

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to  
2 establish policies and reports related to children in out-of-home care during the COVID-  
3 19 pandemic.

4 WHEREAS, in April 2020 over 10,000 children were in the custody of the Cabinet  
5 for Health and Family Services, which is the highest amount in the last six years; and

6 WHEREAS, as of February 2021, 9,156 children were in the custody of the Cabinet  
7 for Health and Family Services; and

8 WHEREAS, efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19 have impacted the child  
9 welfare system in many ways, including limiting in-home visits, limiting out-of-state  
10 travel, and increasing the use of virtual court hearings; and

11 WHEREAS, the changes enacted by the Cabinet yielded positive and negative  
12 consequences for all parties involved in caring for children in the state's custody; and

13 WHEREAS, the Department for Community Based Services within the Cabinet for  
14 Health and Family Services has reported a decrease in entries into and exits from out-of-  
15 home care resulting from COVID-19;

16 NOW, THEREFORE,

17 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

18 ➔Section 1. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services shall not establish any  
19 new requirement related to out-of-state travel for children in out-of-home care during any  
20 state of emergency declared by the Governor in response to the COVID-19 virus or any  
21 mutated strain of the COVID-19 virus that is any more restrictive than requirements  
22 included in an executive order as part of a declared state of emergency for all Kentucky  
23 citizens.

24 ➔Section 2. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is hereby directed to  
25 create a report detailing any efficiencies discovered in the Kentucky child welfare system  
26 due to procedural and process changes created during the COVID-19 pandemic.

27 ➔Section 3. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services shall submit the report to

1 the Governor, the Legislative Research Commission, the Child Welfare Oversight and  
2 Advisory Committee, and the Interim Joint Committee on Health, Welfare, and Family  
3 Services by August 31, 2022.