

HR 9085

2007

House Resolution

A resolution recognizing April 16-22, 2007, as "Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week" in Florida.

WHEREAS, government statistics show that, in 2003, unspeakable pain and suffering were inflicted upon more than 906,000 children, our nation's most vulnerable citizens, as victims of abuse and neglect, and, on an average day in the United States, four of these hapless children die, and

WHEREAS, the leading cause of death among abused children is inflicted head trauma, including that trauma known as Shaken Baby Syndrome, which occurs when a caregiver shakes a baby or young child, most frequently less than 1 year of age but in some cases as old as 5 years, with the resultant loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, or death, and

WHEREAS, on average, 1,200 to 1,400 children in the United States are diagnosed with Shaken Baby Syndrome each year, with thousands of additional cases thought to be misdiagnosed or undetected, and substantial medical evidence seems to indicate that, even when injuries resulting from this form of abuse are moderate, such injuries and similar trauma are likely to cause learning disabilities in children and to substantially increase their vulnerability to substance abuse, and

WHEREAS, during the first few years of the life of a single child disabled by its having been shaken, medical and rehabilitation costs may amount to more than a million dollars, with annual national costs of child abuse estimated at more than \$94 billion, and Florida Medicaid would likely bear some of the

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29 | medical and rehabilitation costs associated with Shaken Baby
30 | Syndrome injuries, and

31 | WHEREAS, the most effective way to end Shaken Baby Syndrome
32 | is by preventing such abuse, and, inasmuch as awareness and
33 | prevention programs have provided critically important
34 | information to parents, caregivers, daycare workers, child
35 | protection employees, law enforcement personnel, health care
36 | professionals, and legal representatives, it is clear that the
37 | minimal costs of such programs may avert enormous medical and
38 | disability expenditures as well as untold grief for many
39 | families, and

40 | WHEREAS, prevention programs have demonstrated that
41 | educating new parents about the danger of shaking young children
42 | and how they can help protect their child from injury can effect
43 | a significant reduction in the number of Shaken Baby Syndrome
44 | cases, and

45 | WHEREAS, training and education for child care providers
46 | and high school and middle school students who are frequently
47 | employed as paid or unpaid babysitters are also effective in
48 | helping them keep young children safe from injury, and

49 | WHEREAS, such national groups as the National Shaken Baby
50 | Coalition, the Shaken Baby Alliance, the SKIPPER Initiative, and
51 | the National Center for Shaken Baby Syndrome are experiencing
52 | great success in their mission to educate new parents and
53 | caregivers, increase awareness among the general public and
54 | professionals, and encourage increased support for victims and
55 | their families in the health care and criminal justice systems;
56 | and the selfless commitment and Herculean efforts of those

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57 | working in agencies of state, county, and local governments are
58 | making great strides toward the eradication of this and all
59 | forms of child abuse, NOW, THEREFORE,

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61 | Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
62 | Florida:

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64 | That the House of Representatives commends those advocates
65 | and organizations and the agencies of state, county, and local
66 | governments that are committed to fostering an awareness among
67 | parents and caregivers of the causes, consequences, and
68 | prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and other inflicted abuse and
69 | recognizes April 16-22, 2007, as "Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness
70 | Week" in Florida.