

STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation *by* *Governor Bill Walker*

WHEREAS, protecting Alaska's children is a priority at every stage of infancy and childhood, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) are a leading cause of preventable and permanent birth defects and intellectual and developmental disabilities in the United States; and

WHEREAS the birth defects associated with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders include brain damage, facial deformities, and deficits in growth, learning, memory, and internal organ development; and

WHEREAS, consuming alcohol at any stage of pregnancy can cause an unborn child to develop FASD, damaging his or her development; and

WHEREAS Alaska has the highest known incidence of FASD in the United States. More than 120 Alaskans are diagnosed with FASD every year, and the number of actual cases is estimated to be even greater; and

WHEREAS, children FASD are often undiagnosed until a child has reached school age. Early diagnosis have been shown to significantly help children with FASD learn to cope with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, FASD present as a variety of physical, behavioral, and learning disabilities and can contribute to conditions such as: hyperactivity, attention deficit, poor memory, speech and language delays; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the personal and emotional difficulties, the lifetime health and social costs in medical care, special education, specialized services, and lost productivity are estimated to cost millions for each individual with FASD; and

WHEREAS, on the ninth day of the ninth month of each year, we remember that the significant consequences of FASD are entirely preventable if mothers refuse to drink alcohol during the nine months of pregnancy.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bill Walker, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA, do hereby proclaim September 9, 2017 as:

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day

in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans to abstain from alcohol consumption throughout the course of pregnancy, and to support pregnant family members and their commitment to protecting the next generation.

Dated: August 31, 2017



Bill Walker
Bill Walker, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.