

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

HCR7

“Proclaiming April 2015 as Child Abuse Prevention Month; and proclaiming April 3, 2015, as Go Blue Friday”

Sponsor Statement

Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. In 2014, the Office of Children’s Services statistics showed that there were 40,000 allegations of child maltreatment, meaning abuse or neglect of a person under 18 years of age.

Children subject to abuse are more likely to become abusers themselves. They are also 9 times more likely to engage in criminal and other anti-social behavior than children who do not experience neglect. Emotionally and physically, abuse has long-term effects including improper brain formation, an inability to trust, low self-esteem, and an increased vulnerability to post-traumatic stress disorder, sexually transmitted diseases, heart disease, cancer, and depression.

Every child deserves a loving family, a safe home, and the opportunity to grow into an upstanding and responsible member of society. We have to work together to support our children.

This resolution proclaims April 2015 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in an effort to raise awareness of child abuse nationally and in-state. In 1983, the U.S. Legislature proclaimed April the first National Child Abuse Prevention Month to show a commitment to identifying and implementing solutions to end child abuse. As a result, child abuse and neglect awareness activities are promoted across the country during April of each year. Many governors also issue proclamations to encourage initiatives and events in their respective states.

The high rates of child abuse in Alaska must stop, and recognition and an open discussion are ways to assist in breaking this painful cycle. I invite all citizens in Alaska to join me on April 3rd, 2015 to wear blue as a symbolic gesture that child abuse will not be tolerated and we stand together in putting an end to the abuse.