

ENROLLED HOUSE

RESOLUTION NO. 1015 By: Mitchell, Adair, Adkins, Askins, Bastin, Begley, Benson, Beutler, Blackburn, Bonny, Boyd (Betty), Boyd (Laura), Braddock, Bryant, Case, Claunch, Coleman, Collins, Covey, Cox, Culver, Dank, Davis, Deutschendorf, Dunegan, Easley, Eddins, Ervin, Erwin, Ferguson, Fields, Frame, Gilbert, Glover, Graves, Gray, Greenwood, Hager, Hamilton, Hastings, Hefner, Hiett, Hilliard, Hutchison, Ingmire, Key, Kinnamon, Kirby, Kouba, Langmacher, Leist, Lindley, Liotta, Maddux, Mass, Matlock, McCarter, Miller, Morgan, Newport, O'Neal, Ostrander, Paulk, Perry, Pettigrew, Phillips, Plunk, Pope (Clay), Pope (Tim), Ramsey, Reese, Rice, Roach, Roberts, Ross, Sadler, Satterfield, Seikel, Settle, Smith (Dale), Smith (Hopper), Staggs, Stanley, Steidley, Stites, Sullivan (John), Sullivan (Leonard), Taylor, Thomas, Thornbrugh, Toure, Turner, Tyler, Vaughn, Voskuhl, Weaver, Webb, Weese, Wells, Wilt and Worthen

A Resolution designating a Child Abuse Prevention Day; stating the costs of child abuse and neglect; stating the importance of preventing child abuse and neglect; commending public and private agencies for their work in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, there have been 90,586 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect in Oklahoma during the past ten years, and 296 of these children died as the result of abuse; and

WHEREAS, there were 11,646 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect in Oklahoma in fiscal year 1996, and 29 children died as the result of abuse; and

WHEREAS, child abuse in Oklahoma has reached epidemic proportions and must be fought on the same level as other threats to the safety and well-being of Oklahoma's citizens; and

WHEREAS, if thousands of Oklahoma's children had been victims of preventable diseases such as polio, diphtheria, or smallpox last year, there would be a massive public outcry insisting that such an outrage be stopped; and

WHEREAS, research and experience has demonstrated that child abuse and neglect are preventable, and that prevention and early intervention programs are effective and cost-effective; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that child abuse and neglect can be prevented, the Governor of Oklahoma stated in a proclamation designating April to be Child Abuse Prevention Month that "public awareness, community-based family resource programs, other prevention and intervention programs and professional education and training are the best ways to reduce the incidence of children being abused or neglected" and further stated the "children who are abused or neglected often grow up to be abusive or neglectful adults; and the effects of child abuse are felt by whole communities"; and

WHEREAS, Department of Corrections officials have stated that 80% of prison inmates were physically or sexually abused as children; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 1997, the State of Oklahoma appropriated \$2,580,000 for the prevention of child abuse and neglect and \$201,662,429 to the Department of Corrections.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 46TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the costs of human suffering resulting from child abuse and neglect and the costs to Oklahoma taxpayers due to the failure to prevent child abuse and neglect are no longer tolerable.

THAT preventing child abuse and neglect from ever occurring in the first place is more humane and more cost-effective than remedial treatment and the punishment of perpetrators after a child has been injured or killed.

THAT April 23, 1997, is hereby declared to be Child Abuse Prevention Day for the State of Oklahoma.

THAT the Governor, our fellow legislators, and the citizens of Oklahoma join us in demanding an end to this epidemic that hurts and destroys the lives of thousands of Oklahoma's children and families every year.

THAT personnel of the Division of Children and Family Services in the Department of Human Services and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention of the State Department of Health, and the many other public and private agency personnel and volunteers who have committed themselves to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect be recognized and praised for their dedication and resolve.

THAT the Oklahoma Child Abuse Prevention Coalition, the Oklahoma Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, the Tulsa Children's Consortium, the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, the Center on Child Abuse and Neglect at the Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, and the Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse be commended for their efforts to make the prevention of child abuse and neglect a major priority for our state.

THAT copies of this resolution shall be distributed to the Governor, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Human Services, the memberships of the State Board of Health, the Human Services Commission, the Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth, and to any person requesting a copy.

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 23rd day of April, 1997.

Speaker

of the House of
Representatives