

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Department for Libraries and Archives and
2 the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to cooperate in exploring ways to increase
3 enrollment in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Program.

4 WHEREAS, the Imagination Library, founded by the American icon, entertainer,
5 businesswoman, and philanthropist Dolly Parton, was inspired by her father who could
6 not read or write and is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading; and

7 WHEREAS, this book-gifting program sends high quality, age-appropriate books to
8 children from birth to age five each month, regardless of their family's income; and

9 WHEREAS, the program is supported by a 50/50 match in funding from Dolly
10 Parton and local community partners; and

11 WHEREAS, research shows that children's brains develop connections faster in the
12 first five years than at any other time in their lives; and

13 WHEREAS, books in the home and daily reading provide parents the greatest
14 opportunity for preparing their child for school; and

15 WHEREAS, literacy is a major social determinant of health and economic impact;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Kentucky can make a sensible, affordable, effective, and foundational
18 investment to help ensure success in K-12 and beyond by investing up to \$77.50 per child
19 from birth to age five, for a total of 60 books over five years; and

20 WHEREAS, 52 percent of the eligible birth to age five children currently are
21 enrolled in the 134 local Imagination Library Programs in Kentucky; and

22 WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to ensure that
23 all communities have equal access to and information about the Imagination Library
24 Program; and

25 WHEREAS, Ohio has recently started to allow families to enroll in the Imagination
26 Library Program as part of the birth certificate completion process; and

27 WHEREAS, expanding enrollment in the program would help ensure that every

1 Kentucky child, regardless of zip code or income, could begin life with the tools needed
2 to succeed and to thrive; and

3 WHEREAS, this matching funding model strengthens community ownership and
4 maintains program affordability for local partners in all regions, including rural and
5 underserved communities; and

6 WHEREAS, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is uniquely positioned to
7 facilitate enrollment in the Imagination Library through birth certificate enrollment and to
8 explore other ways to increase enrollment in the program in cooperation with the
9 Department for Libraries and Archives;

10 NOW, THEREFORE,

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

12 ➔Section 1. The General Assembly hereby directs the Department for Libraries
13 and Archives and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to cooperate in exploring
14 ways to increase enrollment in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Program, particularly
15 in areas where enrollment is lower than the state average. Opportunities to enroll children
16 as part of the birth certificate completion process as well as other ways to increase
17 participation shall be considered.

18 ➔Section 2. The Department for Libraries and Archives and the Cabinet for
19 Health and Family Services are directed to submit a report on progress in identifying
20 ways to increase enrollment in the program to the Governor and the Legislative Research
21 Commission by November 1, 2026.