

MAR 09 2010

S.R. NO. 74

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE FORMATION OF A JOINT POVERTY REDUCTION TASK
FORCE.

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that it is in the public
2 interest to pursue the common good whereby all families and
3 individuals in Hawaii have improved access to economic and
4 educational opportunities that help families achieve
5 self-sufficiency and financial security while reducing the
6 number of Hawaii residents living in poverty; and
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8 WHEREAS, poverty has social and economic costs for children
9 and families, communities, and the State. Children living in
10 poverty often experience lower academic achievement and
11 increased health and behavioral problems. These problems often
12 continue into adulthood, resulting in greater social and
13 economic costs to society, including increased crime rates,
14 health problems, and negative economic impacts estimated to cost
15 the United States \$500,000,000,000 in lost earnings each year;
16 and
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18 WHEREAS, more and more middle-class Hawaii families are
19 living from paycheck to paycheck, especially in these very
20 difficult economic times; and
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22 WHEREAS, more states are recognizing that reducing poverty
23 by addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income families is
24 a critical economic development issue; and
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26 WHEREAS, reducing poverty requires strategic, integrated,
27 and comprehensive approaches that create opportunities for
28 families to achieve economic success, including creating quality
29 jobs, providing work supports, promoting greater collaboration
30 with the private sector, and implementing targeted tax policies;
31 now, therefore,
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33 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
34 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,
35 that a Poverty Reduction Task Force be created to:
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- 1 (1) Assess current state policies and practices, along
2 with evidence-based solutions utilized in other
3 states, that promote economic opportunity and poverty
4 reduction; and
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- 6 (2) Develop a strategic, integrated, and comprehensive
7 plan to expand economic opportunities in Hawaii to
8 reduce, by at least fifty per cent by 2020, the number
9 of Hawaii residents, including children and families,
10 living in poverty; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force consist of ten
13 members of the Legislature as follows:
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- 15 (1) Five members of the House of Representatives, three of
16 whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
17 Representatives and two of whom shall be appointed by
18 the minority leader of the House of Representatives;
19 and
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- 21 (2) Five members of the Senate, three of whom shall be
22 appointed by the President of the Senate and two of
23 whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the
24 Senate; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each year, the Speaker of the
27 House of Representatives and the President of the Senate shall
28 jointly designate one member of the Task Force to serve as
29 chairperson of the task force. The first chairperson shall be a
30 member of the House of Representatives. Thereafter, the
31 position of Task Force chairperson shall alternate between the
32 House of Representatives and the Senate; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each member of the Task Force
35 serve a two-year term; provided that the Speaker of the House of
36 Representatives and the President of the Senate shall jointly
37 select five of the initial members to serve one-year terms.
38 Initial appointments to the Task Force shall be made by
39 August 1, 2010. Members may serve for unlimited consecutive
40 terms; and
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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the Task Force
43 serve without compensation and shall not be reimbursed for any
44 expenses incurred in the performance of their duties; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force meet during each interim at least four times and additionally as convened by the chairperson; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force appoint subcommittees to advise the Task Force in completing its duties. The chairperson shall select subcommittee members from stakeholder groups that shall include but are not limited to relevant executive branch agencies, the counties, business and labor organizations, educational organizations, advocates, and individuals directly affected by the work of the Task Force. The chairperson of the Task Force shall appoint a member of the Task Force to chair each subcommittee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force:

- (1) Assess current state policies and practices that promote economic opportunity and poverty reduction and, before December 31, 2011, develop a strategic, integrated, and comprehensive plan that will expand economic opportunities in Hawaii and, by 2020, reduce by at least fifty per cent the number of Hawaii residents, including children and families, living in poverty;
- (2) Study and evaluate best policies and practices that:
 - (A) Build family assets and financial stability;
 - (B) Increase preschool through postsecondary educational opportunities;
 - (C) Expand the work force with quality jobs that meet private sector needs;
 - (D) Make work pay through the use of fair and sustainable targeted tax policies; and
 - (E) Address work-support issues;
- (3) Study and evaluate:



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- (A) Federally-supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty;
- (B) The economic impact of poverty;
- (C) Current policies and services that affect persons living below the self-sufficiency standard;
- (D) The interaction of various issues that affect poverty, such as a lack of education, health care, housing, income, child care, and food security; and
- (E) The supplemental nutrition assistance program, with the goal of recommending changes to increase participation and secure additional federal funds for assistance with education and training; and

(4) Prior to January 15, 2011, and prior to January 15 each year thereafter, the Task Force is requested to prepare and submit a written report to the Legislature that includes:

- (A) A summary of the work accomplished by the Task Force over the prior year;
- (B) In the initial annual report, an assessment of current policies and procedures that address poverty;
- (C) A general description of the scope of the problem in Hawaii with respect to poverty; and
- (D) An outline of the issues being addressed by the Task Force and the proposed time frame for addressing those issues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be dissolved on June 30, 2021; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the Senate and the
3 Speaker of the House of Representatives.
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OFFERED BY: Shiranne Chun Ouliland

