

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2006

**Source**  
SCS HJR 31(HES)

**Legislative  
Resolve No.**  
54



Relating to designating September 9, 2006, as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day.

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

**WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorders include a broad range of effects that can result for a child born of a mother who drank alcohol during pregnancy; and

**WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are permanent birth defects that can affect brain function, emotional and physical development, behavior, facial features, learning, and sleeping; and

**WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are the leading cause of mental retardation in western civilization, including the United States, and are entirely preventable; and

**WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are a major cause of numerous social disorders, including learning disabilities, school failure, juvenile delinquency, homelessness, unemployment, mental illness, and crime; and

**WHEREAS** the incidence rate of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders is estimated at one out of 100 live births in the United States; and

**WHEREAS** more than 126 children are born in the state each year with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders; and

**WHEREAS** Alaska ranks first in the United States, of the states with reliable and available surveillance data, as having the highest number of children born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders; and

**WHEREAS** the economic cost of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in 2003 in the United States has been estimated to be \$5,400,000,000, and it is estimated that each individual with fetal alcohol syndrome will cost United States taxpayers between \$1,500,000 and \$3,000,000 over the course of the individual's lifetime; and

**WHEREAS** it is in the best interest of the public to eliminate the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in children born in the state by using all appropriate means; and

**WHEREAS** it is in the best interest of the public to support education and early diagnosis and treatment programs related to fetal alcohol spectrum disorders for families residing in the state; and

**WHEREAS** the first International Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day was observed on September 9, 1999; and

**WHEREAS** Bonnie Buxton of Toronto, Canada, the co-founder of the first International Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day, asked "What if . . . a world full of FAS/E [Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effects] parents all got together on the ninth hour of the ninth day of the ninth month of the year and asked the world to remember that during the nine months of pregnancy a woman should not consume alcohol . . . would the rest of the world listen?"; and

**WHEREAS**, on the ninth day of the ninth month of each year since 1999, communities around the world have observed International Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day;

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that September 9, 2006, be designated as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the people of the state observe Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day with appropriate ceremonies to promote awareness of the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol, increase compassion for individuals affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol, minimize further effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol, and ensure

healthier communities across the state; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the people of the state observe a moment of reflection on the ninth hour of September 9, 2006, to remember that during the nine months of pregnancy a woman should not consume alcohol.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Karleen Jackson, Commissioner, Department of Health and Social Services; Kevin C. Ritchie, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League; Denise Michels, President, Alaska Conference of Mayors; David Talericho, President, Alaska Municipal League Board of Directors; Mary Becker, President, Association of Alaska School Boards; Carl Rose, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards; and the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.