

Thomas Olson v City of Hooper Bay, et al, Case No. S-13455

Appellee's Excerpt of Record
Volume 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

House Bill No. 375 Exc. 359

HB 375

HOUSE BILL NO. 375 by the House Rules Committee by request of the Governor, entitled:

"An Act relating to children in need of aid matters and proceedings; relating to murder of children, criminally negligent homicide, kidnapping, criminal nonsupport, the crime of indecent exposure, and the crime of endangering the welfare of a child;

House Journal

Page 2201

HB 375

relating to registration of certain sex offenders; relating to sentencing for certain crimes involving child victims; relating to the state medical examiner and reviews of child fatalities; relating to teacher certification and convictions of crimes involving child victims; relating to access, confidentiality, and release of certain information concerning the care of children, child abuse and neglect, and child fatalities; authorizing the Department of Health and Social Services to enter into an interstate compact concerning adoption and medical assistance for certain children with special needs; authorizing the establishment of a multidisciplinary child protection team to review reports of child abuse or neglect; relating to immunity from liability for certain state actions concerning matters involving child protection and fatality reviews and children in need of aid; relating to persons required to report suspected child abuse or neglect; relating to foster care placement and to payment for children in foster and other care and the waiver of certain foster care requirements; relating to the access to certain criminal justice information and licensure of certain child care facilities; amending Rule 218, Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure; amending Rules 1, 3, 15, 18, and 19, Alaska Child in Need of Aid Rules; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the Health, Education & Social Services, Judiciary and Finance Committees.

The following fiscal note applies:

Indeterminate fiscal note, Office of the Governor Various Depts.,
2-2-98

Exc. 000359

The Governor's transmittal letter dated January 30, 1998, appears below:

"Dear Speaker Phillips:

More than 15,500 reports of child abuse or neglect were filed last year in Alaska. National statistics have shown Alaska has the highest rate of child abuse and neglect among all 50 states with 38 substantiated cases for every 1,000 children in the state's population. These

House Journal

Page 2202

HB 375

disturbing numbers have steadily increased since the 1980's along with increases in substance abuse and domestic violence. One abuse feeds another. The cycle must stop. We are shirking our greatest responsibility if we don't face this tragedy head on and demand the tools, laws and resources to put an end to it.

This child protection bill I am transmitting to you today is my Administration's effort to improve Alaska's laws to protect our children and prevent the crime that inevitably results when abused kids become angry teens and adults. This bill is part of my Smart Start for Alaska's Children initiative a comprehensive approach to breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect, stopping family violence, preventing crime, and working together for a bright future for all of Alaska's children.

The bill makes many changes in Alaska law to protect children and prevent crime. The most significant include:

- Updating the child in need of aid laws to put children first and make sure every effort is made to reunify the family when appropriate, and to expedite making the child legally eligible for permanent placement when reunification is clearly not in the child's best interest.

- Increasing penalties for people who kill or harm children by abuse or neglect.

- Establishing a child fatality review team and facilitating the sharing of information to improve our legal tools to investigate child

Exc. 000360

fatalities and more comprehensively address situations that put Alaska children at risk.

- Requiring incarcerated sex offenders to register as sex offenders prior to release from prison.

- Improving criminal laws regarding criminal nonsupport of children by heightening penalties to be sure parents who are able, but choose not to support their children are appropriately punished.

House Journal

Page 2203

HB 375

- Authorizing the Department of Health and Social Services to enter into the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance to facilitate adoption of hard-to-place children when they move from state to state.

I have proposed attacking Alaska's escalating problem with child abuse on three major fronts: health care, prevention programs, and intervention when children are in peril. Earlier this session, I introduced a bill to expand Medicaid eligibility for children, giving our kids a chance for a healthy start in life. That legislation, along with several initiatives in my proposed budget, boosts programs such as Healthy Families and Head Start to prevent child abuse through education and counseling. This bill completes my Smart Start package by providing the necessary intervention tools to stop abusive situations. It represents my Administration's effort to say we will not allow this harmful situation to continue. I urge you to give this bill and my entire Smart Start package thorough and swift attention.

Sincerely,

s/

Tony Knowles
Governor"

Exc. 000361