
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 769 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MURT, BAKER, BIZZARRO, BRADFORD, R. BROWN,
BULLOCK, BURNS, CALTAGIRONE, COHEN, D. COSTA, SCHLEGEL,
CULVER, DeLUCA, DiGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, DUSH, EVERETT, FARINA,
GILLEN, GINGRICH, GOODMAN, HARHART, HENNESSEY, KAUFFMAN,
KILLION, KINSEY, KIRKLAND, LONGIETTI, MACKENZIE, MAHONEY,
MAJOR, MARSICO, MILLARD, MOUL, O'BRIEN, PAYNE, PICKETT,
READSHAW, REGAN, ROSS, ROZZI, SCHLOSSBERG, SONNEY, THOMAS,
TOOHIL, VEREB, WATSON, WHEELAND AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 6, 2016

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
APRIL 6, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the week of April 17 through 23, 2016, 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, In 2012, statistics show that 680,000 children were
9 victims of abuse and neglect in the United States and according
10 to the Department of Human Services this number includes 3,565
11 children in this Commonwealth; and

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

1 WHEREAS, The leading cause of death and disability among
2 abused children under five years of age is infant abusive head
3 trauma, including the inflicted trauma known as shaken baby
4 syndrome; and

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

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

15 WHEREAS, Such abuse causes unspeakable pain and suffering to
16 our most vulnerable residents, while putting enormous strain on
17 families in all communities; and

18 WHEREAS, On average across the United States, 750 to 3,750
19 infants and young children are diagnosed with shaken baby
20 syndrome every year, with medical experts believing that
21 thousands of additional cases are misdiagnosed or undetected;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, Approximately one-third of the victims die as a
24 result of direct brain injuries; and

25 WHEREAS, Even in milder cases in which babies look normal
26 immediately after the shaking, the child may eventually develop
27 irreversible damage due to the child's injuries; and

28 WHEREAS, The most effective way to end shaken baby syndrome
29 is by preventing such abuse and it is clear that minimal costs
30 of educational and preventive programs may avert enormous

1 medical and disability costs and immeasurable grief for many
2 families; and

3 WHEREAS, Hospital-based education programs, such as the
4 nationally recognized Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention &
5 Awareness Program developed by Dr. Mark Dias of the Penn State
6 Hershey Medical Center, provide critically important information
7 about shaken baby syndrome to every parent of every child born
8 in this Commonwealth; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2002, the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Act was
10 enacted, establishing the Shaken Baby Syndrome Education and
11 Prevention Program; and

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

17 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness efforts are supported by
18 national and local organizations, such as the Department of
19 Health, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, the
20 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy
21 of Pediatrics, Prevent Child Abuse Pennsylvania, the Cynthia
22 Gibbs Foundation, the Skipper Initiative, the National Center on
23 Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Children's Defense Fund, the Child
24 Welfare League, the Shaken Baby Alliance and the Pennsylvania
25 Family Support Alliance, that all work to educate new parents
26 and caregivers and increase awareness among the general public
27 to encourage increased support for victims and their families in
28 the health care and criminal justice systems; and

29 WHEREAS, Prevention and awareness has been shown to provide
30 critically important information about shaken baby syndrome to

1 parents, caregivers, day-care workers, child protection
2 employees, law enforcement personnel, health care professionals,
3 the general public and representatives of the justice system;
4 therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
6 week of April 17 through 23, 2016, as "Shaken Baby Syndrome
7 Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania and encourage all residents to
8 observe this week with programs and activities that share the
9 commitment of prevention, awareness, community support and
10 partnerships to protect our children from shaken baby syndrome;
11 and be it further

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