

**STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE**

**2014**

**Source**  
CSSCR 13(HSS)

**Legislative  
Resolve No.**  
41



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

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**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

**WHEREAS**, while the state currently maintains a high quality diagnostic system for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, further advancement in rapid assessment and neonatal screening capability is needed; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Social Services; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governor to take actions to expand residential substance abuse treatment services in the state for women who are pregnant and concurrently experiencing alcohol and drug addiction challenges, including exploring appropriate partnerships to prioritize the admission of pregnant women into homes operated by the Indian Health Service for the care of women.