

A RESOLUTION encouraging the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to do what is in the best interest of a Kentucky child in cases where a child is removed from his or her biological family in cases of abuse or neglect.

WHEREAS, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services reported as of February 1, 2015, that more than 7,600 children were in out of home care in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, federal and state laws require the immediate goal for any child removed from his or her home is to be family reunification; and

WHEREAS, these Kentucky children average more than three moves to different placements while they are in out of home care; and

WHEREAS, according to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services the average length a that a Kentucky child is in care is over two years and this mirrors the national average; and

WHEREAS, the immediate goal of family reunification upon removal and the process of determining if that is what is in the best interest of the child is creating an unacceptable reality of instability for Kentucky's most vulnerable children;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The House of Representatives recognizes that Kentucky's most vulnerable children, those who have been removed from their biological families in cases of abuse or neglect, are waiting too long for a permanent family structure to be established for them.

➔Section 2. The House of Representatives hereby encourages the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to work in the fastest legal way possible to determine if family reunification is in the best interest of a child who has been removed from his or her biological family in cases of abuse or neglect.

➔Section 3. The House of Representatives additionally encourages the Cabinet

for Health and Family Services to work expeditiously to establish a permanent family structure for a child who, in a case of abuse or neglect, has been removed from his or her biological family and who will not be reunited with that biological family.