Offered: 4/17/89
Referred: Rules

6-0785E

Original sponsor: Health, Education and
Social Services Committee

1 IN THE HOUSE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15 (Finance)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Relating to citizen review boards for

6 the foster care system.

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

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

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

10 and

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

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

13 returned to their natural homes or another permanent home; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

22 foster care; and

23 WHEREAS states are increasingly using independent volunteer citizens

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

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

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

27 best interests of the child; and

28 WHEREAS citizen reviewers, acting as advocates for foster children,

29 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 possible establishment of a permanent statewide citizen
29 review system.