

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

April 11, 2007  
Volume 1 - Issue 9

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.

## House Bill 231: Medical Assistance: Children/Pregnant/Disabled

This bill relates to eligibility requirements for medical assistance for certain children, pregnant women, and disabled persons. This bill replaces the current specific, static income thresholds of the federal poverty level guidelines for Alaska to not exceed 200 percent of the FPL of household income for children who are under nineteen years of age and pregnant women.

### Sponsor(s):

Representative Andrea Doll (D-4), Max Grunberg (D-20)

### Status:

Introduced 04/02 and referred to (H) HES

### Link to Bill Text:

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+231](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+231)



## Held Committee Referrals and Bill Hearings:

## New Amendments Added to Senior Care/Benefit Bills to Include Denali Kid Care Medical Assistance Eligibility

### Senate Bill 4: Senior Care and Medical Aid for Kids and Pregnant Women

This bill has been amended in Section 1 to read and include medical assistance for children who are under nineteen years of age and pregnant women whose household income does not exceed 175 percent of the federal poverty level guidelines for Alaska.

Senate Bill 4 also does three things for the Senior Care Program: Extends the program's sunset date to June 30, 2011; Removes the prescription drug benefit; And increases the monthly cash benefit based on income as established by the federal poverty level guidelines for Alaska. Monthly payments are:

*\$175 per month when an individual's income does not exceed 100 percent FPL.*

*\$150 per month when an individual's income does not exceed 135 percent but is above 100 percent FPL.*

*\$100 per month when an individual's income does not exceed 150 percent but is above 135 percent FPL.*

This Senior Care Program is strictly needs based and does not require an Asset Test to be in place.

**Sponsor(s):** Senators Donald Olson (D-T), Bill Wielechowski (D-J), Kim Elton (D-B), Al Kookesh (D-C), Johnny Ellis (D-L)

### Info:

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+4](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+4)

### House Bill 198: Senior Benefits/Medical Assistance Eligibility

This bill has been amended in Section 5 to include medical assistance for children who are under nineteen years of age and pregnant women whose household income does not exceed 175 percent of the federal poverty level guidelines for Alaska.

House Bill 198 establishes the Alaska Senior Assistance Program payments to low-income Alaska seniors and amends the existing Senior Care Program, which is scheduled for sunset June 30, 2007. The new program removes the prescription drug benefits and increase monthly cash payments to Alaskans 65 or older based on the FPL guidelines for Alaska:

*\$250 per month for individuals with incomes less than 75 percent FPL.*

*\$175 per month for individuals whose income does not exceed 100 percent but is above 75 percent FPL.*

*\$125 per month for individuals whose income does not exceed 175 percent but is above 100 percent FPL.*

**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), Nelson (D-38), Jole (D-40), Roses (R-19), Johnson (R-28), Seaton (R-35), Cissna (D-22)

### Info:

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+198](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+198)

### Senate Bill 4:

#### Senior Care/Medical Aid for Kids & Pregnant Women

Tuesday, April 10th State Capitol

**Passed Senate**

### Senate Joint Resolution 3:

#### Medicare Rates in Alaska

Wednesday, April 11th State Capitol

**Passed Senate**

### House Bill 29:

#### Safe Haven for Infants

Tuesday, April 10th State Capitol

held and heard in House Finance and moved out of committee

### House Bill 136:

#### Dental Hygienists

Wednesday, April 11th State Capitol

**Passed House**

### House Bill 178:

#### Employment of People with Disabilities

Wednesday, April 11th State Capitol

House Finance Committee

### House Bill 198:

#### Senior Benefits/Medical Assistance Eligibility

Tuesday, April 10th State Capitol

House Rules Committee

### House Bills 95 & 96:

#### Operating & Mental Health Budget

Tuesday & Wednesday, April 10-11th

Senate Finance Committee

Public testimony and hearings

## Current Status of Moving Bills in the Legislature:

### SB 4: Senior Care/Medical Aid for Kids & Pregnant Women

Extends cash assistance benefit program for seniors under the senior care program and increases the benefit amount; amends medical income eligibility provisions for persons under 19 years of age & pregnant women.

**04/10** passed Senate > **04/11** referred to (H) Finance

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+4](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+4)

### SB 40: Longevity Bonus Reapplication

An Act relating to reapplications for the Alaska longevity bonus program.

**02/28** (S) HES > **03/02** referred to (S) STA; scheduled for **04/12** 9:00 am, room 211

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+40](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=sb+40)

### SJR 3: Medicare Rates in Alaska

Relates to the effect of Medicare rates on senior citizens' access to healthcare and urging the United States Congress to increase Medicare rates for Alaska.

**04/11** passed Senate

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_complete\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=SJR3](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_complete_bill.asp?session=25&bill=SJR3)

### HB 29: Safe Haven for Infants

Relates to infants who are safely surrendered by a parent shortly after birth.

**02/20** (H) HES > **03/12** (H) Judiciary > **04/10** (H) Finance > **04/11** referred to (H) Rules

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_complete\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB29](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_complete_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB29)

### HB 79: Longevity Bonus Reapplication

An Act relating to reapplications for the Alaska longevity bonus program.

**02/08** (H) STA > **02/12** referred to (H) Judiciary; scheduled for **04/16** at 1:00 pm, room 120

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+79](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?session=25&bill=hb+79)

### HB 136: Dental Hygienists

Relates to the supervision of dental hygienists by dentists; establishes a restorative function license endorsement for dental hygienists and allowing collaborative agreements between licensed dentists and dental hygienists.

**03/06** (H) HES > **03/19** (H) L&C > **03/27** (H) Finance > **04/10** (H) Rules > **04/11** passed House

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_complete\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB136](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_complete_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB136)

### HB 178: Employment of People with Disabilities

Relates to the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

**03/20** (H) HES > **04/11** (H) Finance scheduled 1:30 pm, room 519

**Info:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_complete\\_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB178](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_complete_bill.asp?session=25&bill=HB178)

### HB 198: Senior Benefits/ Medical Assistance Eligibility

Relates to the establishment of the Alaska senior benefits payment program; repealing the senior care program; amending medical assistance income eligibility provisions for persons under 19 years of age, for pregnant women, and for disabled persons.

**03/22** (H) HES > **04/03** (H) Finance > **04/10** (H) Rules, held and heard; returned to Rules

**Info:**

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### **Upcoming Bill Hearing Schedule Details:**

#### **Dates:**

**Thu. April 12th, 9:00am**

**SB 40: Longevity Bonus Reapplication**

Senate State Affairs Committee  
Room 211 State Capitol

**Mon. April 16th, 1:00pm**

**HB 79: Longevity Bonus Reapplication**

House Judiciary Committee  
Room 120 State Capitol

**HB 95 & 96: Operating & Mental Health Budget**

Senate Finance Committee  
Amendments

**Thursday, April 12th:**

9:00am and 5:00pm

**Friday, April 13th:**

9:00am and 5:00pm

**Saturday, April 14th:**

9:00am

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

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