

JAN 24 2018

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, TO WORK WITH THE FAMILY REUNIFICATION WORKING GROUP AND OTHER COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH VISITATION CENTERS AT ALL STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND JAILS.

1           WHEREAS, as states grapple with the alarming statistics  
2 regarding children of incarcerated parents nationwide, child  
3 welfare servers and public safety stakeholders are acknowledging  
4 the adverse childhood experiences and trauma faced by children  
5 of incarcerated parents; and

6  
7           WHEREAS, child welfare servers and public safety  
8 stakeholders are declaring that they will fulfill their duty to  
9 ensure the rights and wellbeing of all children, including the  
10 children of incarcerated parents; and

11  
12           WHEREAS, parental incarceration is a strong risk factor for  
13 many adverse outcomes for children, including antisocial and  
14 violent behavior, mental health problems, failure to graduate  
15 from school, and unemployment; and

16  
17           WHEREAS, parental incarceration is now recognized as an  
18 "adverse childhood experience"; it is distinguished from other  
19 adverse childhood experiences by the unique combination of  
20 trauma, shame, and stigma; and

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22           WHEREAS, the prison environment can be frightening and  
23 traumatizing for children, both in the attitudes and behaviors  
24 of prison staff as well as the physical setting of approved  
25 visitation sites; and

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27           WHEREAS, visits can include long waits, body frisks, rude  
28 treatment, exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no activities  
29 for children; and

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31           WHEREAS, such conditions do not encourage frequent visits  
32 between incarcerated parents and their children, despite  
33 findings from studies suggesting the maintenance of family ties



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1 and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release  
2 success, lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations;  
3 and  
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5 WHEREAS, the alarming rates of intergenerational  
6 incarceration, which studies suggest may be attributed to the  
7 lack of communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated  
8 parent relationships; and  
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10 WHEREAS, caring for children who are experiencing the  
11 stigma and blame associated with parental incarceration is  
12 particularly difficult for caregivers and may be emotionally and  
13 physically taxing; and  
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15 WHEREAS, Hawaii's correctional system can benefit from the  
16 establishment of visitation centers at all local correctional  
17 prisons and jails with the hope to strengthen, rebuild, and  
18 reunify children with their incarcerated parents and ensure the  
19 welfare and wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents; and  
20

21 WHEREAS, in January 2014, the legislative Keiki Caucus  
22 established a working group to explore the issues surrounding  
23 children and families impacted by incarceration, called the  
24 Family Reunification Working Group, which consisted of  
25 representatives from Blueprint for Change, Hawai'i Prisoner  
26 Resource Center, dba Holomua Center, the Office of Hawaiian  
27 Affairs, ALU LIKE, Inc., Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center,  
28 Keiki O Ka Aina Learning Centers, Family Programs Hawai'i, Adult  
29 Friends for Youth, Community Alliance on Prisons, TJ Mahoney,  
30 Chaminade University's Native Hawaiian Program, and Makana O Ke  
31 Akua Clean and Sober Living, and included parents of children  
32 who have been affected by incarceration; now, therefore,  
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34 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth  
35 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018,  
36 that during the 2018 legislative interim, the Department of  
37 Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Public  
38 Safety, is requested to work with the Keiki Caucus's Family  
39 Reunification Working Group and other community stakeholders to  
40 develop a plan to establish children and family friendly  
41 visitation centers at all local correctional prisons and jails



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1 to ensure the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents and  
2 their families; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
5 Services submit a report on the status of visitation centers,  
6 including any findings, recommendations, and proposed  
7 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior  
8 to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2019 and 2020; and

9  
10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
11 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services,  
12 Director of Public Safety, and Chairperson of the Keiki Caucus's  
13 Family Reunification Working Group.

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