

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 447

By Calfee

A RESOLUTION recognizing East Tennessee Children's Hospital for specialized treatment of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome.

WHEREAS, Tennessee is proud to be the home of a number of world-class medical institutions where life-changing advancements and internationally renowned discoveries are continuously being made; and

WHEREAS, East Tennessee Children's Hospital in Knoxville is one such institution of research and healing, which has pioneered a special treatment protocol for babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) that has produced desired results that have been recognized across the nation; and

WHEREAS, NAS is a condition in which a newborn baby has withdrawal symptoms after being exposed to certain substances in utero, such as prescription drugs to alter pain, anxiety, or sleep, as well as a gamut of illegal drugs. Babies born with NAS stay in the hospital longer than others and have a greater risk of developing serious medical and social problems as they grow and develop; and

WHEREAS, over the past decade, there has been a tenfold increase in the incidence of babies born with NAS in Tennessee, and more than 750 newborns are treated in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at East Tennessee Children's Hospital each year; and

WHEREAS, in order to mitigate the severity and duration of NAS's painful symptoms, East Tennessee Children's Hospital's NICU medical staff uses small doses of morphine to help babies through their withdrawal. With additional support from fifty-seven highly experienced volunteer cuddlers, babies receive cutting-edge pharmaceutical intervention and heavy doses of

holding, rocking, and nurturing human contact that has shown remarkable success in the infants' recoveries; and

WHEREAS, while NAS is a totally preventable problem that requires mothers only to abstain from drug use before and during pregnancy, the incidence of this syndrome clearly indicates that it is an illness that must be treated; and

WHEREAS, East Tennessee Children's Hospital has displayed an abiding dedication to children's health and an unwavering determination to ameliorate childhood illnesses and suffering, and its accomplishments in the realm of NAS are most impressive, having done much to spread awareness about the syndrome and about the hospital's NICU protocol for treating it; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly recognize the hospital, especially the NICU, for its actions in dealing with this painful syndrome that affects our tiniest Tennesseans; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and commend East Tennessee Children's Hospital for its work with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome and extend to its physicians, medical personnel, and researchers our best wishes for ongoing success in caring for sick children.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.