

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the week of April 15 through 21, 2019, as "Shaken
2 Baby Syndrome Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, The well-being of this generation and future
4 generations depends in great measure upon the ability and
5 dedication of those who devote themselves to make the safety,
6 welfare and well-being of our precious children their highest
7 priority; and

8 WHEREAS, Statistics show that 672,000 children were victims
9 of abuse and neglect in the United States in 2016, and,
10 according to the Department of Human Services, this number
11 includes 4,355 children in this Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, On average, approximately five children will die
13 every day as the result of abuse or neglect in the United
14 States; and

15 WHEREAS, The leading cause of death and disability among
16 abused children under five years of age is infant abusive head
17 trauma, including the inflicted trauma known as shaken baby

1 syndrome; and

2 WHEREAS, Shaken baby syndrome is one of the most severe forms
3 of child abuse caused by the violent shaking of an infant with
4 or without impact against an object; and

5 WHEREAS, Shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted head
6 traumas occur when a caregiver loses control and shakes a baby
7 or young child, most frequently less than one year of age or, in
8 some cases, as old as five years of age, resulting in blindness,
9 broken bones, cerebral palsy, brain damage, hearing loss,
10 paralysis, seizures, mental retardation, speech or learning
11 difficulties and death; and

12 WHEREAS, This abuse causes unspeakable pain and suffering to
13 our most vulnerable residents while putting enormous strain on
14 families in all communities; and

15 WHEREAS, On average across the United States, approximately
16 1,300 infants and young children are diagnosed with shaken baby
17 syndrome every year, with medical experts believing that
18 thousands of additional cases are misdiagnosed or undetected;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Approximately one out of every four victims die as a
21 result of direct brain injuries; and

22 WHEREAS, In milder cases, in which babies look normal
23 immediately after the shaking, the child may eventually develop
24 irreversible damage due to the child's injuries; and

25 WHEREAS, The most effective way to end shaken baby syndrome
26 is by preventing such abuse; and

27 WHEREAS, It is clear that minimal contributions to education
28 and prevention programs may avert enormous medical and
29 disability costs and immeasurable grief for many families; and

30 WHEREAS, Hospital-based education programs, such as the

1 nationally recognized Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention and
2 Awareness Program developed by Dr. Mark Dias of Penn State
3 Hershey Medical Center, provide critically important information
4 about shaken baby syndrome to every parent of every child born
5 in this Commonwealth; and

6 WHEREAS, In 2002, the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Act was
7 enacted, establishing the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education and
8 Prevention Program; and

9 WHEREAS, The Shaken Baby Syndrome Education and Prevention
10 Program partnered with the Department of Health, and, in 2006,
11 Pennsylvania became the first state in the nation to provide
12 consistent hospital-based education in 100% of all birthing and
13 children's hospitals in this Commonwealth; and

14 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness efforts are supported by
15 national and local organizations, including the Department of
16 Health, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, the
17 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy
18 of Pediatrics, Prevent Child Abuse Pennsylvania, the Cynthia
19 Gibbs Foundation, the SKIPPER Initiative, the National Center on
20 Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Children's Defense Fund, the Child
21 Welfare League of America, the Shaken Baby Alliance and the
22 Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance; and

23 WHEREAS, These national and local organizations all work to
24 educate new parents and caregivers and increase awareness and
25 support for victims and their families in the health care and
26 criminal justice systems; and

27 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness efforts provide critically
28 important information about shaken baby syndrome to parents,
29 caregivers, day-care workers, child protection employees, law
30 enforcement personnel, health care professionals, the general

1 public and representatives of the justice system; therefore be
2 it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
4 week of April 15 through 21, 2019, as "Shaken Baby Syndrome
5 Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage all
7 residents to observe this week with programs and activities that
8 share the commitment of prevention, awareness, community support
9 and partnerships to protect our children from shaken baby
10 syndrome; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commend
12 advocates, organizations and agencies of national, State, county
13 and local governments working continuously to educate parents,
14 caregivers and professionals about the causes, consequences and
15 prevention of shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted head
16 injuries.