

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE)
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION)
ON CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE)
_____)

ORDER

25700-B-533

WHEREAS, the Washington State Supreme Court recognizes that the safety, permanency and well being of children under court supervision is paramount;

WHEREAS, the judiciary seeks to provide all children in foster care with safe, permanent families in which their physical, emotional and social needs are met;

WHEREAS, systemic improvements are needed to meet the needs of children in foster care and the child welfare system;

WHEREAS, the needed systemic improvements can best be achieved through collaboration between the courts and child welfare partners;

WHEREAS, institutionalization of this collaboration will assume that systemic improvements are sought and achieved beyond the terms of office of individual members of the judiciary, agency directors and elected officials;

Now, therefore, it is hereby;

ORDERED:

That a Commission on Children in Foster Care be established to monitor and report on the extent to which child welfare programs and courts are responsive to the needs of the children in their joint care; to make recommendations for systemic improvements; and to broaden public awareness of and support for meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families, including

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provision of sufficient mental health, health care, education and other services;

That the Commission shall be co-chaired by a sitting or retired justice of the Supreme Court, to be designated by the Chief Justice, and by the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration;

That the Commission shall consist of the following members, appointed by the Chief Justice:

Attorney General of the State of Washington,
Superintendent of Public Instruction,
President-Judge of the Superior Court Judges Association,
Executive Director of Washington State CASA,
President/Co-Presidents of the Foster Parents Association of Washington State,
Chair of the Northwest Inter-Tribal Council,
Chair of the House Committee with oversight for issues relating to the child welfare system,
Chair of the Senate Committee with oversight for issues relating to the child welfare system,
Director of the Office of Public Defense,
Director of the Office of Civil Legal Aid,
One youth currently in foster care, and
One alumni of foster care;
One parent who has been involved in a dependency proceeding.

That the Commission shall file an annual report with the Washington State Supreme Court, recommending appropriate action to serve and meet the needs of children in foster care and in the child welfare system.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 9th of February 2012.

Johnson

Owen, J.

Fairhurst, J.

J. Johnson

Madsen, C. J.

Stevens, J.

Chambers, J.

Wiggins, J.

Gonzales, J.