

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 52

BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND AUTHORIZING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
TO APPOINT A COMMITTEE TO UNDERTAKE AND COMPLETE A STUDY OF THE FOSTER  
CARE SYSTEM IN IDAHO.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, studies have shown that children who enter foster care systems  
endure numerous traumatic experiences, including the initial trauma of be-  
ing separated from their parents, the trauma of being separated from their  
siblings, the trauma of bouncing from one foster care placement to another,  
never knowing when their lives will be uprooted next and the trauma of lan-  
guishing for years in foster homes; and

WHEREAS, the trauma experienced by children who enter foster care sys-  
tems leads to multiple attachment disorders, as well as emotional and behav-  
ioral issues; and

WHEREAS, many young people age out of foster care without permanent  
families, and research has shown that those who leave care without being  
linked to forever families have a higher likelihood than youth in the general  
population of experiencing homelessness, unemployment and incarceration as  
adults; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of children who enter the foster care sys-  
tem in Idaho, also enter the Idaho juvenile corrections system; and

WHEREAS, during a Joint Senate and House Health and Welfare Committee  
meeting held during the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Leg-  
islature, there was a plethora of consistent testimony given illustrating  
major concerns with the foster care system in Idaho; and

WHEREAS, the concerns expressed during the meeting included: fos-  
ter children being moved for punitive reasons against the foster parents,  
rather than to effectuate the best interest of the child; a chilling effect  
experienced by foster parents who are afraid to speak out for fear of being  
blacklisted by the Department of Health and Welfare; moving children from  
foster family to foster family, which augments the traumatic experiences for  
the children; moving children into homes of questionable standards; the lack  
of clear standards and guidelines for what constitutes appropriate and fit  
homes for children, both in state and out of state; and the lack of under-  
standing by the State of Idaho that the damage done to these children lasts a  
lifetime, not just for the period of time the child is in foster care.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular Ses-  
sion of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and  
the Senate concurring therein, that the Legislative Council is authorized to  
appoint a committee to undertake and complete a study of the foster care sys-  
tem in Idaho, and to make recommendations for changes to state statutes. The  
Legislative Council shall determine the number of legislators and member-  
ship from each house appointed to the committee and shall authorize the com-

1 mittee to receive input, advice and assistance from interested and affected  
2 parties who are not members of the Legislature.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that nonlegislative members of the committee may  
4 be appointed by the cochairs of the committee who are appointed by the Leg-  
5 islative Council. Nonlegislative members of the committee shall not be re-  
6 imbursed from legislative funds for per diem, mileage or other expenses and  
7 shall not have voting privileges regarding the committee's recommendations  
8 or proposed legislation.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall report its findings,  
10 recommendations and proposed legislation, if any, to the First Regular Ses-  
11 sion of the Sixty-fourth Idaho Legislature.