

Legislation Text

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Recognizing the Month of May as National Foster Care Month in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, May is National Foster Care Month, a month set aside to acknowledge foster parents, family members, volunteers, mentors, policymakers, child welfare professionals, and other members of the community who help children and youth in foster care find permanent homes and connections; and

WHEREAS, National Foster Care Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges of children in the foster-care system, and encourage the implementation of policies to improve the lives of children in the foster-care system; and

WHEREAS, Every child deserves a safe, loving, and permanent home; and

WHEREAS, In 1972, the National Adoption Center was established to create families for children living in foster care. The National Adoption Center works with public and private adoption agencies to expand adoption opportunities and foster an atmosphere of care and security amongst children in foster care; and

WHEREAS, In 1988, President Ronald Reagan issued the first Presidential proclamation that established May as National Foster Care Month to bring foster-care issues to the forefront of society; highlight the importance of permanency for every child; and recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children in foster care throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Children's Bureau of the United States' Department of Health and Human Services reports that in FY15 approximately 428,000 children living in foster care and there were approximately 269,509 youth that entered the foster-care system, while over 62,000 youths were eligible and awaiting adoption at the end of FY15; and

WHEREAS, Children of color are more likely to stay in the foster-care system for longer periods of time; and

WHEREAS, As of December 2015, 5,948 children in Philadelphia were living in foster care, group homes, or with relatives or close friends. The Philadelphia Department of Human Services works in partnership with resource parents, birth parents, and Community Umbrella Agencies (CUA) to address the ongoing needs to ensure that every child in Philadelphia retains a safe, loving, and permanent home; and

WHEREAS, Foster parents are the front-line caregivers for children who cannot safely remain with their biological parents and provide physical care, emotional support, education advocacy, and are the largest single source of families providing permanent homes for children; and

WHEREAS, Children in foster care who are placed with relatives, compared to children placed with nonrelatives, have more stability, including fewer changes in placements, have more positive perceptions of their placements, and demonstrate fewer behavioral problems; and

WHEREAS, The continuation of successful prevention and reunification services is necessary to reduce the number of children that are forced to remain in the foster-care system; and

WHEREAS, Much remains to be done to ensure that all children have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, regardless of age or special needs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the month of May as National Foster Care Month in the City of Philadelphia.