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A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

25-93

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

July 11, 2023

To recognize the importance of kinship families in the District of Columbia and the many benefits kinship caregivers bestow on the children in their care as well as the many challenges they face when raising these children, and to declare the month of September 2023 as “Kinship Care Month” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, the DC Council seeks to proclaim September 2023 as Kinship Care Month in the District of Columbia;

WHEREAS, Kinship Care Month is observed to recognize children in kinship families, and the grandparents, other relatives, and family friends who raise them, ensuring their safety, promoting their well-being, and establishing a safe and stable home for these young people;

WHEREAS, in kinship families, a caregiver cares for a child or children who were biologically born to another family member or close friend because the biological parents are unable to raise them;

WHEREAS, nationally, approximately 2.7 million children are living with grandparents and other relatives or fictive kin in kinship care; more than 22,000 of these young people reside in the District of Columbia, with fewer than 125 of them in foster care;

WHEREAS, one in 11 of all children, and one in five African-American children, will live within a kinship family sometime during their childhood;

WHEREAS, kinship caregivers report tremendous satisfaction in caring for and raising children but face substantial challenges in accessing the resources they need to care for their families;

WHEREAS, many kinship caregivers live at or below the margins of financial stability themselves even before they agree to take a child into their homes, while others may give up their retirement years to assume parenting duties for these children;

WHEREAS, many children come to live with kinship caregivers after allegations of parental abuse or neglect;

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WHEREAS, children in kinship care frequently have mental health conditions from trauma experienced in their homes and communities;

WHEREAS, kinship caregivers offer a refuge, as well as love, nurturing and care, for these children;

WHEREAS, research shows that kinship care helps maintain family, sibling and community ties, improves behavioral and mental health outcomes, and promotes permanency for children who cannot live with their parents;

WHEREAS, it is vitally important the public grow in awareness of the challenges faced by children, grandparents and other relatives in kinship families; so as to ensure there are services and supports available and accessible to enable kinship youth to grow and thrive; and

WHEREAS, Kinship Care Month honors the priceless role these grandparents and other kinship caregivers play in the lives of the children they love.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Kinship Care Month Recognition Resolution of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Council recognizes the contributions of kinship families raising children in the District of Columbia, and declares the month of September 2023 as “Kinship Care Month”, as a confirmation of the District’s continued support to kinship caregivers for stepping up in times of crisis to provide loving homes for children in the District.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.