



Senator Hollis French

For your information newsletter



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April 23, 2007

Voice your opinions!

Here are some ways to let your voice be heard regarding issues important to you.

Write a Letter to the Editor –

Submit your 225 word letter to the Anchorage Daily News via e-mail letter@adn.com, or fax them to 258-2157, attn: letters to the editor.

Contact the Governor – Governor Palin's Anchorage office may be reached at 269-7450, or e-mail her at sarah.palin@gov.state.ak.us You can also visit the state website at www.state.ak.us

Contact your Congressional Delegation – Congressman Don Young, Anchorage Office: 907-271-5978 don.young@mail.house.gov

Senator Lisa Murkowski, Anchorage Office: 907-271-3735, EMAIL: [Sen. Lisa Murkowski](mailto:Sen.Lisa.Murkowski)

Senator Ted Stevens, Anchorage Office: 907-271-5915 EMAIL: [Sen. Ted Stevens](mailto:Sen.Ted.Stevens)

Special E-News Update: New Health Care Legislation Introduced

Alaska entered into the health care debate today with the introduction of SB 160, a bill that my office has been working on for over a year. The central focus of this bill is to ensure that everyone in Alaska secures affordable health care.

Making certain that everyone has health insurance addresses much more than just the health needs of Alaskans; it also ensures equitable financing of the health care system. It can be argued today that hospitals in Alaska already provide universal health care, since a hospital cannot turn down anyone in need of emergency care. Unfortunately, everyone cannot pay for the care they receive, with bills easily reaching tens of thousands of dollars in a matter of days. When someone cannot pay their medical costs, those who can pay are forced to subsidize the care for the uninsured by paying inflated prices for the services they receive. A recent study estimated that health insurance premiums are 13.6% higher in Alaska than they would be if everyone had health coverage (Families USA report). This legislation makes certain that everyone has affordable insurance, not only to protect the health and wellbeing of the insurance holder, but also to protect the businesses and individuals who have chosen to invest in health insurance. For those that cannot afford the full cost of a health care plan, sliding scale vouchers will be issued to make insurance affordable.

Health care costs are rising faster in Alaska than in many other states around the country. Mark Foster, a researcher with the Institute of Social and Economic Research, noted in a recent hearing that rising costs could hurt the ability for Alaskan businesses to compete globally – potentially affecting projects like the natural gas pipeline currently being pursued by Gov. Palin and the Alaska State legislature. The current health care crisis has even led to some unlikely allies working towards reform; businesses,

unions, insurers and health care providers all understand that now is the time to address our looming health problem.

Today is a great starting point for what must occur to address the problem. I look forward to the lively debate that this bill will inspire, and I hope that eventually we can reach a solution which betters the health of all Alaskans while ensuring fair and equitable financing of the health care system.

Materials relating to the bill can be found on my website at french.aksenate.org in the 'Bill Documents/Download' section. I look forward to getting your comments on this issue, and if you would like more information about the legislation don't hesitate to contact my office at 1-866-465-3892.

Sincerely,

Hollis French
Alaska State Senator
District M - Anchorage

If you do not wish to receive future emails from Hollis French, [click here.](#)