

2008 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 74

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 9, 2008

Requesting the Department of Social Services to study options for increasing the number of foster care families in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patron—Hanger

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, foster care is a program that provides services, substitute care, and supervision for a child on a 24-hour basis until the child can return to his or her family or be placed in an adoptive home or another permanent foster care placement; and

WHEREAS, in Virginia, more than 8,100 children are in foster care at any given time; and

WHEREAS, in many cases, foster care is the first step in helping these children achieve safe, stable, and secure living arrangements; and

WHEREAS, the need for foster families that are willing and able to provide assistance to children in need is significant and is growing more severe; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Department of Social Services be requested to study options for increasing the number of foster care families in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Department of Social Services shall conduct cost-benefit and feasibility analyses of (i) issuing a request for proposals to recruit and train foster families, (ii) increasing the stipend paid to regular foster care families, (iii) establishing a tiered stipend structure that allows for differential payments based on the needs of the foster child, (iv) expanding the public sector's capacity to recruit, train, and support foster families, and (v) outsourcing support and case management services for children in regular foster care to private child-placing agencies.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department of Social Services by the Office of Comprehensive Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Social Services for this study, upon request.

The Department of Social Services shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2008, and for the second year by November 30, 2009, and the Department of Social Services shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document for each year. The executive summaries and reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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