

1       A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION establishing the Child Welfare and Family  
2 Court Reform Task Force.

3       WHEREAS, Kentucky has nearly double the national rate of child maltreatment at  
4 14.2 per 1,000 children, compared to the national rate of 7.4 per 1,000 children; and

5       WHEREAS, the most recent data indicates that Kentucky recorded a total of 14,484  
6 child victims of maltreatment in a single year; and

7       WHEREAS, the youngest Kentuckians remain the most vulnerable to abuse and  
8 neglect, as nearly 30 percent of the total victims of child maltreatment in Kentucky were  
9 children under the age of four; and

10       WHEREAS, the total number of children in out of home care in Kentucky is over  
11 8,000, and the total number of children waiting for adoption is 2,792; and

12       WHEREAS, Kentucky children entering foster care still face lengthy wait times  
13 before achieving permanency, as nearly 30 percent of the children reunified with their  
14 families in 2023 spent more than 12 months in foster care, and over 50 percent of  
15 children adopted in 2023 spent at least three years in foster care; and

16       WHEREAS, the average time it takes for a termination of parental rights  
17 disposition after the case filing date is 215 days, prolonging the child's time in foster care  
18 before the child is eligible for adoption; and

19       WHEREAS, the average cost per day for one child in foster care in Kentucky is  
20 \$89.28, creating a significant financial impact on the Commonwealth; and

21       WHEREAS, preventing child maltreatment and safely reducing the number of  
22 children in foster care is critical to the well-being of Kentucky families and to the state's  
23 prosperity; and

24       WHEREAS, the General Assembly is committed to protecting children from  
25 maltreatment and believes that any proposed reform requires comprehensive input from  
26 experts and individuals with lived experience;

27       NOW, THEREFORE,

1 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*  
2 *Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:*

3       ➔Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission is hereby directed to establish  
4 the Child Welfare and Family Court Reform Task Force. The task force shall review  
5 existing laws and relevant agency policies regarding child abuse and neglect, foster care,  
6 and court processes and procedures, seek input from experts and individuals with lived  
7 experience, and develop recommendations for proposed legislation to be considered by  
8 the General Assembly.

9       ➔Section 2. The Child Welfare and Family Court Reform Task Force shall be  
10 composed of the following members, with final membership being subject to the  
11 consideration and approval of the Legislative Research Commission:

12       (1) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of  
13 the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated by the Speaker of the  
14 House of Representatives as a co-chair of the task force;

15       (2) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Minority Floor  
16 Leader of the House of Representatives;

17       (3) Three members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, one of  
18 whom shall be designated by the President of the Senate as a co-chair of the task force;

19       (4) One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority Floor Leader of the  
20 Senate;

21       (5) The commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services, or  
22 designee;

23       (6) The director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, or designee; and

24       (7) Four at-large members appointed by the Legislative Research Commission,  
25 including:

26       (a) One family court judge;

27       (b) One member representing law enforcement;

- 1           (c) One member of the Kentucky County Attorneys Association; and
- 2           (d) One member representing community-based organizations, whether for-profit
- 3 or nonprofit, with experience in programs for children and families, including substance
- 4 abuse prevention and treatment, case management, mental health, or counseling.

5           ➔Section 3. The Child Welfare and Family Court Reform Task Force shall at a

6 minimum meet monthly during the 2026 Interim of the General Assembly and shall

7 submit recommendations to the Governor and to the Legislative Research Commission

8 for referral to the Interim Joint Committee on Health Services by December 1, 2026.

9           ➔Section 4. Provisions of this section to the contrary notwithstanding, the

10 Legislative Research Commission shall have the authority to alternatively assign the

11 issues identified herein to an interim joint committee or subcommittee thereof, and to

12 designate a study completion date.