

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 242

Recognizing May as “National Foster Care Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 3, 2011

Ms. BASS of California (for herself and Mr. McDERMOTT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

RESOLUTION

Recognizing May as “National Foster Care Month”.

Whereas on average, the Nation’s foster care system provides for nearly 424,000 children each day who are unable to live safely with their biological parents;

Whereas foster parents are the most frontline caregiver for children who cannot safely remain with their biological parents and provide physical care, emotional support, education advocacy, and are the largest single source of families providing permanent homes for kids leaving foster care to adoption;

Whereas most children who are removed from the care of their parents live with non-related foster parents, however, the number of children placed in relative foster care is growing;

Whereas on the last day of fiscal year 2009 nearly 1 in 4 of all children living in foster care (24 percent or close to 102,000 children) were living in the homes of relatives;

Whereas children in foster care who are placed with relatives, compared to children placed with non-relatives, have more stability (fewer changes in placements), have more positive perceptions of their placements, are more likely to be placed with their siblings, and demonstrate fewer behavioral problems;

Whereas some relative caregivers receive less financial assistance and support services than do foster caregivers;

Whereas 255,000 children entered the foster care system during fiscal year 2009 and an average of 115,000 children were waiting to be adopted every day;

Whereas in fiscal year 2009, almost 57,000 children were adopted out of foster care, but the number of children “aging out” of the foster care system without finding a permanent family increased to nearly 29,500;

Whereas children “aging out” of foster care need and deserve a support system as they work to secure affordable housing, obtain health insurance, pursue higher education, and acquire adequate employment;

Whereas youth in foster care are much more likely to face educational instability with 65 percent of former foster children experiencing at least 7 school changes while in care;

Whereas an increased emphasis on prevention and reunification services is necessary to reduce the number of children that are forced to remain in the foster care system;

Whereas Federal legislation over the past 3 decades, including the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of

1980, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, provided new investments and services to improve the outcomes of children in the foster care system;

Whereas State and local governments and other child serving agencies have also invested in child welfare services improvements in order to provide stable, permanent homes for children;

Whereas more work and investments are needed to provide the necessary array of services to these children;

Whereas foster children, like all children, deserve no less than a safe, loving, and permanent home; and

Whereas May would be an appropriate month to designate as National Foster Care Month to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of the child welfare workforce, foster parents, advocacy community, and mentors and the positive impact they have on children's lives: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of National
3 Foster Care Month;

4 (2) honors the tireless efforts of those who work
5 to improve outcomes for children in the child welfare
6 system;

7 (3) acknowledges the exceptional alumni of the
8 foster care system who serve as advocates and role
9 models for youth who remain in care;

1 (4) recognizes the significant improvements to
2 Federal, State, and local child welfare policy; and

3 (5) reaffirms the need to work through the pro-
4 grams in Title IV–B and IV–E in the Social Secu-
5 rity Act and other programs to support vulnerable
6 families, invest in prevention and reunification serv-
7 ices, promote adoption in cases where reunification
8 is not in a child’s best interest, adequately serve
9 those children brought into the foster care system,
10 and facilitate the successful transition into adult-
11 hood for children that “age out” of the foster care
12 system.

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