

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1360

WHEREAS, the proper education of all students is necessary for a productive and bright future of all citizens of Missouri; and

WHEREAS, the social, emotional, and educational needs of children are affected by placement in foster care; and

WHEREAS, the mobility of pupils in foster care often disrupts their educational experience; and

WHEREAS, efficient transfer procedures and transfer of pupil records is a critical factor in the swift placement of foster children in educational settings; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that a determination of responsibility among both the local school district and the child placing agency is made regarding the proper and timely placement and transfer of pupils in foster care:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, hereby create a Senate Interim Committee on the Educational Rights of Foster Care Pupils; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim committee shall be responsible for:

(1) Investigating the primary objective that all pupils in foster care should have a meaningful opportunity to meet the academic achievement standards to which all pupils are held;

(2) Studying the implementation of a new policy by the department of social services that would consider as part of the function of the child's family support team the educational needs of each child under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court or family court;

(3) Exploring the means of ensuring that pupils, educators, care providers, child placing agencies, advocates, and the juvenile officers work together to maintain stable school placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all pupils;

(4) Researching the possibility of requiring each school district to designate a staff person as the educational liaison for foster care children;

(5) Investigating the feasibility of ensuring that regular full school days of education for all pupils in foster care is achieved; and

(6) Exploring any other ideas as necessary to attain the goals of establishing an educational bill of rights for foster care pupils; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim committee be authorized to call upon any department, office, division, or agency of this state to assist in gathering information pursuant to its objective; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim committee herein established shall consist of five members, three of which shall be members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate, two of which shall be members of the Senate appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the staff of Senate Research shall provide such legal, research, clerical, technical, and bill drafting services as the interim committee may require in the performance of its duties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim committee, its members, and any staff assigned to the committee shall receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in attending meetings of the committee or any subcommittee thereof; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim committee shall expire on December 31, 2007, and on that same date deliver a report of findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.