

1 SJR73
2 168916-1
3 By Senators Coleman, Dunn, Ross, Singleton, Holley, Dial and
4 Orr
5 RFD:
6 First Read: 14-MAY-15

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8 REQUESTING THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES
9 TO ESTABLISH A STUDY COMMITTEE ON FAMILY CAREGIVING.
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11 WHEREAS, family caregivers are considered the
12 backbone of Alabama's long-term care system; and

13 WHEREAS, a 2013 PEW study estimates that 39 percent
14 of the adult population care for a loved one with significant
15 health issues; and

16 WHEREAS, that study would estimate that 1.8 million
17 Alabamians are providing care for a loved one or family
18 member; and

19 WHEREAS, the population of the state that is 85
20 years of age or older and most likely to need caregiving
21 assistance is projected to reach one million in the next
22 decade; and

23 WHEREAS, almost all people who need assistance with
24 activities of daily living want to remain in their homes and
25 communities; and

1 WHEREAS, providing services and support in homes and
2 communities is generally much less expensive than nursing home
3 care; and

4 WHEREAS, people who receive services from caregivers
5 in their homes are much less likely to need public assistance;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, almost three-fourths of older people living
8 in the community who receive personal assistance relied
9 exclusively on unpaid caregivers for help; and

10 WHEREAS, the most recent survey completed by the
11 AARP Public Policy Institute shows the population of
12 caregivers who are caring for an adult with a disability or
13 chronic health condition in Alabama is estimated at 818,000,
14 and these caregivers are providing 783,000,000 hours of unpaid
15 respite at a market rate of \$7,800,000,000, saving the State
16 and Federal Government billions of dollars in health
17 care-related costs; and

18 WHEREAS, in addition to the 2014 National Alzheimer
19 Report showing 86,000 Alabamians diagnosed with Alzheimer's
20 disease, the 2012 U.S. census estimates over 425,000
21 Alabamians representing 15.5 percent of adults aged 21-64 as
22 having a disability, and most of these identified individuals
23 with special health care or behavioral issues require a
24 caregiver to assist with their independence, living at home or
25 in the community; and

26 WHEREAS, the number of caregivers providing care to
27 children with disabilities is in addition to the adult

1 caregiver statistics listed above, and their hours of unpaid
2 respite reflect similar health care-related cost savings to
3 the state; this group includes those caring for the 6,200
4 children age birth to three served in Alabama's Early
5 Intervention Program in 2014 and another 133,000 children ages
6 3-21 enrolled in Alabama Department of Education Special
7 Education Programs, with both age groups inclusive of CDC's
8 estimate of 1 in 68 children reported as having an identified
9 Autism Spectrum Disorder; and

10 WHEREAS, to successfully address the surging
11 population of older adults who have significant needs for
12 long-term services and support, in addition to the long-term
13 services and support needs of those affected by developmental
14 and acquired disabilities, the state must develop methods to
15 both encourage and support families to assist their relatives
16 affected by aging or disability and develop ways to recruit
17 and retain a qualified, responsive in-home care workforce; now
18 therefore,

19 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
20 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That (1) the Alabama Department of
21 Senior Services (ADSS) is urged to establish a study committee
22 on family caregiving and long-term support and services for
23 the purpose of providing recommendations and advice to the
24 Governor and Legislature to encourage innovative and creative
25 means to support family caregivers to continue to provide
26 needed in-home support for older adults and individuals with

1 disabilities and chronic conditions who need long-term
2 services and supports.

3 (2) The study committee is further requested to
4 identify policies, resources, and programs available for
5 family caregivers and encourage additional innovative and
6 creative means to support family caregivers to continue to
7 provide needed in-home support for care recipients.

8 (3) The ADSS shall include representatives from the
9 Alabama Lifespan Respite Resource Network and Coalition, AARP
10 Alabama, the Disability Leadership Coalition of Alabama, the
11 Alabama Developmental Disability Council, health and human
12 service agencies, and other interested stakeholders including
13 family caregiver representatives to participate in the study
14 committee.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this
16 resolution shall be sent to the Alabama Department of Senior
17 Services.