

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 6

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES NICHOLIA, Grussendorf, Dyson, Ryan, Croft, James, Kubina, Kempen

SENATORS Lincoln, Parnell, Duncan, Ellis, Taylor, Leman, Mackie, Wilken

Introduced: 1/22/97

Referred: Community and Regional Affairs, Health, Education and Social Services, Finance

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 11 - 17, 1997; 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 RurAL CAP'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 RurAL CAP's Mother's Day Campaign, which is occurring during May 11 -
19 17, 1997; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
21 Governor to proclaim both the week of Mother's Day, May 11 - 17, 1997, and the week of
22 Father's Day, June 15 - 21, 1997, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week and
23 urges schools, health care organizations and practitioners, and other public and private
24 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 RurAL CAP, and the chief executive officer of each hospital and health clinic in the state.