attended
4 home births
33 birth center births
7 hospital transports
6 cesarean sections

Total births attended to as of September 30, 2003 by JFBC
midwives - 392

Total women served by the birth center- 700

Statistics as of August 24, 2003

Number of women transported in labor	56	15.5%
Number of cesarean sections	32	8.2%
(Number of cesarean sections nation wide)		28%
Number of transports of mom postpartum	6	1.8%
Number of transports of baby postpartum	7	1.8%
Baby deaths at birth	0	
Baby deaths before 6 weeks	2	
One of heart problems at 5 weeks		
One of a birth defect incompatible with life		
Homebirths	67	17.3%
Breastfeeding rate for the first 6 weeks		98%
(Most of our moms breastfeed for years, but we have no official way of tracking this)		
Average baby weight		8 lbs

COST DIFFERENTIAL FOR BIRTHING CENTERS AND HOSPITALS IN ALASKA

ANCHORAGE

Geneva Woods Birth Center	\$1200.00
Providence Hospital	\$3460.00(1)
Alaska Regional	\$3475.00(2)

JUNEAU

Juneau Family Birth Center	\$1200.00
Bartlett Regional Hospital	\$2695.00-\$3850.00 (mom) plus \$1170.00-\$1755 (baby) (3)

FAIRBANKS

Alaska Family Health & Birth Center	\$1200.00
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	\$2500.00-\$3500.00 (4)

1. Quote is for Providence Hospital, uncomplicated delivery and 24 hour stay after delivery. Epidural anesthesia is \$1300.00 additional. Cesarean section is \$7104.00 for 3 day stay, not including anesthesia or physician charges.
2. Cesarean section at Alaska Regional is \$7206.00.
3. Bartlett Regional Hospital does not have all-inclusive pricing. They quote a range of prices and everything from an IV to oxygen and medication is an additional charge. Cesarean section in Juneau costs \$7203.00-\$8005.00 (mom) with an additional charge for the baby of \$1995.00-\$2310.00.
4. Fairbanks Memorial does not have all-inclusive pricing and charges for labor and delivery by the hour. Baby is an additional charge, as is any medication, oxygen, etc. Cesarean section is approximately \$8,000.00.



Geneva Woods Birth Center

Barbara Norton, CNM, ANP
Geneva Woods Birth Center
3730 Rhone Circle, Suite 102
Anchorage, AK 99508

Letters of
Support for
SB 294

Honorable Senators Dyson, Green, Davis, Wilken, and Guess,

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss with you my support for Senate Bill 294. As I'm sure you're aware, this Act would add birthing centers to the list of health facilities eligible for payment of medical assistance for needy persons. There are many reasons why birthing centers should be among these eligible health facilities, the most compelling of which are *cost savings to the State of Alaska*, and *client choice*.

The cost savings realized through the use of Birthing Centers are two-fold. First, the facility fee at a Birthing Center is equal to approximately one-third the price of a hospital stay for normal childbirth. Secondly, additional savings can be realized through the significant reduction in medical intervention for both the mother and the baby that characterizes Birthing Center births. In birthing centers, mothers don't have continuous electronic fetal monitoring, which has been shown to *increase* the cesarean section (c-section) rate, without improving outcomes for babies or mothers. They don't receive epidural anesthesia, which not only costs roughly \$2,000 by itself, but is often accompanied by the necessary use of pitocin to enhance the strength of labor, internal fetal monitoring, and forceps, or vacuum assisted deliveries. A hospital birth involving all of the above-mentioned interventions can cost upwards of \$7000 to \$10,000 for a 'natural' birth. (A birth by cesarean section can cost more than \$20,000.) The current c-section rate at the Geneva Woods Birth Center is 3%, while the current national c-section rate is 26%. This is a *significant* difference, with enormous cost-saving implications. Women in birthing centers give birth the "old fashioned way"; surrounded by family, unmedicated, and without unnecessary medical interventions.

In our practice, *Midwifery & Women's Health Care at Geneva Woods*, there are many women who would choose to give birth in our birthing center if the facility fee were paid by Denali Kid Care, but are obligated instead to go to the hospital, where the facility fee is covered. We estimate that each year there are between thirty to fifty women, in our practice alone, who would choose this lower-cost birth center option, if given a choice.

* Please refer to the enclosed copy of the results of a study conducted by Judith Rooks, PhD, documenting the safety of Birth Center births.

This could potentially result in a savings to the state of \$60,000 to \$100,000 for *our clients alone*, each year. There are currently six other Birth Centers in the state.

A relatively large percentage of women choose out-of-hospital birth in Alaska, as compared to women in the lower 48 (6% in Alaska compared to 2% nationwide). Each year the number of women who choose to have their babies in our Birth Center grows by more than 30%. Clearly, when presented with the choice, an increasing number of women are choosing Birth Centers. If Birth Center facility fees were to be reimbursed by Denali Kid Care, the option of a Birth Center birth could be made available to even more women, allowing us health care providers to offer better service and more choice to our clients, while enabling the state to save money on the Denali Kid Care plan.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Norton CNM, ANP

Barbara Norton, CNM, ANP



J U N E A U
F A M I L Y B I R T H
C E N T E R

3225 Hospital Drive Suite 106, Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-1203 fax (907) 586-5765

03/12/2004

Dear Legislator

I am a Certified Direct-Entry Midwife and an Executive Director of the Juneau Family Birth Center, a non-profit registered birth center here in Juneau. I have worked on midwifery issues in Alaska since 1984 and look forward to helping to clarify for you midwifery and birth center issues. I served on the State Licensing Board for Certified Direct-Entry Midwives from its inception in 1992 until 2000.

Midwifery is a growing profession, as I am sure you are aware. Alaska's Certified Direct-Entry Midwives deliver almost 10% of the babies in Alaska. This is an amazing statistic considering that nationwide, Direct-Entry Midwives attend 2% of the births. Alaska is at the forefront of midwifery and other states look to our law when crafting legislation.

I would like your support of SB 294, a bill adding birth centers to the list of facilities that Medicaid will cover. At this time, Medicaid does not cover our \$1800 facility fee, which is covered by all insurance companies. This means a loss of \$1800 revenue for any Medicaid or Denali Kid Care client that we accept. At the same time, Medicaid pays hospital facility fees of 5 to 10 times more for a birth. The Juneau Family Birth Center has chosen to write off the loss instead of requiring payment from clients who are financially stressed. Other birth centers in Alaska cannot do this. This translates to women choosing a hospital birth over a birthcenter birth, at much greater expense to the State of Alaska Medicaid Program.

I appreciate your support on this bill. I would be happy to meet with you if you need more information.

Sincerely,

Kaye Kanne, CDM
Executive Director,
Juneau Family Birth Center

Moonlight Midwifery

Laura Gore C.D.M.
P.O. Box 112051
Anchorage, Alaska 99511

March 2, 2004

Honorable Senators Dyson, Green, Davis, Wilken, and Guess,

I am writing to offer my support for Senate Bill 294. This bill would add birthing centers to the list of health facilities eligible for payment of medical assistance for eligible recipients (those qualifying for Medicaid). The state of Alaska already provides reimbursement to providers for services provided in the birth center setting. This bill will be a cost saving measure for medical assistance by increasing the amount of low risk women able to use birthing centers thus saving on costly hospital births by women who would prefer to birth at a birthing center.

A facility fee for a birth center is approximately one-third the price of a hospital birth. In addition to the overall lower price of the facility fee, savings are also realized through the reduction of costly additional medical interventions often seen in the hospital.

This Bill would make choosing a birthing center a viable option for all low risk women, regardless of their financial status, and would be a cost saving measure for the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Laura Gore C.D.M.
Certified-Direct Entry Midwife

Sharon K. Evans, CPM, CDM
PO Box 67
Palmer, AK 99645
March 3, 2004

Subject: Senate Bill 294

Dear Senator:

I am writing this letter in support of SB 294, which would add birth centers to the list of facilities paid by Medicaid. I have practiced midwifery primarily in Alaska for 20 years, working as a midwife and preceptor for midwifery students. I have participated in the evolution of maternity care services in Alaska and have watched the demand for quality, cost-effective healthcare, in particular out-of-hospital birth, steadily increase.

The cost of out-of-hospital birth is substantially less (50-70%) than a hospital birth. The average charges for a birth center delivery (including practitioner fees) is approximately \$3500.00. The average cost for a hospital birth room alone is approximately \$5400.00. In states where birth centers are paid by Medicaid, savings of 30% to 50% over hospital charges in the same communities were reported. At a time when Medicaid funding may be cut, millions of dollars could be saved annually if Medicaid was paying birth centers instead of hospitals.

Medicaid recipients should have the same options for birth as self-paying people (or those with insurances that do reimburse birth centers). As has been demonstrated by other states, implementation of SB 294 offers a promise of lower cost, greater availability, and a comparable degree of safety, as has been consistently shown for more than a decade of freestanding birth center operation. For the sake of the Alaska public, I am asking that you support this Bill.

Sincerely,

Sharon K. Evans, CPM, CDM

Sharon K. Evans, CPM, CDM

Mat-Su Midwifery, Inc.

2650 Broadview Ave., Wasilla, AK 99654

907-373-3420 Fax 907-376-7847

March 1, 2004

Subject: Senate Bill 294

Dear Senator:

I am writing this letter in support of SB 294, which would add Birth Centers to the list of facilities which are paid by Medicaid.

I am the owner/operator of a birth center in Wasilla, AK. We serve a birthing population that extends from Glennallen to Eagle River. We deliver over 100 babies per year, and approximately 90% qualify for Denali Kid Care or Medicaid. Our birth facility fee for out-of-hospital birth is \$1200.00. Insurances currently pay this amount. Medicaid recipients must pay out-of-pocket. This cost dissuades many from using our birth facility. The average cost for a hospital birth room in our area starts at \$3000.00

In states where birth centers are paid by Medicaid, savings of 30% to 50% over hospital charges in the same communities were reported. At a time when Medicaid funding may be cut, millions of dollars could be saved annually if Medicaid was reimbursing birth center facility fees.

Medicaid recipients should have the same options for birth as self-paying people (or those with insurances that do reimburse birth centers). As has been demonstrated by other states, implementation of SB 294 offers a promise of lower cost, greater availability, and a comparable degree of safety, as has been consistently shown for more than a decade of freestanding birth center operation.

Please consider the cost savings SB 294 represents to the citizens of our state.

Sincerely,

Judi Davidson, CDM, CPM

Judi Davidson, CDM, CPM

Subject: Bill 294

Date: Mon, 23 Feb 2004 14:28:47 -0900

From: Sean & Jennina Rheault <rheaults@gci.net>

To: Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us

I had my first child in a Birth Center in Anchorage, it was a great experience, I was only in labor for 5 hours, before my daughter was born.

I am now on Denali Kid Care, and am hoping this bill will make it possible to deliver my second and last child at the birth center also, as I cannot afford even the reduced rate the birth center offers me because I am on Denali Kid Care. It is more comfortable, less invasive, and I personally feel that the care received is excellent. Women have choices to keep children or not and I think they should have the choice to deliver at a birth center if they choose to do so. I believe it would save the state probably about \$2,000 per delivery compared with an average hospital delivery.

Please take my opinion into consideration making your decision on this bill.



Alaska Family Health & Birth Clinic

728 Gallinney Rd. Suite 100, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 • (907)456-3719

March 3, 2004

RE: Senate Bill 294
Senate Bill 349

I am writing in support of SB294 and SB349. These bills would require all birth centers to be licensed and provide for Certified Direct entry Midwives to be the attendants at these births. This would provide a safe alternative to low risk women at a savings to the State for all Medicaid and Denali Kid Care patients. Certified Direct Entry Midwives typically have a high percentage of Medicaid and DKC clients and charge 50 - 75% less overall for prenatal care and childbirth services. CDEMs are currently doing homebirths or working in birth centers that may be registered through the State but do not have any licensing provisions. These bills would provide for consistent quality for all birth centers.

Thank You,

Cheryl Corrick
Certified Direct Entry Midwife



Alaska Family Health & Birth Clinic

728 Gaffney Rd. Suite 100, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 • (907)456-3719

March 3, 2004

Subject: Senate Bill 294
Senate Bill 349

My name is Dana Brown and I have been a licensed Certified Direct Entry Midwife (CDEM) since January 1993. I am writing in Support of SB294 and SB349.

I am the director of Alaska Family Health & Birth Center, a non-profit registered birth center. I am in favor of all birth centers becoming licensed with inclusion of CDEM's as providers. Licensing birth centers assures high standards and is in the best interest of the public. SB 349 supports this. Birth centers have been proven safe for low risk pregnancies and offer an affordable alternative. In fact, birth centers can provide a savings of 50 - 75% less than hospital births. Birth centers benefit consumers as well as the economy. SB294 offers a promise of savings and cost effectiveness. Please support SB294 and SB349. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dana Brown".

Dana Brown
Certified Direct Entry Midwife



Alaska Family Health & Birth Clinic

728 Gaffney Rd. Suite 100, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 • (907)456-3719

Danielle Baham, CMA
728 Gaffney Street, Suite 100
Fairbanks, AK 99709

March 3, 2004

Subject: Senate Bill 349
Senate Bill 294

Dear Senator:

I am the Office Administrator at AHF&BC a non-profit birth center in Fairbanks.

I am support of SB 294 & SB 349 and ask that the legislative please pass these bills.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Danielle Baham, CMA



Alaska Family Health & Birth Clinic

728 Gaffney Rd. Suite 100, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 • (907)456-3719

Vanessa R. Dunham
Apprentice Direct-entry Midwife
728 Gaffney Street, Suite 100
Fairbanks, AK 99709

March 3, 2004

Subject: Senate Bill 349
Senate Bill 294

Dear Senator:

I am in favor of SB 349, an act which would require the licensing of birth centers. As a soon to be direct-entry midwife, working for Alaska Family Health and Birth Center I feel that licensing contributes to the high standards of birth centers.

I am in favor of SB 294. This bill is cost effective and will give medicaid recipients the same options as private and insurance clients.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa R. Dunham".

Vanessa R. Dunham

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate
Health, Education &
Social Services
Committee

Senate
Labor & Commerce
Committee



While in Session
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-3822
Fax: (907) 465-3756

While in Anchorage
716 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 269-0144
Fax: (907) 269-0148

SENATOR BETTYE DAVIS

Senator_Bettye_Davis@legis.state.ak.us
www.akdemocrats.org

Memorandum

To: Senator Fred Dyson, Chair
Senate Health, Education & Social Services Committee

From: Senator Bettye Davis *BD*

Date: April 16, 2004

RE: 2nd Request for Hearing, SB 294

I respectfully renew my request a hearing for Senate Bill 294. My original request was sent to your office on April 5, 2004.

The following items were previously forwarded to your office:

- Current version of Senate Bill 349
- Sponsor statement
- Sectional analysis
- Fiscal note
- Request for teleconferencing and list of witnesses and sites
- Pertinent background information
 - Research
 - Legal opinions
 - Letters of support

SB

301

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

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

February 11, 2004

The Honorable Fred Dyson, Chairman
Senate Health, Education and
Social Services Committee
Alaska State Capitol; Rm. 121
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Dyson,

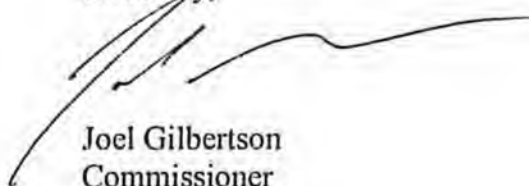
The Department of Health and Social Services respectfully requests a hearing in the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services Committee on Senate Bill 301 "An Act relating to the Alaska Pioneers' Home, and the Alaska Veterans' Home; relating to eligibility for admission to the Alaska Pioneers' Home and Alaska Veterans' Home; relating to state veterans' home facilities; making conforming amendments; and providing for an effective date."

The purposes of this bill are twofold: 1) to establish a statutory framework for the operation of a State Veterans' Home in accordance with federal law; and 2) to allow the department to obtain additional sources of financing for the Alaska Pioneers' Home and Alaska Veterans' Home system.

The Governor's transmittal letter and fiscal note relating to SB 301 are on file with the committee.

Your favorable consideration of this request will be appreciated.

Sincerely,



Joel Gilbertson
Commissioner

cc: Mike Tibbles, Director
Legislative Office
Office of the Governor

John Vowell, Director
Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes

SB301

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
GOVERNOR
GOVERNOR@GOV.STATE.AK.US



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STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

February 4, 2004

The Honorable Gene Therriault
President of the Senate
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 107
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear President Therriault:

Under the authority of article III, section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to the Alaska Pioneers' Home (APH) and Alaska Veterans' Home (AVH).

The purpose of the bill is two-fold: to authorize the establishment of an AVH under the umbrella of our existing APH system and to provide long-term financial stability for both our AVH and APH programs.

For over a decade, the State of Alaska has struggled to develop a viable plan for an AVH. The time has come to move beyond planning to make an AVH a reality. With passage of this bill, the state would have clear statutory authority to serve veterans within the APH system by identifying one or more homes as an AVH consistent with the requirements of the United States Veterans' Administration.

In addition, the bill would require that, as a condition for receipt of assistance to pay the cost of care in a home, a home resident could be required to apply for other state or federally sponsored programs whose benefits could reduce the amount of that assistance.

Taken together, these changes are designed to ensure the sustainability of the APH and AVH system over the long-term. Additional federal and other third-party payments are critical in order to maintain the high quality of care the homes provide and home residents expect and deserve. Over time, the Department of Health and Social Services is optimistic that several millions of dollars of additional resources can be obtained in third-party reimbursements annually to support operation of the homes.