
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO NETWORK AND COOPERATE TO
SUPPORT FOSTER FAMILIES IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, children are our State's most precious resource,
2 which makes it in our greatest interest to nurture and provide
3 them with the opportunities and resources they need to reach
4 their highest potential; and
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6 WHEREAS, according to the State of Hawaii Department of
7 Human Services, more than four thousand children entered foster
8 care in Hawaii in 2006, which constitutes a significant decrease
9 from past years due to new and innovative programs that have
10 been developed to better protect and serve our children and
11 families; and
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13 WHEREAS, foster children come from all backgrounds and from
14 birth to age eighteen, and forty-five per cent of foster
15 children are of Hawaiian or part Hawaiian descent; and
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17 WHEREAS, children enter foster care for various reasons,
18 the most common of which are physical abuse, sexual abuse,
19 domestic violence, and parental drug use; and
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21 WHEREAS, we have a shared responsibility to serve the needs
22 of foster children and to support the foster families that
23 strive to provide these children with safe, healthy, and loving
24 homes; and
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26 WHEREAS, as of 2006, there were fewer than two thousand
27 foster homes, representing only a portion of homes that are
28 needed; and
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30 WHEREAS, Kokua Ohana, a foster care program that was the
31 result of a collaborative effort between the Partners in
32 Development Foundation and the Department of Human Services,
33 works with churches and community organizations in the Native

1 Hawaiian community to recruit, train, and support foster
2 families through the general licensing process, with the goal of
3 striving for cultural harmony within Hawaii's child welfare
4 system by uniting churches, community organizations, and
5 families to care for and nurture Hawaii's foster keiki; and
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7 WHEREAS, Kokua Ohana offers to help churches build a foster
8 family ministry, members of which recruit others to become
9 foster families, encourage others to become members of the
10 ministry, support other foster families, accept and distribute
11 donations, enjoy fellowship activities, mentor new foster
12 families, help with household projects, and provide childcare;
13 and
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15 WHEREAS, Kokua Ohana will train foster family ministry
16 members about foster care and develop an action plan to reach
17 the hearts of congregations, funnel community donations to
18 foster families in the church, help build relationships with
19 local social workers to improve communication and services
20 provided by the State, and provide support for prospective
21 foster parents throughout the general licensing process; and
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23 WHEREAS, Kokua Ohana sets a laudable example of what a
24 faith-based organization can do to promote and assist foster
25 families in Hawaii, and the collaboration of faith-based
26 organizations to help our children in foster care in this way
27 would have far-reaching benefits for society; now, therefore,
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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
31 House of Representatives concurring, that faith-based
32 organizations in the State are urged to network and cooperate to
33 support foster families in Hawaii, such as by forming foster
34 family ministries; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
37 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
38 of Human Services, Director of Kokua Ohana, Executive Director
39 of Hawaii Youth Services Network, and President of Family
40 Programs Hawaii.