

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES WEYHRAUCH, Kerttula, Holm, Lynn, Gardner, Neuman, Salmon, Seaton

Introduced: 2/8/06

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

**A RESOLUTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6           **WHEREAS** the economic cost of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in 2003 in the  
7 United States has been estimated to be \$5,400,000,000, and it is estimated that each individual  
8 with fetal alcohol syndrome will cost United States taxpayers between \$1,500,000 and  
9 \$3,000,000 over the course of the individual's lifetime; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 healthier communities across the state; and be it

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

5 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the  
6 Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.  
7 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.