

# Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education *Legislative Update*

March 21, 2007  
Volume 1 - Issue 6

Tuesday, January 16th began the 25th Alaska Legislative session in Juneau. During this session, the GCDSE is keeping you up-to-date by monitoring legislative action and tracking bills that relate to issues concerning health, education, disabilities, and services in the State of Alaska.

## Senate Bill 114: Drug Product Substitution

This bill amends current Section 1 of AS 08.80.295 to include the requirement of a pharmacist to gain permission from a parent before substituting any equivalent drug when the patient is a minor. It limits pharmacist's authority to substitute an equivalent drug when the prescription is for an epilepsy or anti-seizure medication; unless the pharmacist first obtains a written or oral agreement of the

prescriber.

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Health, Education & Social Services by request

**Status:** 03/12 introduced and referred to Senate Labor & Commerce

**Link to Bill Text:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=SB114](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=SB114)



## House Bill 148: Senior Care

This bill relates to the senior care program as established by the Department of Health & Social Services to provide cash assistance benefits. Section 3 of AS 47.45.310 is amended to read that to be eligible for cash assistance, an individual *must* meet certain provisions; 65 years of age or older, be a resident of the state, have a household income that does not exceed 135% of the FPL guidelines in Alaska and may not be receiving a longevity bonus payment under AS 45.45.010-47.45.150.

**Sponsor(s):** Rules by request of the Governor

**Status:** 02/21 introduced; 03/12 referred to House Finance Committee

**Link to Bill Text:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=HB148](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=HB148)

## Held Committee Referrals and Bill Hearings:

## House Bill 198: Senior Assistance Payment Program

This bill establishes the Alaska Senior Assistance Program to provide cash assistance payments to low-income Alaska seniors. On June 30th, 2007, the current existing Senior Care Program is scheduled to sunset and this bill removes the current prescription benefits and increases the monthly cash payments to individuals who are 65 years of age or older. Monthly cash assistance is related to the federal poverty level (FPL) guidelines for Alaska and are as follows:

- \$250/month with income less than 75% FPL
  - \$175/month with income less than 100% FPL
  - \$125/month with income from 100-135% FPL
- Individuals with incomes higher than 135% of the federal poverty level guidelines for Alaska would not be eligible for the program.

The new Alaska Senior Assistance Program in this bill repeals the senior care and longevity bonus payment programs and would take effect June 30th, 2007 and sunset June 30th, 2011 if not reauthorized.

**Sponsor(s):** Representative(s); Hawker (R-32), Harris (R-12), Coghill (R-11), Samuels (R-29), Chenault (R-34), Meyer (R-30), Foster (D-39), Doogan (D-25), Fairclough (R-17), Thomas (R-5), Wilson (R-2)

**Status:** 03/14 introduced & referred to House Health, Education & Social Services Committee

**Other Bills Related to Senior Care:**

**SB 4** - Senior Care

**SB 40** - Longevity Bonus Reapplications

**SB 90** - Senior Care; Companion to HB 148

**HB 148** - Senior Care; Companion to SB 90

**HB 179** - Longevity Bonus Reapplications

**Link to Bill Text:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=HB198](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_fulltext.asp?session=25&bill=HB198)

### **SCR 4:**

**Public Health & Public Health Compact**

**SB 100:**

**Substance Abuse & Mental Health Programs**

Monday, March 19th State Capitol

Held and heard in Senate Health, Education & Social Services Comm.

**HB 135:**

**Tuition for Certain Children**

**HB 178:**

**Employment of People with Disabilities Committee**

Tuesday, March 20th, State Capitol

Held & heard in House Health, Education & Social Services Comm.

**House Concurs in Senate Changes to WWAMI HB 18**

Wednesday, March 21st State Capitol

## Current Status of All Bills in Legislative Updates



### SENATE BILLS:

#### **SB 1: Increase Amount of Base Student Allocation**

02/09 held & heard in (S) SED

#### **SB 4: Senior Care Program**

02/22 referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 6: Hate Crimes/Discrimination & Tolerance Program**

01/16 introduced & referred to (S) HES

#### **SB 8: Mental Health Patients' Rights: Staff Gender**

01/16 introduced & referred to (S) HES

#### **SB 9: Repeal Secondary School Exit Exam**

01/16 introduced & referred to (S) SED

#### **SB 17: Foster Care Age Limit/Tuition Waiver**

01/16 introduced & referred to (S) HES

#### **SB 27: Medical Assistance Eligibility: Denali KidCare**

03/14 referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 40: Longevity Bonus Reapplications**

03/02 referred to (S) State Affairs

#### **SB 76: Tuition for Certain Children**

03/14 referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 87: Medical Assistance Eligibility: Denali KidCare**

03/14 referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 90: Senior Care Program**

03/09 referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 93: Professional Counselors**

03/09 referred to (S) Rules

#### **SB 100: Substance Abuse/Mental Health Programs**

03/21 (S) HES report awaiting transmittal

#### **SB 106: Approp. Community Health Centers**

03/07 introduced/referred to (S) Finance

#### **SB 114: Drug Product Substitution**

03/12 introduced & referred to (S) L & C

#### **SJR 1: Medical Assistance for Children**

03/16 passed Senate referred to (H) HES

#### **SJR 3: Medicare Rates in Alaska**

03/07 introduced & referred to (S) HES

#### **SCR 2: Brain Injury Awareness Month**

3/21 Permanently Filed

#### **SCR 4: Public Health/Health Compact**

03/21 referred to (S) Rules

### HOUSE BILLS:

#### **HB 4: Health Care Facilities**

01/16 introduced & referred to (H) HES

#### **HB 18: Post-Secondary & Other Edu. Programs**

03/21 awaiting transmittal to Governor

#### **HB 29: Safe Haven For Infants**

03/14 referred to (H) Finance

#### **HB 55: WWAMI Medical School**

1/30 heard & held in (H) HES

#### **HB 68: Long-Range Fiscal Plan**

02/09 heard & held in (H) Ways & Means

#### **HB 79: Longevity Bonus Reapplications**

02/12 referred to (H) Judiciary

#### **HB 81: AK Prescription Drug Task Force**

01/16 introduced & referred to (H) HES

#### **HB 82: Prescription Drug Accounts**

01/16 introduced & referred to (H) HES

#### **HB 97: Approp: K-12 Edu.; Pers/Trs Liability**

02/22 referred to (H) Finance

#### **HB 120: Extending Council on Domestic Violence**

03/19 signed into law

#### **HB 124: Intensive Service Funding**

02/07 introduced & referred to (H) HES

#### **HB 125: Long-Range Fiscal Plan**

03/16 referred to (H) Rules

#### **HB 136: Dental Hygienists**

03/21 referred to (H) Finance

#### **HB 140: Medical Assistance Eligibility: Denali KidCare**

02/28 held & heard in (H) HES

#### **HB 148: Senior Care**

03/12 referred to (H) Finance

#### **HB 178: Employment of People with Disabilities**

03/20 moved out of (H) HES

#### **HB 198: Senior Assistance Payment Program**

03/14 introduced & referred to (H) HES

#### **HJR 10: Medical Assistance for Children**

03/05 referred to (H) Finance, not heard

#### **HCR 3: Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

03/01 passed House, 03/21 referred to (S) Rules

### Upcoming Bill Hearing Schedule Details:

#### Date:

**Thu. March 22nd, 1:30pm**

**HB 95 & 96:**

**Operating & Mental Health  
Budget/Appropriations**

House Finance Committee

Room 519 State Capitol

**Thu. March 22nd, 3pm**

**HB 198:**

**Senior Assistance**

**Payment Program**

House Health, Education & Social

Services Committee

Room 106 State Capitol

### !!CORRECTION!!

**HB 178: Legislative Update Vol. 5**

This bill *does not* change the current committee title to add *rehabilitation*, but amends the current statute AS 23.15.220 to read:

*“The purpose of AS 23.15.220-23.15.320 is to create a governor’s committee on employment and **rehabilitation** of people with disabilities for Alaska to carry on a continuing program to promote the employment of people of the state with disabilities by creating statewide interest in the rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities, and by obtaining and maintaining cooperation with private and private groups and individuals in this field.”*

### If you have any Questions or Comments, please contact:

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