

1 JOINT RESOLUTION ON HOMELESS AND RUNAWAY

2 YOUTH

3 2015 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 Chief Sponsor: Gage Froerer

6 Senate Sponsor: Luz Escamilla

7	Cosponsors:	Sandra Hollins	Dixon M. Pitcher
8	Patrice M. Arent	Eric K. Hutchings	Douglas V. Sagers
9	Scott H. Chew	David E. Lifferth	Earl D. Tanner
10	Rebecca P. Edwards	Curtis Oda	R. Curt Webb
11	Justin L. Fawson	Jeremy A. Peterson	

12

13 LONG TITLE

14 General Description:

15 This joint resolution of the Legislature designates the month of November as
16 "Homeless and Runaway Youth Awareness Month."

17 Highlighted Provisions:

18 This resolution:

- 19 ▶ designates the month of November as "Homeless and Runaway Youth Awareness
- 20 Month"; and
- 21 ▶ recognizes the efforts of those addressing the problem of youth homelessness.

22 Special Clauses:

23 None

24

25 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

26 WHEREAS, between 900 and 5,000 youth in Utah experience homelessness each year,
27 the majority of whom are forced to live outdoors, on the streets, or in other places unfit for
28 human habitation;

29 WHEREAS, families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless
30 population and now account for approximately one-third of all homeless individuals;

31 WHEREAS, homeless and runaway youth are more likely to become chronically
32 homeless adults later in life;

33 WHEREAS, 32% of homeless youth attempt suicide;

34 WHEREAS, many youth experience isolation and trauma while homeless, which can
35 lead to depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder;

36 WHEREAS, one of every three homeless youth will take illegal drugs for the first time
37 while homeless;

38 WHEREAS, many homeless youth are lured into prostitution within 48 hours of
39 leaving home and are susceptible to becoming victims of human trafficking;

40 WHEREAS, homeless youth are typically too poor to secure basic needs, are unable to
41 access adequate medical or mental health care, and often engage in "survival sex" in exchange
42 for food, clothing, or shelter;

43 WHEREAS, 12-36% of youth in foster care will experience homelessness at least once
44 after exiting foster care;

45 WHEREAS, homeless youth are most often expelled from their homes without
46 adequate resources after being physically, sexually, or emotionally abused by their guardians or
47 after being separated from their parents through death, divorce, or family rejection;

48 WHEREAS, 75% of homeless or runaway youth have dropped out of school or will
49 drop out of school; and

50 WHEREAS, a heightened awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness and its
51 causes is essential for programs involving businesses, families, law enforcement agencies,
52 schools, and community and faith-based organizations to be effective at helping youth remain
53 off the streets, and for making youth homelessness prevention a local and state priority;

54 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
55 designates the month of November as "Homeless and Runaway Youth Awareness Month" and
56 encourages businesses, organizations, and volunteers to continue to intensify their efforts to

57 address the needs of homeless and runaway youth.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature supports the values and efforts of
59 businesses, organizations, and volunteers who are dedicated to preventing youth homelessness
60 and to meeting the needs of homeless children and teens.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature applauds the initiative taken, and
62 the time and resources donated by businesses, organizations, and volunteers, to increase the
63 public's awareness of the problems of youth homelessness and increase awareness of the causes
64 and potential solutions for youth homelessness, and also applauds the work they have
65 performed through effective public and private partnerships to prevent homelessness among
66 children and teens.