

JAN 22 2019

SENATE CONCURRENT 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

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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

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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

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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, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no
29 activities for children; and



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2 WHEREAS, such conditions do not encourage frequent visits
3 between incarcerated parents and their children, despite
4 findings from studies suggesting the maintenance of family ties
5 and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release
6 success, lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations;
7 and

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9 WHEREAS, studies suggest that the alarming rates of
10 intergenerational incarceration may be attributed to the lack of
11 communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated parent
12 relationships; and

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14 WHEREAS, caring for children who are experiencing the
15 stigma and blame associated with parental incarceration is
16 particularly difficult for caregivers and may be emotionally and
17 physically taxing; and

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19 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's correctional system can benefit from the
20 establishment of visitation centers at all local correctional
21 prisons and jails with the hope to strengthen, rebuild, and
22 reunify children with their incarcerated parents and ensure the
23 welfare and wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents; and

24
25 WHEREAS, in January 2014, the legislative Keiki Caucus
26 established a working group to explore the issues surrounding
27 children and families impacted by incarceration, called the
28 Family Reunification Working Group, which consisted of
29 representatives from Blueprint for Change, Hawai'i Prisoner
30 Resource Center, dba Holomua Center, the Office of Hawaiian
31 Affairs, ALU LIKE, Inc., Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center,
32 Keiki O Ka Aina Learning Centers, Family Programs Hawai'i, Adult
33 Friends for Youth, Community Alliance on Prisons, TJ Mahoney,
34 Chaminade University's Native Hawaiian Program, and Makana O Ke
35 Akua Clean and Sober Living, and included parents of children
36 who have been affected by incarceration; now, therefore,

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38 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
39 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the House of
40 Representatives concurring, that during the interim following
41 the Regular Session of 2019, the Department of Human Services,
42 in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, is



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1 requested to work with the Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification
 2 Working Group and other community stakeholders to develop a plan
 3 to establish children-friendly and family-friendly visitation
 4 centers at all State correctional prisons and jails to ensure
 5 the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents and their
 6 families; and

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 8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
 9 Services submit a report on the status of visitation centers,
 10 including any findings, recommendations, and proposed
 11 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
 12 to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2020 and 2021; and

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 14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 15 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human
 16 Services, Director of Public Safety, and Chairperson of the
 17 Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification Working Group.

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