

# Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education Legislative Update



Tuesday, January 20th began the 26th 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.

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## Cover the Uninsured Week March 22-28

March 22—28 marks the seventh annual Cover the Uninsured Week. Forty-six million people are without health insurance across the United States. The Institute of Medicine estimates that there were 22,000 people who died in 2006 because they could not pay for treatment. Uninsured adults are less likely to receive the health care services that their doctors recommend because of cost. In Alaska, **16.9%** of the population does not have health insurance.

Cover the Uninsured Week brings attention to the problems in health insurance. It is a good time to take action on bills like HB 187 (private autism insurance coverage) or SB 61 (mandatory universal health care for Alaskans). Get involved today!

## HB 187: Private Autism Insurance Coverage

This bill would require insurance companies to provide “coverage for the costs of the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.” It gives criteria to discern what treatments are medical necessary, and specifically includes applied behavioral analysis (ABA) as an approved treatment. ABA is the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications, using behavioral stimuli and consequences, to improve social behavior or prevent the loss of an attained skill or function.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Petersen, Dahlstrom, Wilson, Gruenberg, Munoz

**Status:** 3/12 introduced and referred to (H) Health & Social Services

**Link to Bill Text:**

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get\\_fulltext.asp?session=26&bill=HB187](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_fulltext.asp?session=26&bill=HB187)

## Talk to Your Legislators!

Is there a bill in one of these updates that you feel strongly about? Are you passionate about minimum wage or have a story to tell about foster care? **Call your legislator!** The legislative session has reached its two-thirds mark—there are only 30 days left to get those bills passed. Now is the perfect time to make yourself heard!

You can find phone numbers and other important contact information by clicking here: [Legislator Contact List](#) or here: [Legislator Addresses](#).

**OR** call the Legislative Information Offices at 1-800-478-4648 for phone numbers and other legislative information.



## Upcoming Committee and Bill Hearings

**March 23rd**

8:00am, 1:00pm

**HB 9: Capital Punishment**  
House Judiciary  
Rome 120 State Capitol  
(Teleconference)

**March 24th**

3:00pm

**HB 187: Private Autism Insurance Coverage**  
House H&SS  
Room 106 State Capitol  
(Teleconference)

**March 27th**

9:00am

**SB 1: Minimum Wage**  
Senate Finance  
Room 532 State Capitol  
(Teleconference)

3:15pm

**Hb 105: STEP Program**  
(H) Labor & Commerce  
Room 124 State Capitol  
(Teleconference)