

Alaska State Legislature

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Standing Committees:
Resources
Transportation

Budget Subcommittees:
Natural Resources
Corrections
Public Safety
Community &
Economic Development

Senate District R

Alatna
Alcan
Allakaket
Aniak
Anvik
Arctic Village
Beaver
Bettles
Big Delta
Birch Creek
Boundary
Canyon Village
Central
Chalkyitsik
Chenega bay
Chicken
Chistochina
Chitina
Chuathbaluk
Circle
Coldfoot
Copper Center
Cordova
Crooked Creek
Delta Junction
Dot Lake
Dry Creek
Eagle
Eagle Village
Evansville
Eyak
Fort Greely
Fort Yukon
Four Mile Road
Gakona
Galena
Georgetown
Glennallen
Grayling
Gulkana
Healy Lake
Holy Cross
Hughes
Huslia
Kaltag
Kenny Lake
Koyukuk
Lake Minchumina
Lime Village
Livengood
Lower Kalskag
Manley Hot Springs
Marshall
McCarthy
McGrath
Medfra
Mendeltna
Mentasta
Minto
Nabesna
Nenana
Nikolai
Northway
Nulato
Paxon
Pilot Station
Rampart
Red Devil
Ruby
Russian Mission
Shageluk
Silver Springs
Slana
Sleetmute
Stevens Village
Stony River
Takotna
Tanacross
Tanana
Tatitlek
Tazlina
Telida
Tetiin
Tok
Tolsona
Tonsina
Tuluksak
Tyonek
Upper Kalskag
Valdez
Venetie
Whittier
Wiseman

SPONSOR STATEMENT SCR 15

Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week

SCR 15 would recognize both Mother's Day week of May 14-20 and Father's Day week of June 18-24, 2000 as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) related birth defects include permanent growth retardation, physical malformations, and permanent central nervous system damage, including developmental delays, learning disabilities, behavioral problems and mental retardation.

- FAS is the **number one** known **cause of mental retardation** in the United States, and one of the three leading causes of birth defects.
- Alaska has an estimated FAS prevalence rate of **1.0-1.4 per 1000** live births.
- Fetal Alcohol Effects may lack the outward physical appearance of alcohol damage but the internal damage to the brain and other organs can be just as serious as FAS.
- Approximately **36 percent** of children with FAS/E end up in state-funded foster care.
- 68% of the children served through the Division of Family and Youth Services subsidized adoption and guardianship program are affected by FAS or prenatal drug and alcohol exposure.
- The **effects of FAS never go away**. FAS/E is a lifetime disability.
- There is **no known safe amount of alcohol** for a pregnant woman. When a woman drinks, the alcohol passes directly through the placenta to the baby.
- The estimated lifetime cost per FAS birth in Alaska is between **\$1.4 million and \$3 million dollars**.
- Fathers have an equal responsibility to prevent FAS children from being born. They are encouraged to remain sober during the pregnancy as well.

We have the opportunity to make an impact in the area of FAS by both improving quality of life and by promoting cost effective prevention. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is 100% preventable. Let's work together to send a message to the public about the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

I strongly urge you to support SCR 15 and Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week.