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NEWS RELEASE



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**Attorney General Will Seek To Uphold Alaska Parental Consent Act
In Appeal to State Supreme Court**

(Juneau, AK) - Attorney General Gregg Renkes announced today that he will appeal to the Alaska Supreme Court the recent decision by Superior Court Judge Tan, which found the Alaska Parental Consent Act unconstitutional.

“We believe that requiring parental or judicial consent before a minor child may seek an abortion is constitutional and does not violate the rights of privacy or equal protection guaranteed by the Alaska Constitution,” said Attorney General Renkes.

“It is important that after an extensive review of evidence, the superior court found that the State has several compelling interests in enforcing the Parental Consent Act,” Renkes said.

The Act provides that unmarried, unemancipated girls aged 16 and under must obtain parental or judicial consent before they may obtain an abortion.

The superior court found that the State has compelling interests in protecting minors from their own immaturity; protecting the physical, emotional, and psychological health of minors; ensuring that doctors obtain informed consent from minor patients; protecting minors from sexual abuse; fostering and protecting the family structure; and protecting the rights of a minor child to bring a civil action against the doctor performing the abortion.

“An extensive record has been created and the State's compelling interests have been established,” Renkes said. “The court’s findings that the Act does not use the least restrictive means possible to serve those interests should be reviewed by the Alaska Supreme Court.”

Attorney General Renkes concluded, “Similar laws have been upheld by the United States Supreme Court and are in operation in nearly 40 other states. I am hopeful that on review, the Alaska Supreme Court will reverse the findings of the superior court. We should be allowed to provide these protections for families and children in our state.”

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