

By Senator Rossin

35-737-98

1 Senate Resolution No. ____

2 A resolution honoring youths 15 years of age
3 and older who are in foster care and honoring
4 the State Youth Advisory Board of the
5 Department of Children and Family Services.

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7 WHEREAS, youths who enter the foster care system have
8 not experienced the benefit of traditional family support and
9 values that come with a stable family background, and
10 frequently there is a stigma associated with being in foster
11 care which creates the perception that youths in foster care
12 are different from other young people or are to blame for
13 their circumstances, and

14 WHEREAS, the Independent Living Program of the
15 Department of Children and Family Services has been in
16 existence for over 11 years and has proven to be a highly
17 effective program in assisting youths who are in foster care
18 to become independent of the welfare system, and

19 WHEREAS, youths who complete the Independent Living
20 Program go on to work and live in their communities as
21 taxpaying citizens who contribute to the state's economy, and

22 WHEREAS, youths who do not complete the Independent
23 Living Program are more likely to become homeless, more likely
24 to commit crimes, and more likely to continue to depend on the
25 welfare system, and

26 WHEREAS, there are currently 2,919 youths in foster
27 care who are between the ages of 15-21 and are eligible for
28 the Independent Living Program, and

29 WHEREAS, the National Resource Center for Youth
30 Services, University of Oklahoma, has named the Florida

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1 Department of Children and Family Services as having the most
2 successful state youth board in the nation, and

3 WHEREAS, the National Resource Center for Youth
4 Services has requested that the Department of Children and
5 Family Services provide other states with access to its
6 expertise in working with state youth boards, NOW, THEREFORE,

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8 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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10 That the Florida Senate hereby honors the state's
11 youths who are in foster care and, specifically, the State
12 Youth Advisory Board for their role in serving as a bridge
13 between the system and children in foster care.

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