

ALASKA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Interim Address:
3340 Badger Road
North Pole, AK 99705
(907) 488-5725
Fax # (907) 488-4271



Session Address:
State Capitol, Rm. 204
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-3719
Fax # (907) 465-3258

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL

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CONTACT: Representative John Coghill (907) 465-3719

Coghill Introduces Medical Assistance Eligibility Legislation

(JUNEAU) – Representative John Coghill (R-North Pole) has introduced legislation to address medical assistance eligibility in Alaska. HB 426 would make some significant changes to current law to ensure that Alaskans truly in need are served by medical assistance funds.

Under this bill, stepparent's income will be counted as household income in determining eligibility for a child's medical assistance when that stepparent resides in the household. Also the person applying for medical assistance for a minor would have to be that person's parent or legal guardian. The exception to this is if the parent or legal guardian is a minor himself or herself. The bill requires that people receiving medical assistance be legal residents of the United States.

This bill changes a practice in existing law that allows parents to utilize public assistance to pay for residential treatment of a child even though one or both parents have private pay medical insurance.

Representative Coghill said of the legislation, "Congress recently passed legislation that will reduce TANF lock grants, Medicaid child support enforcement and child welfare programs by \$4.5 billion over the next five years. We need to make sure public assistance is going to the people it is intended for."

HB 426 received referrals to the Health Education and Social Services (HESS) and Finance Committees.

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