

HOUSE RESOLUTION 133

By Gilmore

A RESOLUTION to honor the Tennessee Public Health Association's efforts on behalf of the children of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this legislative body recognize those exemplary organizations that strive to improve the lives of their fellow citizens and the children of our great State; and

WHEREAS, one such exceptional organization is the Tennessee Public Health Association, which has made countless efforts to help improve the quality of life for every Tennessean and is currently focused on how to protect our children from the dangers of secondhand smoke in cars; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 Surgeon General's Report states that the scientific evidence about the dangers of secondhand smoke is indisputable; there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, almost sixty percent of U.S. children aged three to eleven years, or almost 22 million children, are exposed to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, there is overwhelming evidence of the harms associated with exposure to secondhand smoke that is specific to children and specific to enclosed environments; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics studies "provide evidence that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is associated with increased rates of lower respiratory illness and increased rates of middle ear effusion, asthma, and sudden infant death syndrome"; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics concludes that "exposure during childhood to environmental tobacco smoke may also be associated with development of cancer during adulthood"; and

WHEREAS, a 2006 Harvard School of Public Health study found "alarming" levels of secondhand smoke were generated in just five minutes in vehicles under various driving, ventilation, and smoking conditions; and

WHEREAS, the same Harvard study found a "significant increase" in the levels of carbon monoxide in cars where smoking occurs, a substance known to induce lethargy and loss of alertness even in small quantities; and

WHEREAS, smoking just one cigarette in a vehicle raises fine particle levels far beyond exposure limits set by the EPA and raises secondhand smoke levels several times higher than levels found in bars and other establishments where smoking is allowed; and

WHEREAS, a University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health found that sixty percent of current smokers would support a ban on smoking in cars carrying children, compared with eighty-four percent of former smokers and eighty-seven percent of people who never smoked; and

WHEREAS, at least six states including Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Maine, Oregon, and Utah have smoke-free car laws, banning smoking in cars where children are present, protecting children ranging from less than six years old to less than eighteen years old; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee maintains a robust child restraint law requiring all children under the age of nine and under four feet nine inches tall to be restrained in either a booster seat or some other child safety restraining system; and

WHEREAS, to benefit the children of Tennessee, the Tennessee Public Health Association strongly recommends the banning of smoking in any car where a child should be restrained by a child safety restraint system; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the Tennessee Public Health Association for its efforts to improve the quality of health of the children of Tennessee and bring public awareness to the dangers of secondhand smoke.

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