

By the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs; and  
Senator Detert

586-02128-16

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to foster families; creating s.  
3           683.333, F.S.; designating the second week of February  
4           of each year as "Foster Family Appreciation Week";  
5           providing an effective date.  
6  
7           WHEREAS, the family is the very foundation of our  
8           communities, state, and country, and  
9           WHEREAS, parents serve as a child's primary source of love,  
10          attachment, identity, self-esteem, and support, and  
11          WHEREAS, foster parents open their homes and hearts to  
12          children whose families are in crisis and play a vital role in  
13          helping children heal, reconnect, grow, and flourish, and  
14          WHEREAS, foster parents are professional parents and full  
15          partners in the commitment to ensuring the well-being of  
16          children in foster care, and  
17          WHEREAS, many of the children adopted in this state have  
18          been provided a permanent home by their foster parents, and  
19          WHEREAS, foster parents play a critical role in the Quality  
20          Parenting Initiative, which places a priority on quality  
21          parenting, putting the needs of children first, advocating for  
22          children in their care, and supporting and mentoring birth  
23          families, and  
24          WHEREAS, in this state, more than 6,000 children and youth  
25          in foster care have a safe, secure, and stable family foster  
26          home, and  
27          WHEREAS, compassionate individuals, faith-based  
28          communities, and public and private organizations work to  
29          increase public awareness of the enduring and valuable  
30          contributions of foster parents and the needs of children in  
31          foster care, and

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32 WHEREAS, those families who are able to serve as foster  
33 parents should be wholeheartedly encouraged to do so, and

34 WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child  
35 Protection, the Legislature, the Department of Children and  
36 Families, community-based care lead agencies, the guardian ad  
37 litem program, the Florida State Foster/Adoptive Parent  
38 Association, and state and local agencies and organizations all  
39 provide support for foster families, and

40 WHEREAS, to continue to commend and support foster families  
41 in the years ahead, the people of this state are called upon to  
42 recognize the positive impact that foster parents have on  
43 children in foster care and to consider providing a loving,  
44 supportive home for children in need by becoming foster parents,  
45 NOW, THEREFORE,

46  
47 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

48  
49 Section 1. Section 683.333, Florida Statutes, is created to  
50 read:

51 683.333 Foster Family Appreciation Week.-

52 (1) The second week of February of each year is designated  
53 as "Foster Family Appreciation Week" to recognize the enduring  
54 and invaluable contributions that foster parents provide to the  
55 children in their care and, thus, to the future of this state.

56 (2) The Department of Children and Families, local  
57 governments, and other agencies are encouraged to sponsor events  
58 to promote awareness of the contributions made by foster  
59 families to the vitality of the state.

60 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.