

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 14

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES TUCK, Story

Introduced: 2/21/20

Referred: Community and Regional Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Proclaiming March 2020 as Brain Injury Awareness Month.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** the month of March is National Brain Injury Awareness Month, a time to
4 recognize the prevalence of brain injuries and help improve quality of life for individuals who
5 have sustained a brain injury; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a traumatic brain
7 injury as a disruption in the normal function of the brain that can be caused by a bump, blow,
8 or jolt to the head, or penetrating head injury; and

9 **WHEREAS** traumatic and acquired brain injuries can happen to anyone and can bring
10 a lifetime of secondary health conditions, including persistent post-concussion syndrome, post
11 traumatic stress injury, physical impairment, developmental delays, paralysis, cognitive and
12 behavioral problems, suicidal thoughts, and a greater risk for dementia, including
13 Alzheimer's, which may present lifelong challenges for individuals and their families; and

14 **WHEREAS** traumatic brain injuries, which often result from motor vehicle accidents,
15 falls, assaults, domestic violence, and sports and occupational injuries, are largely
16 preventable; and

1 **WHEREAS** the rate of identified traumatic and acquired brain injuries in the state is
2 significantly higher than the national rate; and

3 **WHEREAS** between 3,200,000 and 5,300,000 Americans live with long-term
4 disabilities resulting from traumatic brain injuries; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 2016, approximately 27,000,000 new cases of traumatic brain injuries
6 were reported worldwide; and

7 **WHEREAS** the Brain Injury Association of America reports that every nine seconds
8 someone in the United States sustains a brain injury; and

9 **WHEREAS** approximately 137 people die every day in the United States because of
10 traumatic brain injury-related injuries; and

11 **WHEREAS** traumatic and acquired brain injuries may lead to homelessness,
12 substance or alcohol abuse, criminal behavior, domestic violence, or incorrectly diagnosed
13 mental or behavioral health disorders; and

14 **WHEREAS** access to education, assessment, support, and care can greatly improve
15 quality of life for an individual who has suffered a traumatic or acquired brain injury and
16 enable the individual to return to the individual's home, school, workplace, and community,
17 reducing the overall cost of care; and

18 **WHEREAS** policymakers have a responsibility to promote the safety and well-being
19 of our communities, including prevention of brain injuries, through resolutions and person-
20 centered policies; and

21 **WHEREAS** the global project Unmasking Brain Injury and other similar projects
22 seek to give survivors of traumatic and acquired brain injuries a voice, to promote brain injury
23 awareness and education, and to eliminate stigma and discrimination by showing that an
24 individual living with a brain injury deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and
25 compassion and deserves full inclusion in the individual's community; and

26 **WHEREAS** Brain Injury Awareness Month is recognized by the Department of
27 Defense; and

28 **WHEREAS**, since 2000, over 339,462 service members have sustained traumatic
29 brain injuries;

30 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature proclaims March 2020 as Brain
31 Injury Awareness Month and encourages residents of the state to further public awareness of

1 the effects of brain injuries and the importance of taking steps to prevent brain injuries.

2 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Mike Dunleavy, Governor
3 of Alaska; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S.
4 Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
5 delegation in Congress.