

1 HJR157
2 175721-2
3 By Representative McCutcheon
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 15-MAR-16

1
2 ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,
3 RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH.
4

5 WHEREAS, National Foster Care Month was established
6 more than 20 years ago to bring foster care issues to the
7 forefront of public consciousness, to highlight the importance
8 of permanency for every child, and to recognize the essential
9 role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have
10 in the lives of children in foster care throughout Alabama;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, all children deserve a safe, loving, and
13 permanent home; and

14 WHEREAS, the primary goal of the foster care system
15 is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while
16 working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each
17 child; and

18 WHEREAS, approximately 5,000 children are living in
19 foster care in Alabama; and

20 WHEREAS, foster parents are the frontline caregivers
21 for children who cannot safely remain with their biological
22 parents; provide physical care, emotional support, and
23 education advocacy to the children in their care; and are the
24 largest single source of families providing permanent homes
25 for children transitioning from foster care to adoption; and

1 WHEREAS, children in foster care who are placed with
2 relatives, compared to children placed with nonrelatives, have
3 more stability, including fewer changes in placements, have
4 more positive perceptions of their placements, are more likely
5 to be placed with their siblings, and demonstrate fewer
6 behavioral problems; and

7 WHEREAS, some relative caregivers receive less
8 financial assistance and support services than foster
9 caregivers; and

10 WHEREAS, the number of youth who age out of foster
11 care has increased during the past decade; and

12 WHEREAS, foster care is intended to be a temporary
13 placement, but children remain in the foster care system for
14 an average of two years; and

15 WHEREAS, children in foster care experience an
16 average of three different placements, which often lead to
17 disruption of routines and the need to change schools and move
18 away from siblings, extended families, and familiar
19 surroundings; and

20 WHEREAS, children entering foster care often
21 confront the widespread misperception that children in foster
22 care are disruptive, unruly, and dangerous, even though
23 placement in foster care is based on the actions of a parent
24 or guardian, not the child; and

1 WHEREAS, children who age out of foster care lack
2 the security and support of a biological or adoptive family
3 and frequently struggle to secure affordable housing, obtain
4 health insurance, pursue higher education, and acquire
5 adequate employment; and

6 WHEREAS, states, localities, and communities should
7 be encouraged to invest resources in preventive and
8 reunification services and post-permanency programs to ensure
9 that more children in foster care are provided with safe,
10 loving, and permanent placements; and

11 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize May 2016 as
12 National Foster Care Month to provide an opportunity to
13 acknowledge the accomplishments of the child welfare
14 workforce, foster parents, the advocacy community, and mentors
15 for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact on
16 the lives of children; now therefore,

17 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
18 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That in recognition of the
19 importance of foster care in Alabama, we recognize May 2016 as
20 National Foster Care Month.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House
22 of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate are
23 authorized and directed to transmit copies of this resolution
24 to the Department of Human Resources so our support regarding
25 children in foster care may be known.

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