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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
1999 JAN 15 A 11: 55

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY  
LEGISLATORS PEOPLES & HOLT

**RE: CONCERNS REGARDING KINSHIP VERSUS FOSTER CARE**

WHEREAS, Nationwide, 4.3 million children currently reside with relatives other than their parents — 77 percent in urban areas, and

WHEREAS, Rather than children being separated from their family and oftentimes siblings being separated from each other to be placed in foster, preventative or protective care when their parents are incapacitated or incarcerated, many grandparents take responsibility for these children thus keeping the family together, and

WHEREAS, Several complaints have recently been aired that grandparents involved in kinship in Erie County do not receive the same — or any — benefits as a foster parent would, especially in the area of daycare, and

WHEREAS, Grandparents who keep their families together through the acceptance of their grandchildren into their homes and lives should be entitled to the same benefits as foster parents,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, That the Erie County Legislature does hereby commend those grandparents in our community who make welcome into their homes and lives grandchildren whose parents cannot care for their children due to incapacitation or incarceration, and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Honorable Body does express concern that some of said grandparents may not be receiving the same benefits as a foster parent would, and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Honorable Body does hereby request that Erie County Department of Social Services Commissioner Deborah Merrifield appear at a future meeting of the Legislature's Social Services Committee to discuss the aforementioned issue, including providing data to this Honorable Body as to how many grandparents in Erie County participate in said kinship, and what if any regulatory differences exist between kinship and foster care, and be it further

RESOLVED, That certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Erie County Executive Dennis Gorski and Erie County Department of Social Services Commissioner Deborah Merrifield.

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**CRYSTAL D. PEOPLES**

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**GEORGE A. HOLT, JR.**

**Fiscal Impact:** None for resolution.