

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 139

By Curtiss

A RESOLUTION to support the development of cost-effective home- and community-based services to Tennessee children and adults with a developmental disability.

WHEREAS, developmental disability may include, but is not limited to, autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, cystic fibrosis, spina bifida, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and any other condition with which an individual is born or acquires before age 22; and

WHEREAS, having a developmental disability can significantly impact a person's capacity to perform day-to-day activities such as eating, dressing, grooming, using the restroom, finding and maintaining employment, and many other activities representing skills that most Tennesseans take for granted; and

WHEREAS, appropriate services can ensure that people with a developmental disability can lead productive and fulfilling lives within their homes, families, schools, workplaces, and communities; and

WHEREAS, the lack of supports and services can lead to the limitation of physical, emotional, intellectual, and social capacity, which ultimately compromises not only the quality of life, but also health, family economics, and life expectancy for persons with a developmental disability; and

WHEREAS, mental retardation is the only developmental disability for which comprehensive supports and services are currently available in the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the family support program administered by the division of mental retardation services, the only state program for people of all ages with any type of developmental disability, has a waiting list exceeding 6,000 persons; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with legislation passed by the One Hundred Fourth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, the division of mental retardation services formed a developmental disabilities task force that was directed to study the lack of comprehensive home- and community-based services for Tennesseans with developmental disabilities other than mental retardation and to develop a plan for cost-effective services; and

WHEREAS, the developmental disabilities task force developed a plan for cost-effective home- and community-based services for Tennesseans with developmental disabilities, entitled "Fulfilling the Promise," in June 2007, which was subsequently submitted by the division of mental retardation services this General Assembly in January 2008; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize that many of our fellow Tennesseans with developmental disabilities require assistance and support to lead productive and fulfilling lives in their communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we hereby acknowledge the lack of adequate programs to provide the assistance and support needed by many of these Tennesseans with developmental disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support the development of an array of cost-effective home- and community-based programs to support people with developmental disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support people with all types of developmental disabilities having access to home- and community-based services provided through a single distinct entity in state government that has primary responsibility for planning, developing, and administering these programs.