

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and
2 the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet to work together to create recommendations related
3 to partnerships for decriminalization, diversion programs, and the funding of drug courts.

4 WHEREAS, drug courts are alternative courts for people whose substance abuse
5 problems with drugs or alcohol are the primary cause of the crimes with which they are
6 charged. Instead of spending time in jail or on traditional probation, offenders who come
7 through drug courts undergo a rigorous substance abuse treatment program under a
8 judge's supervision; and

9 WHEREAS, there are approximately 21,000 individuals that are incarcerated within
10 Kentucky's jails and prisons. There are an additional 50,000 individuals under some sort
11 of supervision through probation and parole. Research shows sixty to seventy percent of
12 these individuals have some form of a substance use disorder and are in need of treatment
13 and assessment; and

14 WHEREAS, the rate at which released inmates in Kentucky get re-arrested was
15 over 32 percent in 2016; and

16 WHEREAS, in 2019, a five-year \$8.8 million grant was awarded to the Kentucky
17 Department of Corrections in conjunction with the University of Kentucky to expand
18 programming within jails. The goal is to improve capacity of justice system response to
19 substance use disorder. Kentucky is one of ten states chosen for the grant and will focus
20 on women in jails; and

21 WHEREAS, currently the Department of Corrections offers six different substance
22 use disorder treatment options that are able to serve 6,161 individuals arrested for drug
23 offenses; and

24 WHEREAS, around seventy-five percent of inmates in a state prison or local jail
25 who suffer from substance use disorder also suffer from mental health conditions;

26 NOW, THEREFORE,

27 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

1 ➔Section 1. The General Assembly hereby directs the Cabinet for Health and
2 Family Services and the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet to work together to create
3 recommendations for the legislature related to partnerships for decriminalization,
4 diversion programs, and the funding of drug courts.

5 ➔Section 2. The work group shall meet during 2021 and shall submit findings
6 and recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the
7 appropriate committee or committees by December 1, 2021.