

GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION OF ALASKA OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES REQUESTED

September 08, 2016
Thursday PM

(SitNews) North Pole, Alaska - Representative Tammie Wilson (R-North Pole) has requested that a Grand Jury conduct an investigation into how the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and the Office of Children Services (OCS) are complying with statutory duties.

"OCS has become a protected empire built on taking children and separating families," Wilson said. "This is not to say there are not those children who do need to be removed from horrible situations and need protection. I believe children and parents are caught up in legal kidnapping and ineffective politics.

"I have scores of cases of exhausted families on my desk," Wilson said. "I cannot turn my back on these suffering, crying and sometimes beaten down individuals. We are mistreating the most vulnerable. No longer is judgment based on what the child needs or who the child wants to be with or what is really best for the whole family, it is some adult or bureaucrat who makes the decision sometimes based only on hearsay.

"This request is made because I have received numerous complaints and inquiries from parents, grandparents, foster parents and health care providers," Wilson said.

Wilson said, "There are significant, systematic problems with how OCS operates which is illustrated by the fact that the number of children in State custody has grown dramatically.

Also Wilson alleges, "There are areas where legal requirements are being ignored, or simply disregarded. These include missing case plans, plans lacking parent signatures, missing and incomplete visitation or contact plans, lack of plan reviews and updated goals and inadequate legal representation."

"Impoverished individuals appear to be targeted since they make up the overwhelming majority of OCS cases," said Wilson.

"I have witnessed such injustice and harm brought to these families that I am not sure if I even believe reform of the system is possible, in fact, criminals have more rights than parents," Wilson said. "The system cannot be trusted. It does not serve the people. It obliterates families and children."

"I have respectfully asked the District Attorneys of the State of Alaska to convene a Grand Jury so they can conduct a formal investigation, and, pursuant to its authority, summon and examine witnesses, obtain and examine records and documents, and publish a written investigative report," Wilson said.