

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 64

WHEREAS, recognizing that visual development from birth through school age has sensitive and critical periods where abnormalities can lead to permanent impairments, especially in the development of binocular vision, an important part of human vision; and

WHEREAS, realizing that conditions such as strabismus (ocular misalignment) including esotropia (crossed eyes) and exotropia (outward turned eyes) occur in up to 6.7% of children prior to entering elementary school and anisometropia (significant difference in refractive prescription between the eyes) has a 1% or higher prevalence and clinically significant hyperopia (farsightedness) a prevalence of 3-6%; and

WHEREAS, The Journal of the American Public Health Association reported that 25% of Missouri's K-6 children have some kind of vision deficiency; and

WHEREAS, noting that the majority of eye and vision conditions prior to entering elementary school are not obvious on gross examination and go undetected; and

WHEREAS, noting that decreased binocular vision and depth perception can lead to problems in gross motor and fine motor development, and that uncorrected hyperopia is associated with deficits in visual perceptual skills, reading readiness, intelligence quotient, and reading achievement; and

WHEREAS, realizing that early comprehensive childhood eye care is a neglected area, that less than half of pediatricians perform even limited vision screenings, and pediatric screening, when performed, is usually limited to a light reflex test which will not detect most strabismus, hyperopia or anisometropia; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that professional organizations agree that screening under age 3 is not successful but there is ample evidence that amblyopic conditions should be detected and treated as early as possible;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-First General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby impel school districts to implement:

(1) The institution of a comprehensive vision screening to be performed on kindergarten age children. Such screenings should be done through the use of photorefractive technology developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and should screen for myopia, hyperopia, oblique astigmatisms, anisometropia, constant strabismus, ocular media opacities, other visible eye abnormalities, and defects that can lead to amblyopia.

(2) With the completion of such screening all children and schools would receive information detailing their screening results. Children with possible problems indicated will be directed to seek the

services of an eye care professional to address their problem through a full eye examination.

(3) This screening system will begin with a pilot program for the 2002 school year. This program will be implemented in designated school districts as funding permits.

(4) This pilot program will be funded through monies deposited in the “Blindness, Education Screening & Treatment Fund”.

Unofficial
Resolution
Copy