

## Senate Resolution 231

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Unterman of the 45th, Carter of the 1st, Hill of the 4th, Ligon, Jr. of the 3rd and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Department of Community Health to implement a public information campaign  
2 about folic acid consumption; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, folic acid is a B vitamin that can help prevent birth defects of the brain and  
4 spinal cord called neural tube defects (NTDs), which include anencephaly and spina bifida;  
5 however, folic acid works to prevent these birth defects only if taken before conception and  
6 during early pregnancy; and

7 WHEREAS, according to the March of Dimes, in the United States, about 3,000 pregnancies  
8 are affected by NTDs each year; many additional pregnancies result in miscarriages or  
9 stillbirths due to inadequate maternal folic acid levels; and

10 WHEREAS, at least half of these cases could be prevented if women consumed an adequate  
11 amount of folic acid before contraception and during the early stages of their pregnancy; and

12 WHEREAS, the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine of the National  
13 Academies, the Spina Bifida Association, and the March of Dimes recommend that women  
14 who might become pregnant should consume 400 micrograms of synthetic folic acid every  
15 day from a vitamin or from fortified foods, in addition to maintaining a healthy diet rich in  
16 natural sources of folate; and

17 WHEREAS, while research suggests that consumption of multivitamins containing folic acid  
18 may also help prevent cleft palate, congenital heart defects, prematurity, and low birth  
19 weight, only 84 percent of women of childbearing age have heard of folic acid, only 33  
20 percent of women of childbearing age take a multivitamin containing folic acid, and only 7  
21 percent know it should be taken before pregnancy; and

22 WHEREAS, while public awareness is improving, many women are still unaware of the  
23 many benefits attributable to regular consumption of folic acid during childbearing years and  
24 pregnancy.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
26 urge the Department of Community Health to implement a public information campaign  
27 educating the citizens of this state about the importance of consuming folic acid during a  
28 woman's childbearing years and pregnancy to help prevent neural tube and other birth  
29 defects.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
31 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the commissioner of community health.