

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

June 2, 2005

LR 76

care should receive an explanation appropriate to their age as to why they've been placed in the custody of the Department of Health and Human Services; that every child should be placed in a home where the shelter and foster care giver is aware and understands the child's history, makeup, background and the like. The child should know, in return, what is expected of him or her in that family; that they live in healthy, safe, comfortable placement and adequate healthy food, adequate clothing; that they receive medical, dental, vision, and mental health screening assessments and treatments; that they have monthly contacts with their caseworker; and that they be free from repeated changes in placement. This is a statement of goal, it's not a statement of promise because, frankly, these promises will be disappointed. Our system will not operate at the level that is contemplated by this resolution. However, what the young kids who had been through foster care said was they wanted essentially for the whole system to understand what kids in the system wanted and, among other things, what they wanted was information and a chance to be heard, information and a chance to be heard. The concluding section says, now therefore be it resolved by the members of the Ninety-Ninth Legislature of Nebraska that the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government should combine efforts to ensure and improve timely and safe permanent placements of children and to provide adequate resources to the systems striving to accomplish this work, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor David Heineman and the Governor's Youth Advisory Council, who is the source of this original idea. Thank you, Senator Cudaback.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Landis. You heard the opening on LR 76. Those wishing to discuss it, Senator Stuthman.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I am totally in favor of this resolution, but I would like to engage in a little discussion with Senator Landis. The thing that I would like to know is how or what steps would we make or how would we address this? What would be the formality part of it to try to improve the situation that we have with the placement of the foster care? Senator Landis, would you be