

2011-J1147

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION, memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 17-23, 2011, as Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, Statistics compiled by the federal government show that 702,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect in the United States in 2009, including 77,620 children in New York State; and

WHEREAS, Acts of abuse and neglect by those entrusted with the care of children cause unspeakable pain and suffering to our most vulnerable citizens; and

WHEREAS, On an average day in the United States, four children who are victims of abuse and neglect die; and

WHEREAS, Children younger than one year of age accounted for 46 percent of all child abuse and neglect fatalities in 2009, and children younger than four years-old accounted for approximately 80 percent of such fatalities in 2009; and

WHEREAS, The most recent statistics available from the New York State Department of Health also demonstrate that homicide was a leading cause of death due to injury for children under the age of one; and

WHEREAS, The leading cause of death of abused children is abusive head trauma, including the trauma known as Shaken Baby Syndrome; and

WHEREAS, On average 1,200 to 1,400 children in the United States are diagnosed every year with Abusive Head Trauma, including Shaken Baby Syndrome, and medical experts believe thousands more cases are likely misdiagnosed or undetected; and

WHEREAS, Shaken Baby Syndrome and other inflicted head trauma occurs when a caregiver loses control and shakes a baby or young child, most frequently less than one year of age but in some cases as old as five years of age, resulting in loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, or death; and

WHEREAS, Shaken Baby Syndrome often causes permanent, irreparable brain damage or death to an infant, and may result in more than a million dollars in medical and rehabilitation costs for the care of a single disabled child during the first few years of life; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated the taxpayers of the State of New York may, through the State Medicaid program, pay as much as 41% of the medical and rehabilitation costs that result from shaking injuries; and

WHEREAS, The national cost of child abuse is estimated by Prevention Child Abuse America as more than \$92 billion a year, and the cost of child abuse in New York State is estimated to exceed \$3 billion a year; and

WHEREAS, It appears that substantial medical evidence indicates even mild trauma to the brain caused by Shaken Baby Syndrome is likely to cause learning disabilities in children and substantially increase the risk of substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, The most effective way to end Shaken Baby Syndrome is by educating parents and caregivers about the danger of shaking children and providing the skills needed to cope with frustration and anger, and it is clear the minimal costs of educational and preventive programs may avert enormous medical and disability costs and untold grief for many families; and

WHEREAS, Awareness and prevention programs, such as the nationally recognized Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Project developed by Dr. Mark Dias with the support of the New York State Children and Families Trust Fund, have been shown to raise awareness and provide critically important information about Shaken Baby Syndrome to parents, caregivers, daycare workers, child protection employees, law

enforcement personnel, health care professionals, and legal representatives; and

WHEREAS, These prevention efforts are supported by national groups such as the Shaken Baby Coalition and the National Center for Shaken Baby Syndrome, and New York State groups such as the Hudson Valley SBS Prevention Initiative, the Upstate New York SBS Prevention Project, The SKIPPER Initiative, and the Cynthia Gibbs Foundation, whose mission is to educate new parents and caregivers, increase awareness among the general public and professionals, and encourage increased support for victims and their families in the health care and criminal justice systems; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature enacted legislation in 2001 requiring hospitals to include information about Shaken Baby Syndrome in the maternity information pamphlet provided to all persons registering

for maternity services; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature enacted legislation in 2003 requiring all new child care providers to receive education about the causes, consequences and prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome before they are licensed to care for children; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature enacted legislation in 2004 requiring all hospitals and birthing centers offer new parents the opportunity to watch a video about the causes and consequences of Shaken Baby Syndrome and ways it can be prevented so they can help protect their child from shaking injuries; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature enacted legislation in 2006 requiring the Health Department coordinate a statewide prevention campaign that educates the public about the causes and consequences of Shaken Baby Syndrome and how it can be prevented, and that the Education Department provide a curriculum on Shaken Baby Syndrome to schools so students, who not only may be parents some day, but who may now be babysitting for young children, are educated about the danger of shaking children; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York Legislature wishes to commend those advocates, organizations and agencies of State, county and local governments which work tirelessly throughout the year to educate parents and caregivers about the causes, consequences and prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and other inflicted injuries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 17-23, 2011, as Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.