

By Representative Brennan

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House Resolution

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 House of Representatives of the State of
9 Florida:

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11 That the House of Representatives hereby honors the
12 state's youths who are in foster care and, specifically, the
13 State Youth Advisory Board for its role in serving as a bridge
14 between the system and children in foster care.

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