
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO CONVENE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE HAWAII LEGAL AID INTERAGENCY ROUNDTABLE TO BETTER SERVE LOW-INCOME, VULNERABLE, AND AT-RISK POPULATIONS AND INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services is responsible
2 for providing essential human services and protecting the health
3 and well-being of all of Hawaii's residents, especially those
4 who are least able to help themselves; and
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6 WHEREAS, the Department of the Attorney General is
7 responsible for providing public services and legal support to
8 the State, its departments, and agencies; and
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10 WHEREAS, many Hawaii residents face gaps in the
11 availability of legal aid - including legal representation,
12 advice, community education, and self-help and technology tools
13 - especially those who are most vulnerable and underserved; and
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15 WHEREAS, the 2007 *Assessment of Civil Legal Needs and*
16 *Barriers of Low- and Moderate-Income People in Hawaii* found that
17 only one in five people have their civil legal needs addressed
18 and that only one in three people who contacted a civil legal
19 service provider were able to get assistance; and
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21 WHEREAS, there is only one legal services attorney for
22 every 2,291 persons living below 125 percent of the federal
23 poverty level and only one attorney for every 4,402 persons
24 living below 200 percent of the poverty level; and
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26 WHEREAS, significant barriers to obtaining legal assistance
27 exist in Hawaii including, in addition to the inability to
28 afford an attorney, language and cultural barriers, lack of



1 knowledge of one's rights or the availability of services, and
2 difficulty in accessing legal services programs; and

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4 WHEREAS, equal access to justice helps individuals and
5 families receive health services, housing, education, and
6 employment; enhances family stability and public safety; and
7 secures the public's faith in the justice system; and

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9 WHEREAS, guaranteeing access to legal solutions improves
10 outcomes for those seeking assistance and results in cost
11 savings to the State in the long term by preventing or reducing
12 problems like homelessness, poverty, and health issues that can
13 be costly and harmful to individuals and the public; and

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15 WHEREAS, the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States
16 Constitution ensures equal justice under the law and no state
17 shall "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal
18 protection of the laws"; and

19
20 WHEREAS, goal sixteen of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda
21 for Sustainable Development is to promote just, peaceful, and
22 inclusive societies that provide access to justice for all and
23 build effective and accountable institutions at all levels; and

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25 WHEREAS, a roundtable allows different stakeholders to come
26 to the table to exchange ideas and information, plan, and
27 coordinate, which allows programs to be more efficient and
28 produce better outcomes; now, therefore,

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30 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
31 Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
32 of 2018, that the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services
33 and the Department of the Attorney General are urged to convene
34 the Hawaii Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (Roundtable); and

35
36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
37 Services and the Department of the Attorney General are urged to
38 participate, and the Attorney General and the Director of Human
39 Services, or their designees, are urged to serve as co-chairs of
40 the Roundtable; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Roundtable is requested to
2 submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature on
3 its success in achieving its mission no later than 20 days prior
4 to the convening of each regular session; and
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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Roundtable is requested to
7 submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the
8 economic impact of funding access to civil legal services no
9 later than January 1, 2020; and
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that representatives from the
12 following government agencies are urged to participate in the
13 Roundtable:
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- 15 (1) The Department of Health;
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- 17 (2) The Executive Office on Aging;
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- 19 (3) The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs;
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- 21 (4) The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations;
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- 23 (5) The Office of Community Services;
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- 25 (6) The Hawaii Public Housing Authority;
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- 27 (7) The Hawaii Civil Rights Commission;
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- 29 (8) The Office of Hawaiian Affairs;
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- 31 (9) The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands;
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- 33 (10) The Department of Public Safety; and
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- 35 (11) Any other government agency the co-chairs may, from
36 time to time, designate; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the co-chairs may invite the
39 participation of the Judiciary, Access to Justice Commission,
40 and Hawaii Consortium of Legal Service Providers to the extent
41 consistent with law and legal obligations; and



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 2 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Attorney General,
 3 Director of Human Services, Director of Health, Director of the
 4 Executive Office on Aging, Director of Commerce and Consumer
 5 Affairs, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations, Executive
 6 Director of the Office of Community Services, Executive Director
 7 of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, Executive Director of
 8 the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission, Chief Executive Officer of
 9 the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Chairperson of the Hawaiian
 10 Homes Commission, and the Director of Public Safety.

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OFFERED BY:

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MAR - 9 2018