

1 HJR157
2 175721-1
3 By Representative McCutcheon
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 15-MAR-16

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8 RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH.

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10 WHEREAS, National Foster Care Month was established
11 more than 20 years ago to bring foster care issues to the
12 forefront of public consciousness, to highlight the importance
13 of permanency for every child, and to recognize the essential
14 role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have
15 in the lives of children in foster care throughout Alabama;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, all children deserve a safe, loving, and
18 permanent home; and

19 WHEREAS, the primary goal of the foster care system
20 is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while
21 working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each
22 child; and

23 WHEREAS, approximately 5,000 children are living in
24 foster care in Alabama; and

25 WHEREAS, foster parents are the frontline caregivers
26 for children who cannot safely remain with their biological

1 parents; provide physical care, emotional support, and
2 education advocacy to the children in their care; and are the
3 largest single source of families providing permanent homes
4 for children transitioning from foster care to adoption; and

5 WHEREAS, children in foster care who are placed with
6 relatives, compared to children placed with nonrelatives, have
7 more stability, including fewer changes in placements, have
8 more positive perceptions of their placements, are more likely
9 to be placed with their siblings, and demonstrate fewer
10 behavioral problems; and

11 WHEREAS, some relative caregivers receive less
12 financial assistance and support services than foster
13 caregivers; and

14 WHEREAS, the number of youth who age out of foster
15 care has increased during the past decade; and

16 WHEREAS, foster care is intended to be a temporary
17 placement, but children remain in the foster care system for
18 an average of two years; and

19 WHEREAS, children in foster care experience an
20 average of three different placements, which often lead to
21 disruption of routines and the need to change schools and move
22 away from siblings, extended families, and familiar
23 surroundings; and

24 WHEREAS, children entering foster care often
25 confront the widespread misperception that children in foster
26 care are disruptive, unruly, and dangerous, even though

1 placement in foster care is based on the actions of a parent
2 or guardian, not the child; and

3 WHEREAS, children who age out of foster care lack
4 the security and support of a biological or adoptive family
5 and frequently struggle to secure affordable housing, obtain
6 health insurance, pursue higher education, and acquire
7 adequate employment; and

8 WHEREAS, states, localities, and communities should
9 be encouraged to invest resources in preventive and
10 reunification services and post-permanency programs to ensure
11 that more children in foster care are provided with safe,
12 loving, and permanent placements; and

13 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize May 2016 as
14 National Foster Care Month to provide an opportunity to
15 acknowledge the accomplishments of the child welfare
16 workforce, foster parents, the advocacy community, and mentors
17 for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact on
18 the lives of children; now therefore,

19 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
20 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That in recognition of the
21 importance of foster care in Alabama, we recognize May 2016 as
22 National Foster Care Month.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House
24 of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate are
25 authorized and directed to transmit copies of this resolution

1 to the Department of Human Resources so our support regarding
2 children in foster care may be known.