

CS FOR HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 6(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/25/09

Referred: Today's Calendar

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES STOLTZE, Thomas, Chenault, Austerman, Coghill, Dahlstrom, Edgmon, Fairclough, Foster, Gatto, Harris, Herron, Johansen, Johnson, Joule, Keller, Kelly, Lynn, Muñoz, Neuman, Olson, Ramras, Seaton, Millett, Hawker, Crawford, Tuck, Wilson

A RESOLUTION

1 **Encouraging the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to develop its land and**
2 **resources to the fullest extent possible consistent with its legal and moral responsibility**
3 **to advance mental health services and employment opportunities that protect and**
4 **enhance the lives of those who benefit from the mental health trust.**

5 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

6 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is the trustee of the trust
7 established under the Alaska Mental Health Enabling Act of 1956, P.L. 84-830, 70 Stat. 709;
8 and

9 **WHEREAS** the mental health trust was established with more than 1,000,000 acres of
10 land and \$200,000,000 to serve the beneficiaries of the trust with services related to mental
11 health and to enable the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to act as a catalyst for change
12 in the systems and services that serve the beneficiaries of the trust; and

13 **WHEREAS** many of Alaska's most vulnerable citizens, who experience mental
14 illness, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, alcohol and
15 substance addictions, traumatic brain injuries, and other mental health disabilities, are

1 beneficiaries of the mental health trust; and

2 **WHEREAS** many of these vulnerable Alaskans suffer neglect; sexual, physical, and
3 emotional abuse; homelessness; and exposure to domestic violence; and

4 **WHEREAS** many communities lack adequate mental health care and treatment
5 facilities; and

6 **WHEREAS** employment opportunities, treatment, education, and housing for
7 beneficiaries of the mental health trust are particularly limited in the rural areas of the state;
8 and

9 **WHEREAS** the lack of jobs in the rural areas of the state contributes to unlawful
10 behavior, feelings of despair, and, in extreme cases, suicide; and

11 **WHEREAS** more than 40 percent of the offenders in Alaska's correctional facilities
12 are beneficiaries of the mental health trust; and

13 **WHEREAS** many of the beneficiaries of the mental health trust who have access to
14 an adequate support program are capable of being employed; and

15 **WHEREAS** prevention and early intervention by mental health organizations can
16 prevent more costly institutional and intensive care; and

17 **WHEREAS** the costs of providing mental health care services are increasing; and

18 **WHEREAS** the Department of Health and Social Services, the Alaska Mental Health
19 Trust Authority, and other partner organizations work cooperatively to plan, budget, and
20 implement an integrated and comprehensive mental health program for the state; and

21 **WHEREAS** the ability of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to assist the state
22 in developing a better mental health program is largely dependent on the authority's ability to
23 generate revenue from the land and natural resources of the trust; and

24 **WHEREAS** development of the land held by the mental health trust creates jobs for
25 beneficiaries of the mental health trust and other Alaskans;

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives encourages the Alaska Mental
27 Health Trust Authority to develop its land and resources to the fullest extent possible,
28 consistent with its legal and moral responsibility to advance mental health services and
29 employment opportunities that protect and enhance the lives of those who benefit from the
30 mental health trust.