

# Stevens supports resolution for alcohol treatment month

WASHINGTON — The month of September has been designated as "National Alcohol and Drug Treatment Month," as a result of a resolution co-sponsored in Congress by Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

The resolution states that alcohol and other drug abuse and dependence are major public health problems that are preventable and treatable and that the economic costs to society in 1983 alone were more than \$176 billion.

It also states that alcohol and drug abuse treatment provides an effective means toward independence from substance dependence and is a necessary element in solving the problems associated with alcohol and other drug abuse.

Other points raised by the resolution include:

- More than one-third of the families of the nation are affected by alcoholism and an estimated 10 million Americans are problem drinkers or alcoholics.

- Alcohol abuse during pregnancy is

one of the leading causes in the nation of mental retardation in infants and is the only preventable cause.

- More than 70 percent of the pediatric acquired immunodeficiency syndrome — AIDS — cases are related to intravenous drug use by one or both parents of the infant.

- Drug abuse treatment is an effective way of preventing the spread of AIDS among intravenous drug abusers.

- Alcoholism and drug dependence are illnesses requiring prevention, treatment and rehabilitation through the assistance and cooperation of a broad range of federal, state and local health, law enforcement and social service agencies, families, employers, employees and organizations concerned about alcohol and other drug abuse.

- Despite our national policy goal of making treatment available to all who request it, the existence of waiting lists highlights the need to increase the availability and quality of alcohol and other drug treatment services.