

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 55

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Recognizing April as National Alcohol

6

Awareness Month.

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

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WHEREAS the National Council on Alcoholism has designated April as

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"National Alcohol Awareness Month"; and

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WHEREAS alcoholism is a chronic, progressive, and potentially fatal

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disease characterized by tolerance and physical dependency or pathological

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organ changes, or both, that are the direct or indirect consequences of the

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alcohol ingested; and

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WHEREAS alcoholism and alcohol abuse occur in every socio-economic

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group, although the problems may manifest themselves differently across

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groups; and

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WHEREAS alcoholism is one of the most serious public health problems

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in the United States today; and

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WHEREAS among the 18,300,000 adult "heavier drinkers," those consuming

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more than 14 drinks per week, 12,100,000 have one or more symptoms of

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alcoholism, an increase of 8.2 percent since 1980; and

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WHEREAS Alaska ranks fourth nationally in per capita consumption of

23

alcohol for those 14 and older; and

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WHEREAS 55 percent of all crime in the state is estimated to be alco-

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hol related and 90 percent of all child abuse cases in the state are alco-

26

hol related; and

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WHEREAS alcohol is the most widely used and abused drug in America;

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alcohol abuse accounts for approximately 98,000 deaths annually and is

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known to cause or contribute to other fatal illnesses, including cardiac

1 myopathy, hypertensive diseases, pneumonia, and several types of cancer;
2 and

3 WHEREAS chronic brain injury caused by alcohol is second only to
4 Alzheimer's disease as a known cause of mental deterioration in adults; and

5 WHEREAS children of alcoholics have four times greater risk of devel-
6 oping alcoholism than children of nonalcoholics; and

7 WHEREAS about 65 out of every 100 persons in the United States will be
8 in an alcohol related automobile accident in their lifetimes and alcohol
9 related highway deaths are the number one killer of people between the ages
10 of 15 and 24; and

11 WHEREAS alcohol is a contributing factor in at least 15,000 fatal and
12 6,000,000 nonfatal injuries in nonhighway settings and alcoholics are 10
13 times more likely to die from fires than nonalcoholics, 5 to 13 times more
14 likely to die from falls, and commit suicide from 6 to 15 times more fre-
15 quently than the general population; and

16 WHEREAS Alaska has the highest rate of birth defects due to fetal
17 alcohol syndrome; and

18 WHEREAS fetal alcohol syndrome is the third leading cause of birth
19 defects with accompanying mental retardation, and the only preventable
20 cause among the top three causes of birth defects;

21 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature joins the National
22 Council on Alcoholism in recognizing April 1988 as "National Alcohol Aware-
23 ness Month" and that all citizens of the state are urged to become more
24 aware of the detrimental effects of alcohol abuse.