

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 6, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE 2006 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION TO INCREASE PAYMENTS TO FOSTER CARE PARENTS

ISSUE: City Council consideration of a resolution requesting the 2006 General Assembly to increase payments to foster care parents.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the attached resolution that requests the General Assembly to increase foster care payments in Virginia to at least the national average.

BACKGROUND: The City's 2006 Legislative Package seeks additional State funding for Virginia foster parents, who receive payments which are considerably less than those for surrounding states or the national average. At Council's work session with the General Assembly delegation Councilman Gaines asked that staff prepare a resolution for adoption by Council, indicating Council's strong support for this legislative proposal.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Resolution

STAFF:
Bernard Caton, Legislative Director
Debra Collins, Director, Department of Human Services
Suzanne Chis, Director, Division of Family Services, Department of Human Services

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, foster parents are people who generously open their homes to children in need, and are committed to meet the individual needs of these children; and

WHEREAS, foster parents work in partnership with the child, the local government, and in many cases the birth parents to help in resolving problems and reuniting the family whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, most children in foster care are going through a troubled period in their family life; are often confused, sad, and angry; and need a great deal of support and attention from their foster parents; and

WHEREAS, funding provided by the state to cover the costs incurred by foster parents currently ranges from \$312 monthly for a child 4 years old or younger, to \$463 for a child 13 or older; and

WHEREAS, these monthly payments are far less than the foster parents' actual costs, which the federal government estimates at \$908 a month for a non-foster child; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's foster care payments are much lower than those in neighboring states (Maryland's monthly payments range from \$535 to \$550, Tennessee's are between \$504 and \$580, and West Virginia pays \$600 monthly), and they are also considerably less than the national average; and

WHEREAS, inadequate financial support makes it very difficult to recruit and retain foster parents; and

WHEREAS, this lack of financial support also indicates that Virginians do not put a high enough value on protecting some of our most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, the City believes that the State should substantially increase payments to foster parents, and has included this as a request in its 2006 Legislative Package.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that the 2006 General Assembly is requested to increase Virginia's foster care payments to at least the national average, which is estimated at \$468 to \$550 monthly, depending on age; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be conveyed to the Governor, the Governor-elect, the members of the City's Legislative Delegation, and the chairmen of the Virginia General Assembly's House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees to apprise them of the City's support for increased payments for foster parents in the upcoming General Assembly Session.

ADOPTED: _____
DATE

WILLIAM D. EUILLE, MAYOR

ATTEST:

JACQUELINE M. HENDERSON, CMC CITY CLERK

RESOLUTION NO. 2170

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ADOPTED: December 13, 2005



WILLIAM D. EULLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC

City Clerk