

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE NICHOLIA

Introduced: 4/11/95

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 Relating to Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week.

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 the latest research shows that children with fetal alcohol syndrome and

1 fetal alcohol effects are often unable to live totally independent lives; and

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

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

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

10 **WHEREAS** the division of alcohol and drug abuse, Department of Health and Social
11 Services, will be conducting a statewide campaign designed to increase awareness of fetal
12 alcohol syndrome during the week of May 14 - 20, 1995; and

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

15 **WHEREAS** the legislature wishes to acknowledge RuralCap's statewide activities
16 against irresponsible use of alcohol during pregnancy;

17 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages widespread
18 involvement in RuralCap's Mother's Day Campaign, which is occurring during May 7 - 13,
19 1995; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
21 Governor to proclaim both the week following Mother's Day, May 14 - 20, 1995, and the
22 week following Father's Day, June 18 - 24, 1995, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness
23 Week, and urges schools, health care organizations and practitioners, and other public and
24 private agencies and individuals observe the weeks with appropriate activities.

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