



Sample Resolution in Support of the White House Conference on Children & Youth

Whereas, many children and youth in the United States face serious challenges, including over 3,000,000 reports of child abuse and neglect and nearly 800,000 children substantiated as abused and neglected each year;

Whereas, more than 490,000 children and youth are in foster care at the end of the federal fiscal year and nearly 800,000 spend at least some time in care throughout the year;

Whereas, while 54,000 children are adopted from the public child welfare system each year, more than 133,000 children are waiting to be adopted;

Whereas, in 2007, more than 28,000 youth left the foster care system not because they have found a permanent family but because they reached the age at which foster care assistance ended;

Whereas, there is an over-representation of certain populations including Native Americans and African Americans within the child welfare system;

Whereas, twenty-five percent of children in out-of-home care in 2007 were being living with relatives, the federal government only recently provided states the option to use Title IV-funds for children raised by relative caregivers;

Whereas, many children and youth that come to the attention of the child welfare system and a large proportion of those in foster care experience physical health issues and between 50-80% experience a moderate to severe mental health disorder;

Whereas, youth in foster care are more likely than their teen counterparts to become pregnant, with one study finding that nearly 50% of teen girls in foster care become pregnant by age 19, and adolescent childbearing, in combination with other preexisting factors, is linked to negative consequences for mother and child, and to significant costs to society;

Whereas, [insert statistics specific to your state];

Whereas, the state courts are key decision makers in the lives of children involved in the child welfare system and should be supported, and that these decisions may include determination of abuse or neglect, whether a child should be reunified with his or her family, or should be adopted or placed in another setting;

Whereas, the child welfare system will never fully address its primary mission unless the courts are an integral and functioning component of a statewide system of care and protection;

Whereas, the child welfare system includes a professional workforce in the courts, public and private child welfare agencies, mental health and health care programs, education settings, and citizen review panels, and volunteers such as the Court Appointed Special Advocates, which should be strengthened;

Whereas, the challenge of child abuse cannot be effectively addressed in a sustained manner until the nation addresses the outcomes for children in a comprehensive way;



Whereas, the White House Conference on Children and Youth had been the oldest White House Conference starting in 1909 and continuing every ten years until the last Conference in 1970;

Whereas, these Conferences had resulted in significant policies over the decades including creation of a Children's Bureau, standards of care for children, and had focused attention on critical needs of America's children;

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the (Agency Board Name, state legislature, city commission, etc) urges the United States Congress to authorize and the President Obama to call a White House Conference on Children and Youth; and be it further

Resolved, That the (Agency Board Name, state legislature, city commission, etc) calls for this event to begin in 2010 with a series of state and local conferences to address the nation's child welfare system and to focus the nation's attention on creating better outcomes for all children of the United States.