

# 1996 SESSION

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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 169

*Designating the week of May 12-18, 1996, and in each succeeding year the week that begins with Mother's Day, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week in Virginia.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 8, 1996

Agreed to by the Senate, March 6, 1996

WHEREAS, fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects, which are birth defects related to alcohol consumption by pregnant women, can be prevented if pregnant women and women who plan to become pregnant abstain from alcohol consumption; and

WHEREAS, fetal alcohol syndrome results in permanent growth retardation, physical malformations, and permanent central nervous system damage, including developmental delays, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems, and is most often accompanied by mental retardation; and

WHEREAS, pregnant women who consume alcohol also risk having children with fetal alcohol effects, which may include permanent developmental delays, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems; and

WHEREAS, fetal alcohol syndrome is the number one identifiable cause in the United States of birth defects accompanied by mental retardation and is the only preventable one; and

WHEREAS, alcohol-related birth defects have only recently been discovered to be a major health problem and many questions regarding them remain unanswered; and

WHEREAS, the latest research shows that children with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects are often unable to live totally independent lives; and

WHEREAS, without exception, mothers of infants born with fetal alcohol syndrome consumed alcohol during pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General has issued an advisory that pregnant women and women who plan to become pregnant should not consume alcohol; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate the week of May 12-18, 1996, and in each succeeding year the week that begins with Mother's Day, as Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly urge the Commonwealth's schools, health care organizations and practitioners, and other public and private agencies to observe the week with appropriate activities; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the General Assembly strongly encourage the citizens of Virginia to learn about this serious, and wholly preventable, condition and to take firm action towards its eradication.

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