CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15(RLS)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/23/00
Referred: Today's Calendar

Sponsor(s): SENATORS LINCOLN, Hoffman, Taylor, Adams, Ward, Elton, Ellis, Mackie

REPRESENTATIVES Morgan, Dyson, Green, Whitaker, Kapsner, Smalley, Murkowski

A RESOLUTION

1 Relating to Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Weeks.

2 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects, which are birth defects
4 related to alcohol consumption by pregnant women, can be prevented if pregnant women and
5 women who plan to become pregnant abstain from alcohol consumption; and
6 WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome results in permanent growth retardation, physical
7 malformations, and permanent central nervous system damage, including developmental
8 delays, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems, and is most often accompanied by
9 mental retardation; and
10 WHEREAS pregnant women who consume alcohol also risk having children with fetal
11 alcohol effects, which most often include permanent developmental delays, learning
12 disabilities, and behavioral problems; and
13 WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome is the number one identifiable cause in the United
14 States of birth defects accompanied by mental retardation and the only preventable one; and
15 WHEREAS alcohol-related birth defects have only recently been discovered to be a
16 major health problem, and many questions regarding them remain unanswered; and
17 WHEREAS research shows that children with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol
effects are often unable to live totally independent lives; and

WHEREAS research has also shown that additional children of a woman who has
previously given birth to a child with an alcohol-related birth defect are most often born with
alcohol-related birth defects in successively severe degrees if the woman continues to drink
during her pregnancies; and

WHEREAS, without exception, mothers of infants born with fetal alcohol syndrome
consumed alcohol during pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, in the case of substance-abusing women of childbearing age, treatment
before conception is an effective method of preventing alcohol-related and other drug-related
birth defects; and

WHEREAS the Surgeon General has issued an advisory that pregnant women and
women who plan to become pregnant should not consume alcohol; and

WHEREAS the division of alcohol and drug abuse, Department of Health and Social
Services, will be conducting a campaign designed to increase awareness of fetal alcohol
syndrome during the week of May 14 - 20, 2000; and

WHEREAS the legislature recognizes that the sobriety of fathers is also important to
the well-being of their children and the healthy functioning of their families; and

WHEREAS the legislature wishes to acknowledge RurAL CAP’s statewide activities
against irresponsible use of alcohol during pregnancy;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
Governor to proclaim both the week of Mother’s Day, May 14 - 20, 2000, and the week of
Father’s Day, June 18 - 24, 2000, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Weeks and
urges schools, health care organizations and practitioners, and other public and private
agencies and individuals observe the weeks with appropriate activities.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the governing body of each school district,
the State Medical Board, the Board of Certified Direct-Entry Midwives, the Board of Nursing,
RurAL CAP, and the chief executive officer of each hospital and health clinic in the state.