

# STATE OF ALASKA

## THE LEGISLATURE

1989

Source

Legislative  
Resolve No.

SCR 18

32



Relating to inhalant abuse.

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

WHEREAS substance abuse by Alaskan teenagers is among the highest in the nation and rising at a time when other states are seeing a decrease in substance abuse by their teenagers; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent report published by the University of Alaska Anchorage, inhalant abuse in Alaska has increased 9.4 percent since 1983, the largest increase of all illicit chemical substances; and

WHEREAS inhalant abuse is hard to control because the substances that can be abused are very common and are found in most household products, including fingernail polish remover, typewriter correcting fluid, nonstick cooking oil and other aerosol sprays such as hairspray and deodorants, lighter fluids, and gasoline; and

WHEREAS inhalants tend to be used by young children because they are so readily available and cheap, creating an inverse relationship between the age of the abuser and the frequency with which abuse occurs; and

WHEREAS chronic use of some inhalants has been found to cause damage to the brain, liver, kidneys, heart, nervous system, blood and bone marrow, and, depending on the type of inhalant, this damage may not be reversible; and

WHEREAS toluene, the solvent found in paint thinners, commercial cleaners, and gasoline, which may be the most commonly abused substance in Alaska, has been shown to cause irreversible brain damage; and

WHEREAS the damage caused by inhalant abuse, the warning signs of abuse, where to go for help, and the availability of nontoxic alternatives to replace some products that are frequently abused are not well known in the state;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the Governor is respectfully requested to direct the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education to work together to assist the office of alcoholism and drug abuse to act as a clearinghouse for concerned citizens, organizations, communities, and school districts with respect to information on inhalant abuse and what can be done to stop or prevent it; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is also respectfully requested to direct the Department of Health and Social Services to include in its drug and alcohol abuse advertising and educational programs information on inhalant abuse; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that information regarding nontoxic office products should be provided to the purchasing agent for every state agency, including the legislature and the court system, and that these agencies should, whenever possible, purchase the nontoxic brands rather than those that contain toxic substances.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Myra M. Munson, commissioner of health and social services; the Honorable William G. Demmert, commissioner of education; each purchasing officer in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government; the members of the Alaska State Board of Education; and to the superintendent of each of the 55 school districts in Alaska.