

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 300

Designating the week of April 23–30, 2000, as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 27, 2000

Mr. WELLSTONE submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating the week of April 23–30, 2000, as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week”.

Whereas the month of April has been designated National Child Abuse Prevention Month, an annual tradition initiated by former President Jimmy Carter in 1979;

Whereas the most recent Government figures show that over 1,000,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect in 1997, causing unspeakable pain and suffering to our most vulnerable citizens;

Whereas among the children who are victims of abuse and neglect, more than 3 children die each day in this country;

Whereas the rate of child fatalities has risen by 37 percent between 1985 and 1997, with children aged 3 and younger accounting for 77 percent of the fatalities;

Whereas head trauma is the leading cause of death of abused children, including the trauma known as Shaken Baby Syndrome;

Whereas Shaken Baby Syndrome, which results from a caregiver losing control and shaking a baby usually less than 1 year of age, and can cause loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, or death, is a totally preventable form of child abuse;

Whereas an estimated 3,000 children are diagnosed with Shaken Baby Syndrome every year, with thousands more misdiagnosed and undetected;

Whereas Shaken Baby Syndrome often results in permanent, irreparable brain damage or death to an infant, and more than \$1,000,000 in medical costs in just the first few years of life to care for a single, disabled child;

Whereas the most effective solution to ending Shaken Baby Syndrome is to prevent such abuse, and it is clear that the minimal costs of educational and prevention programs may prevent the enormous medical and disability costs and untold grief for many families;

Whereas prevention programs have been shown to raise awareness and provide critically important information about Shaken Baby Syndrome to parents, caregivers, day-care workers, child protection employees, law enforcement personnel, health care professionals, and legal representatives;

Whereas prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome is supported by groups such as the Shaken Baby Alliance, an organi-

zation which began with 3 mothers of children who had been diagnosed with Shaken Baby Syndrome, and whose mission is to educate the general public and professionals about Shaken Baby Syndrome and to increase support for victims and victim families in the health care and criminal justice systems;

Whereas child abuse prevention programs and “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week” are supported by the Shaken Baby Alliance, Children’s Defense Fund, American Academy of Pediatrics, Child Welfare League of America, Prevent Child Abuse America, Brain Injury Association, National Child Abuse Coalition, National Exchange Club Foundation, and many other organizations including the National Basketball Association which is sponsoring a series of “NBA Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Night 2000” events to generate public awareness about the issue of child abuse and neglect during National Child Abuse Prevention Month 2000;

Whereas a year 2000 survey by Prevent Child Abuse America shows that 1/2 of all Americans believe child abuse and neglect is the most important issue facing this country compared to other public health issues; and

Whereas Congress strongly supports efforts to protect children from abuse and neglect: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate designates the week of
- 2 April 23–30, 2000, as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome
- 3 Awareness Week”.

