

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Day Care Policy Act of 1979 to address the growing needs for foster parents and support the foster care community by extending eligibility for subsidized child care to foster parents who may no longer be working but have some form of verifiable income; teen parents under 21 years of age who themselves are in foster care or wards of the District; and foster parents who are not working but who are enrolled in a verified job training or education program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the "Foster Care Extended Eligibility Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2015".

Sec. 2. (a) The District of Columbia leads the nation in providing high-quality pre-K to over 70% of the District's three-year olds and over 90% of the District's four-year olds. In order to ensure that the District's youngest children are prepared when they enter our pre-K programs, a need exists to increase the level of high-quality child care and services that our 0-3 year old population receives.

(b) Currently, 3,542 children ages 0-3 receive child care subsidy in the District of Columbia, and of those children, 215 live with foster parents that seek support through subsidized child care services. These are generally some of the District's most vulnerable residents who need comprehensive services and a continuity of care to ensure that they are poised to succeed when they enter pre-K and Kindergarten.

1 (c) In order to address the needs of the population discussed in subsection (b) above and  
2 their families, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is expanding the  
3 eligibility for subsidized child care to three specific cohorts of the foster care population: foster  
4 parents who may no longer be working but have some form of verifiable income; teen parents  
5 under 21 years of age who themselves are in foster care or wards of the District; and foster  
6 parents who are not working but who are enrolled in a verified job training or education  
7 program.

8 (e) Under current District law, children receiving child care subsidy are not guaranteed  
9 continuity of care, as their subsidy status is linked to their foster parent's employment status.  
10 Thus, if a foster parent loses his or her job or has retired his or her foster child will either not be  
11 eligible for subsidy or lose subsidy and thus child care. This disruption is particularly  
12 detrimental to these children, as they are often the population with the greatest need for  
13 consistency and continuity. Thus, a need exists to allow the children in foster homes to continue  
14 to receive child care subsidy, and therefore child care, despite the employment status of their  
15 foster parent.

16 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances  
17 enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the "Foster  
18 Care Extended Eligibility Emergency Amendment Act of 2015" be adopted after a single  
19 reading.

20 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.