



Solano County

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Legislation Text

File #: 20-778, **Version:** 1

Adopt a resolution proclaiming the month of November 2020 as National Adoption Month in Solano County

Published Notice Required? Yes ___ No X

Public Hearing Required? Yes ___ No X

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Health and Social Services (H&SS) recommends the Board adopt a resolution recognizing the month of November 2020 as National Adoption Month in Solano County.

SUMMARY:

November is "National Adoption Month" and Solano County has a long tradition of formally recognizing and appreciating the adoptive families who provide permanency to children in need, and the social workers who make and support these life-long connections. The Solano County Adoption Month declaration helps to increase awareness about adoption in the Solano community, and inspire all towards excellence in achieving permanency for youth. The national theme for 2020 is "Engage Youth: Listen and Learn."

Teenagers are less likely to be adopted, often because of their age, and are much more likely to age out of foster care without strong or stable family support. Securing lifelong connections for teens in foster care, both legally and emotionally, is a critical component in determining their future achievements, health, and well-being. Adoption is one way that children who are unable to return to their biological families can find this permanency.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by the Department's FY2020/21 Adopted Budget. The costs associated with preparation and purchase of the resolution materials are included in the Board's FY2020/21 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

National Adoption Month has been promoted and celebrated every November for over two decades in communities across the country. Many national, State, and local agencies as well as foster, kinship care, and adoptive family groups help educate their communities through programs, events, and activities that aim to raise awareness about the thousands of children and youth currently in foster care who are waiting for their own permanent, loving families.

In Solano County, there are 351 children currently in out of home foster care placement, of which 141 children have been referred for adoption services. Solano County Child Welfare Services (CWS) is pleased to report that 45 children have been adopted during this program year, and this number is anticipated to increase in future years as permanency efforts are nurtured and strengthened. CWS believes that every child and teenager in America, including those in Solano County, deserves a permanent loving family and a home in which they can develop to their fullest potential.

Solano County CWS has expanded its permanency process by the creation of adoptive profiles and creative search engagements for adoptive families for youth, often teenagers, who were previously uninterested in pursuing adoption but now wish to find permanency. This process came out of social workers' practice of engaging youth, listening and learning. While teens are often unable to consider permanency immediately after learning they cannot reunify with their parents, their perspective can change and evolve. Maintaining a dialogue with youth about their permanency needs over time allows for this evolution and keeps permanency options open.

Child Welfare Services continuously recruits for adoptive families in order to meet the need for permanent homes and expedite placement for children into permanent homes. Formally recognizing November as National Adoption Month in Solano County provides an opportunity to acknowledge adoptive families and all of the dedicated professionals in Solano County who work diligently to help children and youth find permanent, stable and loving homes.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to adopt the resolution. This is not recommended because National Adoption Month provides an opportunity to celebrate with adoptive parents who open their homes and hearts to children in need, and to recognize County staff and other professionals who assist children in finding permanent homes.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION