



Representative Beth Kerttula

Alaska State Legislature, District 3
State Capitol • Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182 • (907) 465-4766 • Fax (907) 465-4748
E-mail: Representative_Beth_Kerttula@legis.state.ak.us • <http://www.kerttula.net>

House Bill 43

Sponsor Statement

State Employee Dependents Daycare Centers

House Bill 43 would allow childcare centers to be located in office buildings owned or leased by the State of Alaska. Agencies interested in on-site childcare facilities would work with the Department of Administration to determine need and feasibility. This bill provides important benefits to the State as an employer, employees and their children, and childcare providers. Passage of HB 43 would reaffirm Alaska's commitment to children and families.

Alaska Legislators first considered this concept almost 20 years ago. The number of working mothers with infants and toddlers has nearly doubled since 1975, and childcare services in our communities have been unable to keep up with demand.

Research shows that breast-feeding is extremely beneficial to the health of newborns. New mothers typically return to work just three months after giving birth, while they are still nursing. Having their infants in the same building would allow mothers to nurse during their breaks. Also, parents would have the ability to spend more quality time with their young children during the course of the day.

As an employer, the State will greatly benefit from the passage of this bill. Two decades of research shows that addressing work/life concerns can improve recruitment and retention, reduce absenteeism and tardiness, and increase job satisfaction and loyalty. With recruitment and retention of employees being major concerns in today's economy, this bill will help to attract more prospective employees to the State. On-site childcare will not only provide better benefits to employees, resulting less turnover, it will also provide a higher quality of care for our children.

Alaska legislators recognized the importance of childcare nearly 20 years ago; certainly the need has greatly increased since that time. The time has come to provide the State, employees, and children with the resources necessary to succeed. I greatly appreciate your support of this bill.