

Grants to assist Pregnant women

John Pugh, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services announced this month that his department has awarded grants earlier this month totalling \$672,000 to eleven private agencies around the state to provide social services to pregnant women who are experiencing economic or social difficulties. The grant funds were authorized by legislation enacted last year, which was originally sponsored by Mike Miller (Juneau), Terry Martin and Fred Zharoff. The agencies receiving the grants will provide services to assist pregnant women to complete a healthy pregnancy, experience safe delivery, and to raise healthy children.

"The programs are preventive in nature," said Pugh. "Many studies have shown that pregnant women who receive supportive services are more likely to have healthy babies, and are less likely to deliver babies of low birth

weight. In addition, women receiving these services tend to have fewer social problems, be better parents, and be less dependent on other social services in later years."

Eleven projects funded by the grants will offer a variety of health and social services such as foster care, residential care for homeless expectant mothers, counseling services, education and parenting skill training, adoption assistance, transportation to maternity homes or foster homes, and self-sufficiency programs providing the expectant mother with employment related ser-

vices, child care training, and remedial education.

The grants were awarded to the following private agencies: the Norton Sound Health Corporation in Nome, the Maniilaq Association in Kotzebue, the Bristol Bay Health Corporation in Dillingham, the Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Fairbanks Counselling and Adoption Association in Fairbanks, SEACAP in Juneau, and Catholic Social Services, Anchorage Child Abuse Board, Alaska Women's Resource Center, and the Salvation Army Booth Memorial Home in Anchorage.