

H. Res. 465

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

April 11, 2000.

Whereas April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, which provides Congress the opportunity to focus attention and raise awareness of the problem of newborn babies abandoned in public places;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services reports that, in 1998, 31,000 babies were delivered and abandoned in hospitals by mothers;

Whereas an unknown number of newborn babies are abandoned in dumpsters, trash bins, alleys, warehouses, and bathrooms;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services conducted an informal survey of major newspapers and found that, in 1998, 105 babies were found abandoned in public places in the United States, of which 33 were found dead, and that, in 1991, 65 babies were abandoned, of which 8 were found dead;

Whereas national statistics on the number of infants abandoned in public places are not kept, though States are required to submit data to the Department of Health and Human Services on the number of children who enter foster care as a result of abandonment in general;

Whereas Texas is the only State to have enacted a law designed to address this social problem, though 24 other States are considering such legislation, including Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Connecticut, Oregon, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Michigan, and New Mexico; and

Whereas there are innovative model programs in Houston, Mobile, Minneapolis, and Syracuse that protect mothers who take newborns to hospitals or some other safe haven rather than dumping them in a trash bin or leaving them on a doorstep: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That local, State, and Federal statistics should be kept on the number of babies abandoned in public places.

Attest:

Clerk.