

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 33

Relating to the recognition of February as Oral Health Awareness Month

WHEREAS, oral health is a critical component of overall health affecting speech, nutrition, growth and function, social development, employability and productivity, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, dental decay is the most common chronic disease among children - four times more common than asthma, four times more common than early-childhood obesity, and twenty times more common than diabetes; and

WHEREAS, untreated dental disease is linked to adverse health outcomes associated with diabetes, stroke, heart disease, bacterial pneumonia, pre-term and low birth weight deliveries, and in some instances, death; and

WHEREAS, students miss more than 51 million hours of school and employed adults lose more than 164 million hours of work each year due to dental disease or dental visits; and

WHEREAS, dental decay affects 18% of the nation's children aged 2-4, 52% of children aged 6-8, and 61% of teenagers age 15; and

WHEREAS, dental decay is one of the most prevalent health problems in Missouri with 55% of third grade children having experienced dental decay; and

WHEREAS, access to dental care is associated with higher utilization of preventive and restorative dental services; and

WHEREAS, the state has improved access for children enrolled in the MO HealthNet program, but more can be done for these low-income children who suffer more tooth decay than their higher-income peers; and

WHEREAS, Missouri residents deserve access to high quality oral health care:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-seventh General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby:

- (1) Recognize that good oral health is critical to good overall health;
- (2) Support health policies at the state and local levels that are consistent and promote optimal oral health;
- (3) Ensure oral health impact is a consideration in the development of state policy;
- (4) Support the use of available local, state, and federal resources to monitor oral health status;
- (5) Support community oral health initiatives aimed at improving oral health literacy and better health outcomes;
- (6) Recognize each year the month of February as "Oral Health Awareness Month" to draw attention to ongoing efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to improve the oral health of all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be instructed to send a properly inscribed copy of this resolution to the Governor for his approval or rejection pursuant to the Missouri Constitution.