



HR0038

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services
3 (the Department) (DCFS) is the sole agency responsible for
4 receiving and investigating reports of child abuse or neglect
5 made under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and

6 WHEREAS, As of the end of fiscal year 2022, the Department
7 had conducted 97,400 investigations serving 22,911 youth; and

8 WHEREAS, In fiscal year 2022, 171 children died after
9 involvement with the Department, a 40% increase over the
10 previous year; while this does not imply causation on the part
11 of the Department, it does imply that the Department's efforts
12 to prevent the death of children are not sufficient; and

13 WHEREAS, The projected budget of the Department for fiscal
14 year 2023 is \$1.8 billion; and

15 WHEREAS, Since the establishment of the Office of
16 Inspector General (OIG) in 1993, the annual reports issued by
17 the Inspector General have catalogued a consistent pattern of
18 Departmental failures that unfortunately have contributed,
19 through lack of action and negligence, to the deaths of
20 hundreds of children in DCFS care over that period of time; and

1 WHEREAS, In her 1995 report, the OIG observed that "the
2 prevalent over-emphasis on Department rules and procedures
3 perpetuates the Department's isolation and fosters the belief
4 that only Department employees are responsible for the
5 well-being of children in Illinois. A more useful analysis
6 considers whether practices should be changed so that
7 Department employees, working with individuals from other
8 disciplines, would be able to pinpoint situations in which
9 death is a possibility or likelihood. By identifying the
10 characteristics that have led to a death in the past and by
11 utilizing the experiences of a variety of professionals,
12 department employees will be in a better position to prevent
13 future deaths."; and

14 WHEREAS, In her 2022 Annual Report, the Department's
15 Office of the Inspector General identified a systemic pattern
16 of negligence in mandated child protection investigations in
17 which there were significant delays in making initial contact
18 with alleged child victims of abuse or neglect; in these
19 cases, the Department failed to fulfill an essential
20 responsibility in protecting children; and

21 WHEREAS, The Inspector General noted that several
22 investigations conducted this year highlight the critical need
23 for communication and collaboration among multiple entities;
24 and

1 WHEREAS, From the above, it is apparent that shortcomings
2 that were noted 27 years ago are still present in the
3 Department; the result of this is the unfortunate litany of
4 the deaths of children who are in the care of and are the
5 responsibility of the Department; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
7 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
8 it is our position that the time is long past for systemic
9 changes to be made to the Department of Children and Family
10 Services so that it can fulfill its mission to protect
11 children and prevent the ongoing tragedy of child abuse and
12 neglect that confronts us every year; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That we call upon the Governor and the executive
14 branch as well as the Department of Children and Family
15 Services to cooperate in every way that they can to assure that
16 these changes will be made.