

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 is 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.