

---

# 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

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" and is distinguished from other  
19 adverse childhood experiences by the unique combination of  
20 trauma, shame, and stigma; and

21  
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

26  
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



1  
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

8  
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

13  
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

18  
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 affected by incarceration; now, therefore,

37  
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



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  
7

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
9 Services is requested to submit a report on the status of  
10 visitation centers, including any findings, recommendations, and  
11 proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty  
12 days prior to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2020 and  
13 2021; and  
14

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
16 Services is requested to include in its reports to the  
17 Legislature an assessment of any child accommodations in current  
18 visitation areas in prisons and jails and recommendations to  
19 improve any specific issues; and  
20

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
22 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human  
23 Services, Director of Public Safety, and Chairperson of the  
24 Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification Working Group.  
25  
26  
27  
28

