

2012 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 128

Designating the third week in April, in 2013 and in each succeeding year, as Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week in Virginia.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 20, 2012

Agreed to by the Senate, February 28, 2012

WHEREAS, the month of April has been designated "National Child Abuse Prevention Month" as an annual observance initiated in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter; and

WHEREAS, Shaken Baby Syndrome or abusive head trauma, a form of inflicted head trauma occurring when a child is vigorously shaken, is the leading cause of death in child abuse cases in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 80 percent of children who survive serious injuries associated with Shaken Baby Syndrome or abusive head trauma will suffer permanent disability and many will require expensive long-term health care and other services; and

WHEREAS, Shaken Baby Syndrome may result in more than \$1,000,000 in medical costs to care for a single, disabled child in just the first few years of life; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of victims of Shaken Baby Syndrome or abusive head trauma are infants younger than one year old; and

WHEREAS, the perpetrators in these cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome or abusive head trauma are most often parents or caregivers, most frequently male parents or caregivers; and

WHEREAS, caregiver frustration related to a baby's inconsolable crying is often the trigger that results in shaking the baby; and

WHEREAS, prevention programs that teach new parents about infant crying being normal and beneficial and about the dangers associated with shaking a baby can be effective in preventing the number of cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome and thereby prevent enormous medical and disability costs and immeasurable grief for many families; and

WHEREAS, efforts to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome are supported by advocacy groups in Virginia and across the United States that were formed by parents and relatives of children who have been killed or injured by shaking, including Shaken Baby Syndrome of Virginia, the National Shaken Baby Coalition, the Shaken Baby Association, the SKIPPER Initiative, the Sarah Jane Brain Foundation, and many other organizations; and

WHEREAS, awareness, education, and training for parents and caregivers can reduce the risk that a child will be shaken and that a child will suffer injuries associated with Shaken Baby Syndrome or abusive head trauma; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate the third week in April, in 2013 and in each succeeding year, as Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week in Virginia in honor of Jared Nicholas Patton and all the many other victims of Shaken Baby Syndrome in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this week on the General Assembly's website.

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