

HM 7039

2017

1 House Memorial

2 A memorial to the Congress of the United States,
3 urging Congress to establish a child welfare block
4 grant in lieu of Title IV-E funding.
5

6 WHEREAS, one of the most important roles of government is
7 ensuring the safety and well-being of society's most vulnerable
8 members, including children, and

9 WHEREAS, children enter the child welfare system for many
10 reasons, such as parental substance abuse, domestic violence,
11 mental illness, and generational poverty, and the complexity of
12 cases is growing due to the interplay of these factors, and

13 WHEREAS, preventing child abuse, abandonment, and neglect
14 saves children from trauma and avoids costs for more intensive
15 treatment services, juvenile justice interventions, public
16 benefits expenditures, and other social services, resulting in
17 long-term savings, and

18 WHEREAS, for children who suffer maltreatment and need
19 intensive services, a wide range of research-based service
20 models now exist to meet those needs, from in-home services to
21 therapeutic care in out-of-home settings, and

22 WHEREAS, with flexibility in use of federal funds for child
23 welfare services, professionals working closely with children
24 and families can tailor services to best meet individual needs,
25 regardless of the level of involvement in the child welfare

HM 7039

2017

26 | system, thus making the most effective and efficient use of
27 | funding, and

28 | WHEREAS, Florida has been a national leader in innovative
29 | child welfare service provision through a community-based system
30 | of care and flexible funding streams, providing communities with
31 | the responsibility, authority, and resources to care for their
32 | own children, and

33 | WHEREAS, while the federal Child and Family Services Review
34 | found that Florida exceeds national standards with respect to
35 | certain indicators and systemic factors, the state still faces
36 | challenges in meeting other requirements and would benefit from
37 | continued flexibility in federal funding to most effectively
38 | meet these challenges, and

39 | WHEREAS, Florida's Title IV-E waiver is due to end
40 | September 30, 2018, and federal law requires all waiver
41 | operations to terminate by September 30, 2019, such that Florida
42 | will soon revert to more restrictive funding limitations unless
43 | Congress takes action, and

44 | WHEREAS, even the flexible Title IV-E waivers limit state
45 | action to a great degree, and

46 | WHEREAS, widespread support exists nationally to transform
47 | the current Title IV-E funding approach to emphasize prevention
48 | and greater provision of a wider array of services tailored to
49 | meet individual families' needs so that children may be safe

HM 7039

2017

50 while avoiding the trauma of placement outside the home when
51 possible, NOW, THEREFORE,

52

53 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

54

55 That the Legislature of the State of Florida requests the
56 United States Congress to establish a child welfare block grant
57 in lieu of Title IV-E funding, giving states the flexibility to
58 provide an expanded array of community-based programs and
59 supports to children who are in or who are at risk of entering
60 out-of-home placement, and their families; and

61 That under this block grant, eligibility be broadened to
62 include any child in need, and that the total funding available
63 to the state be sufficient to meet the needs of those children,
64 based on factors that provide incentives for earlier
65 intervention and efficient and effective service provision while
66 taking into account population growth, changes in children's and
67 families' needs, and inflation rates.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
69 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
70 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
71 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
72 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.