

By: West

S.C.R. No. 57

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Extended families have long played an important role
2 in raising children when parents are unable or unwilling to do so;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The 2000 U.S. Census found that across the country,
5 more than six million children were living in a household headed by
6 grandparents or other relatives; studies have found that such
7 kinship care provides numerous benefits; kinship placements tend to
8 be more permanent than foster care, and children gain a greater
9 sense of stability when they are loved and cared for in a familiar
10 setting by people they know and trust; kinship caregivers help
11 sustain extended family connections, continue lifelong traditions
12 and memories, and reinforce a child's sense of cultural identity
13 and self-esteem; and

14 WHEREAS, Although kinship placements bring many advantages,
15 the caregivers tend to be single, as well as older and less well off
16 than foster parents; in addition, kinship guardians today receive
17 fewer services for themselves and the children in their care; the
18 lack of financial resources and support services can lead to
19 difficulties that send children back into paid foster care;
20 accordingly, kinship programs have been developed across the nation
21 to help relatives cope with the responsibilities of child rearing
22 by providing assistance similar to that received by foster parents;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, The 80th Texas Legislature showed its support for

1 kinship caregivers in Rider 31 in Article II of House Bill 1
2 (Appropriations Act), which directed the Department of Family and
3 Protective Services to maximize federal funding for kinship
4 guardianship programs by developing and submitting or applying for
5 a waiver that would allow the State of Texas to use Title IV-E of the
6 Social Security Act or any other federal funds available for such
7 programs; and

8 WHEREAS, In October 2008, Congress enacted the Fostering
9 Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, which provides
10 federal resources to support kinship care; states are permitted to
11 claim federal reimbursement under Title IV-E for a part of the cost
12 of providing kinship guardianship assistance to every eligible
13 child who leaves foster care for placement with a grandparent or
14 other relative who has chosen to become the legal guardian; by
15 taking advantage of this funding, the State of Texas can help
16 kinship caregivers provide loving homes where children can thrive;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, It is the intent of the legislature to take full
19 advantage of federal funds, including funds available for
20 subsidized guardianship programs for kinship caregivers as
21 provided by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing
22 Adoptions Act (P.L. 110-351); now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
24 hereby direct the Health and Human Services Commission to seek
25 federal funds available under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act
26 and to pursue all available funding for the support of kinship
27 caregivers; and, be it further

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1 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2 copies of this resolution to the executive commissioner of the
3 Health and Human Services Commission and to the commissioner of the
4 Department of Family and Protective Services.