
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO PROMOTE THE USE OF XYLITOL FOR ITS PREVENTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC HEALTH AND ORAL HEALTH BENEFITS AND TO APPROPRIATELY INCORPORATE XYLITOL INTO THE HEALTHY HAWAII INITIATIVE.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Dental Workforce report released on
2 December 11, 2008 at the annual meeting of the Hawaiian Islands
3 Oral Health Task Force concludes that "Hawaii is struggling with
4 issues related to access to oral health for all residents as
5 well as for vulnerable populations, a shortage or
6 maldistribution of dental practitioners, poor oral health among
7 many subpopulations, and funding an optimal oral health care
8 system"; and
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10 WHEREAS, there are approximately five hundred studies on
11 PubMed that support xylitol as an effective preventative and
12 therapeutic agent; and
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14 WHEREAS, in 1988, the Finnish Dental Association officially
15 endorsed the use of xylitol, followed by the Swedish Dental
16 Association the next year, and the British Dental Association in
17 1990, and many other national dental associations, except the
18 American Dental Association; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Arizona State Dental Hygienists' Association
21 and the Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association officially
22 endorsed the use of xylitol in 2008; and
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24 WHEREAS, xylitol has been used in foods since the 1960s and
25 is approved in the United States as a food additive in unlimited
26 quantity for foods with special dietary purposes, and is safe
27 for use by those with diabetes or hypoglycemia; and
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29 WHEREAS, xylitol, with its extremely low glycemic index of
30 seven (compared to sugar at 100), has been shown to be effective



1 in the prevention and treatment of diabetes and in weight
2 management; and

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4 WHEREAS, xylitol has proven efficacy in the prevention and
5 treatment of upper respiratory problems; and

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7 WHEREAS, xylitol's chemical structure has been shown to
8 cause harmful bacteria and irritants to lose their ability to
9 adhere to infected membranes, rendering them unable to grow and
10 multiply, and thereby allowing normal washing and cleansing
11 mechanisms to flush away the bacteria without causing resistant
12 strains or "superbugs"; and

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14 WHEREAS, studies show that when administered to children in
15 chewing gum or syrup, xylitol produces a reduced rate of otitis
16 (ear infection) and a lower nasopharyngeal carriage rate of
17 pneumococci; and

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19 WHEREAS, dental caries remain the most common chronic
20 disease of children, despite being largely preventable; and

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22 WHEREAS, once established, dental cavities require
23 treatment at a high cost in terms of both money and physical
24 discomfort; and

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26 WHEREAS, many adults also have untreated dental caries,
27 even though these caries are highly preventable; and

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29 WHEREAS, xylitol's five-carbon structure keeps it from
30 being metabolized by oral bacteria, stopping the production of
31 decay causing acids in the mouth, and preventing the formation
32 of sticky bacterial buildup on the teeth; and

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34 WHEREAS, xylitol's naturally sweet and cool taste increases
35 salivary flow, optimizing the pH level in the mouth, increasing
36 the natural washing action of the teeth and tissues, and further
37 promoting dental health; and

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39 WHEREAS, research has shown that new mothers having a high
40 incidence of S. mutans bacteria (caries-inducing), who used
41 xylitol gum regularly between three and twenty-four months after
42 delivery, showed a significant impact on the ability of the
43 bacteria to establish in the babies' mouths, reducing caries by
44 seventy per cent; and



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2 WHEREAS, since humans themselves produce up to ten grams of
3 xylitol in their bodies from other food sources daily, xylitol
4 is not a foreign or artificial substance, but is a normal part
5 of everyday metabolism and is widely distributed throughout
6 nature in small amounts; and
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8 WHEREAS, in 1983, the Joint Expert Committee on Food
9 Additives of two United Nations agencies (the Food and
10 Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization) gave
11 an "acceptable daily intake" definition of "not specified" for
12 xylitol, indicating its safety and that no special consumption
13 limits were needed for xylitol; and
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15 WHEREAS, as indicated by previous studies, incorporating
16 xylitol into health care programs for children, the elderly, and
17 other populations (such as the institutionalized) will
18 substantially reduce dental caries, upper respiratory
19 infections, and ear infections, and lower glycemic indices,
20 thereby assisting in the maintenance of good health for the
21 people of this State; and
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23 WHEREAS, the use of xylitol should be incorporated into the
24 Healthy Hawaii Initiative, which is the Department of Health's
25 program responsible for running the Start Living Healthy
26 campaign (the statewide health promotion campaign); now,
27 therefore,
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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, the
31 House of Representatives concurring, that the Director of Health
32 is requested to promote the use of xylitol for its preventive
33 and therapeutic health and oral health benefits for all
34 populations of the State of Hawaii, and to appropriately
35 incorporate xylitol into the Healthy Hawaii Initiative; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor and the
39 Director of Health.

