

## House Resolution 1376

By: Representatives Thomas of the 39<sup>th</sup>, Hutchinson of the 107<sup>th</sup>, Dreyer of the 59<sup>th</sup>, Cantrell of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Paris of the 142<sup>nd</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 6, 2020, as Foster Care and Adoption Day at the state capitol; and for  
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, in February, 2019, there were 13,873 children in foster care in Georgia who  
4 come from a wide variety of backgrounds and situations, are children of all races, and range  
5 from zero to 18 years of age; and

6 WHEREAS, many of these children are victims of abuse and neglect; and

7 WHEREAS, many of these children suffer from the added trauma of being ripped from his  
8 or her community and school because no foster homes exist nearby; this is especially true in  
9 the northern regions of the state; and

10 WHEREAS, for these children, the state has stepped into the role of parent and has the  
11 statutory obligation to provide them with food, clothing, shelter, education, and medical care.  
12 Details about how the state must fulfill its responsibility to these children are enumerated in  
13 a complex combination of state and federal statutes, court decisions, state regulations, agency  
14 policies, and local practices; and

15 WHEREAS, the foster children in most need of homes are children with special needs,  
16 including teenagers, siblings, and children with physical, emotional, or behavioral  
17 disabilities; and

18 WHEREAS, the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) looks for loving, safe,  
19 and stable homes for the children who are brought into care. In addition, DFCS strengthens  
20 families toward independence and builds stronger communities with caring, effective, and  
21 responsive service; and

22 WHEREAS, DFCS works to locate relatives in order to support the birth family in  
23 reunification efforts as well as relatives willing to let the child stay with them while the birth  
24 family works with the agency on reunification; if relatives are not an option for placement,  
25 DFCS provides alternatives for permanency and assesses placement on a case-by-case basis;  
26 key criteria include safety and the best interests of the child; and

27 WHEREAS, in order of preference, the permanent outcomes for children in care are: (1)  
28 reunification; (2) adoption; and (3) permanent guardianship; and

29 WHEREAS, we also commend the dedication of those individuals who commit their  
30 professional lives and careers to serving foster children; these individuals beat the odds, as  
31 the average turnover rate for Georgia's child welfare workers is 32 percent (nearly 40 percent  
32 in metro area counties); and case managers with an average salary of \$39,000 are easily able  
33 to find better pay, more predictable hours, and lower-risk employment in the private sector;  
34 and

35 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding contributions of these  
36 outstanding public servants and the children they serve be appropriately recognized.

37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
38 the members of this body recognize March 6, 2020, as Foster Care and Adoption Day at the  
39 state capitol.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
41 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
42 public and the press.