

**CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS**

**COSCA Resolution VI**

**In Support of Keeping Families Together Act**

WHEREAS, the Conference of State Court Administrators recognize that each year thousands of parents must relinquish legal custody of their children to state agencies for the sole purpose of obtaining mental health services for their children who have serious mental or emotional disorders; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the U. S. General Accounting Office found that approximately 12,700 children in 19 states were placed in the custody of the state child welfare and juvenile justice systems for the sole purpose of accessing mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the Keeping Families Together Act (H.R. 3243 and S. 1704) is designed to address the barriers that prevent the families with children who have serious mental or emotional disorders from accessing critical mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the Act would provide states with federal matching dollars to fund state interagency systems of care that would serve children while keeping the children in the legal custody of and living with their families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of State Court Administrators urges Congress to give favorable consideration to legislation, such as Keeping Families Together, that provides families with needed mental health services for seriously mentally disturbed children while protecting the safety of these children.

*Adopted by the Conference of State Court Administrators at their 2003 Midyear Meeting December 12, 2003.*