

• Rep. Tom Brice's Human Services Alert •

A legislative update about the Health and Social Services Department from
the Office of Representative Tom Brice

New session Convenes with new challenges

As the legislature grapple with another large deduction from our savings account and no long-term budget solutions in sight, some legislators will look at the proposed \$471 million HSS general fund Budget as an attractive target to cut. The human services community in Fairbanks needs to play a major role speaking against the assaults on the Governor's FY 01 budget that protects the most vulnerable of our society, our children and seniors. Contact the Legislative Information Office (LIO) at (907) 452-4448 to send public opinion messages and faxes on these issues. You can also contact the LIO to get legislators office addresses and phone numbers in Juneau, or legislator's e-mail addresses.

Highlights of the Governor's FY01 budget

Governor Knowles has proposed increases in the following areas. Your help will be needed to preserve these budget items.

\$6.2 million for Foster Care

\$400,000 for Child Safety

\$500,000 for Residential Child Care

\$200,000 to re-open Farenkamp Center as a Residential Facility for Troubled Children

\$4.5 million for Child Care Assistance

\$900,000 for Child Care Grants

\$700,000 for Child Care Licensing

Bills of interest

HB 260 – Medical Assistance Program Coverage by Representative Coghill

This bill would undo Denali Kidcare by reducing the federal poverty level requirement from 200% to 100%, which conflicts with federal requirements. HB 260 is currently in the House HESS Committee. No hearing have been scheduled.

HB 161 – Reduction in Benefit Rates by the House Finance Committee

This bill is currently in the House limbo file, though the House Majority can bring up the bill anytime during this legislative session. If the House approves the Senate changes it goes to the Governor. While it is hoped that he will veto the measure, you should contact his office and express your concerns. Taking benefits away from those who need them the most is wrong-minded.

How to Contact Representative Brice

In Fairbanks: 119 N. Cushman, Ste. 205
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-7423 *
(Phone will forward to Juneau)

In Juneau:

State Capitol Room 426
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-3466 (WORK)
(907) 465-2937 (FAX)

Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us

PLEASE COPY AND REDISTRIBUTE THIS UPDATE FOR JANUARY 2000