HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION INITIATIVES.

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse is a sexual activity between an adult and a child or between two minors if there is a significant age, size, or power difference between them; and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse can include a range of activities such as sexual touching, sexualized talk, exposure of genitals, rape, and involvement in pornography or prostitution; and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse can occur anywhere including places like homes, neighborhoods, schools, and youth sports environments, and activities such as child pornography and communicating in a sexual manner may also occur over the phone or on the internet; and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse is frequently perpetrated by individuals acquainted with the child and it may occur over short or long periods of time with varying levels of coercion or physical violence; and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse is a potential threat to societal safety and the people of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, about one in seven girls and one in 25 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, it was estimated that in 2014 about 400,000 babies born in the United States would later become victims of child sexual abuse; and
WHEREAS, child sexual abuse is far more prevalent than most people realize because children are victimized at a much higher rate than adults; and

WHEREAS, children aged 17 and under account for nearly 70 percent of all reported sexual assaults; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the sexual assault rate for youths aged 12 to 17 was 2.3 times higher than the rate for adults; and

WHEREAS, approximately 44 percent of rape victims are under the age of 18 with children under the age of 12 accounting for 15 percent of the rape victims; and

WHEREAS, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act passed by the federal government in 1974 and reauthorized in 2010, is the largest body of legislation in the United States with regard to the fair, ethical, and legal treatment of children, and its intent is to keep children free from all forms of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse; and

WHEREAS, although child abuse laws exist on federal, state, and local levels, most child sexual abuse issues are governed by state laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse impacts every community regardless of socioeconomic status, culture, race, religion, or gender; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, that the Department of Education is requested to establish a task force to develop sustainable child sexual abuse prevention initiatives that increase awareness, education, prevention, and advocacy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to comprise the following members, or their designees:

(1) Superintendent of Education;
(2) Director of Health;

(3) Director of Human Services;

(4) Attorney General;

(5) One member of the Board of Education, to be determined by the Chairperson of the Board of Education;

(6) Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning;

(7) Executive Director of Hawaii Youth Services Network;

(8) Executive Director of the Hawaii Children's Action Network;

(9) Executive Director of the Sex Abuse Treatment Center;

(10) Chair of the Senate standing committee with primary jurisdiction over education;

(11) Chair of the House of Representatives standing committee with primary jurisdiction over education;

(12) One elementary school principal, to be designated by the Superintendent of Education;

(13) One secondary school principal, to be designated by the Superintendent of Education; and

(14) One representative from a charter school, to be designated by the Executive Director of the State Public Charter School Commission; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent of Education or the Superintendent's designee shall serve as the chair of the task force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to consider the following when developing child sexual abuse prevention initiatives:
(1) Current resources available in the State for educating children in public and private schools about sexual abuse prevention; and

(2) Factors that heighten a child’s risk of sexual abuse including socioeconomic status, ethnicity, geographic location, and previous exposure to crimes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force, with the assistance of the Department of Education, is requested to submit a report to the Legislature, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2019, on the progress made concerning the development of child sexual abuse prevention initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chair of the Board of Education; Superintendent of Education; Director of Health; Director of Human Services; Attorney General; Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning; Executive Director of the Hawaii Youth Services Network; Executive Director of the Hawaii Children's Action Network; Executive Director of the Sex Abuse Treatment Center; and Executive Director of the State Public Charter School Commission.