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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services recognizes that adoption facilitates the endeavors of the State of Illinois to protect children from neglect and harm, enhance childhood health and nutrition, reduce and control diseases in children, foster student learning, and encourage the transition of children into productive responsible adults; and

WHEREAS, Although the adoption of children into loving homes has a positive impact upon the lives of children who might otherwise face the challenges of foster care and the feeling of being unwanted, the difficulties in caring for an adopted child continue well after the formal adoption court order, especially for those families who adopted former wards of DCFS or children with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Children with special needs often have a greater likelihood of not being adopted; and

WHEREAS, Subsidies to adoptive families and post-adoption services are central to the success of many adoptions; and

WHEREAS, DCFS has a significant reservoir of information about post-adoption services in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, There is considerable variation among states concerning programs and services available to adoptive parents of children with special needs and adoptive parents of former state wards and thus, a cross-state analysis would be useful to determine what range of post-adoption programs and services exist in other states; and

WHEREAS, Data from other states with post-adoption programs would be helpful to determine possible changes in Illinois post-adoption programs; and

1 WHEREAS, Public interest and advocacy groups involved in
2 post-adoption policy have valuable insights, suggestions, and
3 resources; and

4 WHEREAS, The General Assembly would be well served during
5 legislative deliberations by an in-depth study concerning
6 post-adoptive services, adoption of children with special
7 needs, adoption of DCFS wards, costs of raising adopted
8 children with special needs, and adoption subsidies;
9 therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
11 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we urge the Department of Children and Family Services to
13 conduct a study and issue a report with respect to
14 post-adoption services available in Illinois, the involvement
15 of the Department of Children and Family Services in
16 post-adoption services, and a comparison of the post-adoption
17 programs and services in Illinois with those in other states,
18 particularly focusing on post-adoption support, the adoption
19 of state wards, and the adoption of children with special
20 needs; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the study report also include the following
22 matters:

23 1. The types of post-adoptive services available in
24 Illinois, including an analysis about the funding levels
25 for those services;

26 2. A description of all services in Illinois that are
27 available to families with adopted children with special
28 needs;

29 3. The costs that adoptive families incur while raising
30 a child with special needs;

31 4. The types of specialized services that adoptive
32 families with children with special needs report that they

1 need;

2 5. An identification of recent trends in Illinois with
3 respect to the adoption of DCFS wards, particularly since
4 the passage of the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act
5 of 1997;

6 6. A survey of a random sample of adoptive parents of
7 former DCFS wards in Illinois to gather data on their
8 household characteristics, the parents' estimates of the
9 costs of raising an adopted DCFS ward, the parents'
10 perceptions of the particular needs of an adopted former
11 DCFS ward, and the manner in which the adoptive family
12 spent its adoption subsidy;

13 7. With respect to other states, determine what
14 subsidies and services are available to families adopting
15 former state wards;

16 8. With respect to other states, determine what
17 subsidies and services are available to adoptive parents of
18 children with special needs;

19 9. Where available, determine what other states spend
20 in order to offer subsidies and post-adoption services;

21 10. With respect to other states, identify and collect
22 policy documents concerning post-adoption services,
23 especially reports, legislation, and policy manuals; and

24 11. Identify information, reports, and proposals
25 supported by public interest and advocacy groups involved
26 in post-adoption services; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the adoption study report of the Department
28 of Children and Family Services be submitted to the House of
29 Representatives and the Senate no later than March 6, 2006, and
30 a copy of the study shall be submitted to the Governor; and be
31 it further

32 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to
33 the Director of Children and Family Services.