

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATORS KELLY, Fairclough, Giessel, Meyer, Micciche, Bishop, Ellis, Stedman, McGuire, Dyson, Dunleavy

Introduced: 2/7/14

Referred: Health and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

Urging the governor to establish and support programs designed to eradicate the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder from the state.

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

WHEREAS fetal alcohol spectrum disorder permanently alters a child's cognitive abilities; and

WHEREAS fetal alcohol spectrum disorder has been identified as a pervasive and chronic driver of numerous social challenges throughout the state; and

WHEREAS the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state is preventable; and

WHEREAS each child born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder costs the state as much as \$4,200,000 during the child's lifetime; and

WHEREAS Alaska has the highest documented prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to the Alaska Maternal and Child Health Data Book, the overall prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in the state is 112.9 for each 10,000 live births; and

1 **WHEREAS**, while the state currently maintains high quality screening for fetal
 2 alcohol spectrum disorder, further advancement in rapid assessment and neo-natal screening
 3 capability is needed; and

4 **WHEREAS**, in 2012, the legislature passed legislation making the existence of fetal
 5 alcohol spectrum disorder a mitigating factor for criminal sentencing; and

6 **WHEREAS** using fetal alcohol spectrum disorder as a mitigating factor at criminal
 7 sentencing is currently being hindered by the lack of available, effective, and timely fetal
 8 alcohol spectrum disorder screening within the Department of Corrections; and

9 **WHEREAS** misconceptions continue to exist regarding the causal factors and lifelong
 10 effects of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder; and

11 **WHEREAS**, according to research conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental
 12 Health Service Administration, 90 percent of women stop drinking once they learn they are
 13 pregnant; and

14 **WHEREAS**, because the highest risk of fetal exposure to alcohol occurs during the
 15 time between conception and knowledge of the pregnancy, it is critical that a woman learns
 16 that she is pregnant as early as possible in the gestational period; and

17 **WHEREAS** the state presently lacks sufficient residential substance abuse treatment
 18 services focusing on women who are pregnant and experiencing alcohol or drug addiction, or
 19 both; and

20 **WHEREAS** the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state can be
 21 eradicated through focused efforts and effective collaboration;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the governor to establish
 23 and to support programs designed to eradicate the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum
 24 disorder from the state; and be it

25 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports a strong public
 26 awareness campaign designed to inform, move, and motivate state residents in an effort to
 27 prevent the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports programs that
 29 will minimize the risk of fetal exposure to alcohol; and be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governor
 31 to increase the capability of rapid screening for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder within the

1 Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Social Services; and be it
2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governor
3 to take actions to expand residential substance abuse treatment services in the state for women
4 who are pregnant and concurrently experiencing alcohol and drug addiction challenges,
5 including exploring appropriate partnerships to prioritize the admission of pregnant women
6 into homes operated by the Indian Health Services for the care of women.