

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

2000

Source
CSSCR 15(RLS)

Legislative
Resolve No.
39



Relating to Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Weeks.

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

WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects, which are birth defects related to alcohol consumption by pregnant women, can be prevented if pregnant women and women who plan to become pregnant abstain from alcohol consumption; and

WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome results in permanent growth retardation, physical malformations, and permanent central nervous system damage, including developmental delays, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems, and is most often accompanied by mental retardation; and

WHEREAS pregnant women who consume alcohol also risk having children with fetal alcohol effects, which most often include permanent developmental delays, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems; and

WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome is the number one identifiable cause in the United States of birth defects accompanied by mental retardation and the only preventable one; and

WHEREAS alcohol-related birth defects have only recently been discovered to be a major health problem, and many questions regarding them remain unanswered; and

WHEREAS research shows that children with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol

effects are often unable to live totally independent lives; and

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

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

WHEREAS, in the case of substance-abusing women of childbearing age, treatment before conception is an effective method of preventing alcohol-related and other drug-related birth defects; and

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

WHEREAS the division of alcohol and drug abuse, Department of Health and Social Services, will be conducting a campaign designed to increase awareness of fetal alcohol syndrome during the week of May 14 - 20, 2000; and

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

WHEREAS the legislature wishes to acknowledge RurAL CAP's statewide activities against irresponsible use of alcohol during pregnancy;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Governor to proclaim both the week of Mother's Day, May 14 - 20, 2000, and the week of Father's Day, June 18 - 24, 2000, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Weeks and urges schools, health care organizations and practitioners, and other public and private agencies and individuals observe the weeks with appropriate activities.

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