

JAN 22 2019

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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URGING THE DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO ADOPT THE CANADIAN DIAGNOSTIC GUIDELINE FOR DIAGNOSIS OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER, AS PUBLISHED IN THE CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION JOURNAL.

1 WHEREAS, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is an umbrella  
2 term used to describe a broad spectrum of presentations and  
3 disabilities resulting from alcohol exposure in utero; and  
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5 WHEREAS, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder may include  
6 physical, mental, behavioral, or learning disabilities, with  
7 brain damage being the most serious effect; and  
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9 WHEREAS, different terms are used to describe fetal alcohol  
10 spectrum disorders, depending on the type of symptoms, including  
11 fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol-related neurodevelopmental  
12 disorder, and alcohol-related birth defects; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, diagnosing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is  
15 important to help children and adults, and their families, who  
16 have the disorder; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, a new Canadian diagnostic guideline released in  
19 2016, supported by the Canada Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder  
20 Research Network and published in the Canadian Medical  
21 Association Journal, provides recommendations for diagnosing  
22 fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, specifically for  
23 multidisciplinary diagnostic teams; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, key recommendations from the Canadian diagnostic  
26 guideline include: counseling women and their partners about  
27 abstinence from alcohol during pregnancy or when planning a  
28 pregnancy; screening of all pregnant women and new mothers for  
29 alcohol use by trained professionals; and referring individuals  
30 for possible diagnosis if there is evidence of prenatal exposure  
31 to alcohol at levels associated with adverse brain function; and  
32

33 WHEREAS, one in ten women in the United States report  
34 drinking alcohol during pregnancy; and



# S.R. NO. 3

1  
2           WHEREAS, the diagnostic guideline for fetal alcohol  
3 spectrum disorders in Hawai'i differs from the Canadian  
4 diagnostic guideline; and  
5

6           WHEREAS, the existing practice in Hawai'i is to focus on  
7 physical features at birth or within the first year when  
8 referring children for treatment for fetal alcohol spectrum  
9 disorder, rather than the Canadian diagnostic guideline, which  
10 recommends referral upon physical or developmental effects  
11 whenever there is evidence or suspected prenatal alcohol  
12 exposure; and  
13

14           WHEREAS, the current practice in Hawai'i is also to confirm  
15 prenatal alcohol exposure based on maternal confirmation, which  
16 is not always possible, rather than the Canadian diagnostic  
17 guideline, which suggests a broader range of ways to confirm  
18 possible prenatal exposure to alcohol for purposes of  
19 determining a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder diagnosis; and  
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21           WHEREAS, severe impairment is defined as greater than or  
22 equal to two standard deviations below the mean; however, state  
23 practice is to require greater than or equal to three standard  
24 deviations and require that an individual's intelligence  
25 quotient be two standard deviations below the mean for an  
26 accompanying intellectual disability to qualify for services;  
27 and  
28

29           WHEREAS, individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder  
30 often fall above two standard deviations and therefore cannot  
31 qualify for services in Hawai'i based on their intelligence  
32 quotient and functional impairment, compared to the Canadian  
33 diagnostic guideline, which does not require a mathematical  
34 formula for services; and  
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36           WHEREAS, adopting the new Canadian diagnostic guideline  
37 will improve how clinicians in Hawai'i diagnose fetal alcohol  
38 spectrum disorder in infants and children, thereby leading to  
39 more widespread early intervention and improved prevention  
40 efforts; now, therefore,  
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# S.R. NO. 3

1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature  
 2 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that the  
 3 Departments of Health and Human Services are urged to adopt the  
 4 Canadian diagnostic guideline for diagnosis of fetal alcohol  
 5 spectrum disorder, as published in the Canadian Medical  
 6 Association Journal; and

7  
 8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Health and  
 9 Human Services are urged to consider developmental and physical  
 10 defects or impairment when making a referral for suspected  
 11 prenatal alcohol exposure; and

12  
 13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Health and  
 14 Human Services are urged to confirm suspected prenatal alcohol  
 15 exposure through a variety of ways, as recommended by the  
 16 Canadian diagnostic guideline; and

17  
 18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Health and  
 19 Human Services are urged to modify the definition of severe  
 20 impairment from three to two standard deviations from the mean  
 21 to ensure more infants and children in Hawai'i are able to  
 22 receive needed services; and

23  
 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Health and  
 25 Human Services are urged to eliminate the standard deviations  
 26 requirement related to a child's intelligence quotient to ensure  
 27 infants and children are able to receive needed services; and

28  
 29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 30 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and Director  
 31 of Human Services.

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33  
34 OFFERED BY:

*Hal Nhoon*  


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*Rosely de Bel*  
*[Signature]*  
*[Signature]*  
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