

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

Relating to citizen review boards for

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the foster care system.

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BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

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WHEREAS all children need the stability, support, sense of lifelong

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belonging and continuity that only a permanent home and family can provide;

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and

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WHEREAS the purpose of foster care is for the temporary care of abused

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and neglected children and other children in need of aid before they are

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returned to their natural homes or another permanent home; and

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WHEREAS foster care placement has often resulted in foster care drift,

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a term that describes a situation when children are moved from foster home

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to foster home, obscured within the child welfare system, without a perma-

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nent placement plan that is adhered to in a timely manner; and

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WHEREAS the problem of foster care drift was addressed by the Congress

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in 1980 by the enactment of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act

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(P.L. 96-272) which provides monetary incentives to states for the develop-

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ment of permanent case plans and regular case reviews for children in

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foster care; and

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WHEREAS states are increasingly using independent volunteer citizens

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on case review boards in order to provide oversight for the problems of the

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family, the intervention efforts of the state, and the final authority of

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the court as a means of ensuring that the entire system is working in the

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best interests of the child; and

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WHEREAS citizen reviewers, acting as advocates for foster children,

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consider the necessity and appropriateness of the current placement and the

1 progress toward alleviating the cause of the placement, determine the
2 compliance and participation in the case plan by all parties, and estimate
3 a likely date for the child's return home or placement in another permanent
4 home; and

5 WHEREAS citizen review boards enhance the ability of the courts to
6 make difficult and complex permanency planning decisions; and

7 WHEREAS citizen review boards broaden local community responsibility
8 for abused and neglected children; and

9 WHEREAS the Alaska Office of Public Advocacy received funding from the
10 National Association of Foster Care Reviewers for a demonstration citizen
11 review board in Anchorage and from the legislature for a demonstration
12 citizen review board in Ketchikan, with the objective of establishing a
13 statewide citizen review system; and

14 WHEREAS the grant funding for the Anchorage project was obtained for
15 one year only with the understanding that alternative funds would be sought
16 to continue the project; and

17 WHEREAS the establishment of an efficient and cost-effective statewide
18 citizen review system will rely upon the information developed from these
19 demonstration projects;

20 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature is committed to the
21 establishment of a statewide foster care citizen review system as a neces-
22 sary and effective way to ensure that foster children do not linger un-
23 necessarily in foster care and that they are returned home or placed in
24 another permanent home as expeditiously as possible; and be it

25 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature intends to fund the
26 continuation of the citizen review demonstration projects in Anchorage and
27 Ketchikan through fiscal year 1990 so that adequate information can be
28 assembled for the establishment of a permanent statewide citizen review
29 system.