



Alaska State Legislature

Senate Majority Web: www.akrepublicans.org

Sponsor: Senator Fred Dyson
Sponsor: Senator Bettye Davis
Current Version: SB 22
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Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 22

Summary:

- Adds birthing centers to the definition of health facility in statute, which makes the centers eligible for medicaid payments.

Benefits:

- Makes the option of birthing centers available to more women.
- Allows Medicaid recipients to choose local birthing centers, which offer personalized and non-invasive services, rather than hospitals.
- Encourages use of birthing centers, where costs to the state are significantly lower than hospitals.

Background:

- Medicaid does not currently cover licensed birthing centers in Alaska. The average cost of a "natural" birth at four hospitals in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau is \$3,705 for a one day stay, not including anesthesia, labor enhancements, fetal monitoring or vacuum assisted deliveries. Fees for three birthing centers in Alaska average \$1,675.