
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES TO
CONDUCT A JOINT STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES'
REUNIFICATION AND KINSHIP PLACEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1 WHEREAS, infants and children removed from their parents
2 because of abuse or neglect deserve the diligent care and
3 protection of the State; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services has reported a
6 number of cases of repeated abuse directed to harmed children
7 reunified with the parent who perpetrated the harm; and
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9 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Foster Parent Association has reported
10 a number of instances in which infants and children have been
11 harmed further because of inappropriate placement with kin; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and other Hawaiian
14 advocacy groups have expressed concerns about the
15 over-representation of Native Hawaiian children in the child
16 welfare service population and the lack of appropriate family
17 and kin placement for these children; and
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19 WHEREAS, social workers, guardians ad litem, child
20 psychologists, public health nurses, pediatricians, child
21 advocates, and judges have not had the opportunity to describe
22 to the State the impact that the Department of Human Services'
23 current reunification and kinship placement policies have on
24 children; and
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26 WHEREAS, the research literature on reunification and
27 kinship placement, although limited in general applicability to
28 Hawaii, suggests a number of safety issues relating to these
29 policies; now, therefore,
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31 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-third
32 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006,
33 that the House and Senate Committees on Human Services are
34 requested to conduct a joint study of the impact that the
35 Department of Human Services' current reunification and kinship



1 placement policies and procedures have on harmed infants and
2 children; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as part of their joint study,
5 the House and Senate Committees on Human Services are requested
6 to solicit testimony from social workers, guardians ad litem,
7 child psychologists, public health nurses, pediatricians, child
8 advocates, and judges regarding the impact of the Department of
9 Human Services' reunification and kinship placement policies on
10 harmed infants and children; and

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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as part of their joint study,
13 the House and Senate Committees on Human Services are requested
14 to solicit the testimony of the Director of Human Services, the
15 Director of Health, and of representatives from the following:
16 the Hawaii Foster Parents Association; the Volunteer Guardian Ad
17 Litem Program; the Hawaii Family Forum; Legal Aid Society of
18 Hawaii; the National Association of Social Workers, Hawaii
19 Chapter; Hawaii Behavioral Health; the Sex Abuse Treatment
20 Center; and other organizations serving the child welfare
21 population; and

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Human Services
24 is requested to provide the following summarized data, or an
25 explanation of why the requested data is unavailable, for fiscal
26 years 2005 and 2006:

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28 (1) An unduplicated count of the children entering the
29 child welfare services population for the first time,
30 classified by gender, ethnicity, and type of harm
31 suffered, e.g., neglect, harm, physical abuse, sexual
32 abuse, or drug exposure;
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34 (2) The number of cases closed in the fiscal year,
35 classified by the number of days the case was active
36 and the type of closing, e.g., adoption by kin or
37 non-kin, guardianship by kin or non-kin, long-term
38 foster placement, or reunification with parents;
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40 (3) An unduplicated count of the number of children
41 re-entering the child welfare services population
42 subsequent to a case closing, classified by gender,
43 ethnicity, and type of harm, with a description of the



1 type of closing and of the type of harm that prompted
2 the child's re-entry into the child welfare system;

3
4 (4) The number of subsequent placements, classified by
5 gender, age, ethnicity, and type of placement, for all
6 children re-entering the child welfare system
7 subsequent to a case closing, except children
8 reunified with parents;

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10 (5) The number of monitoring visits made by social workers
11 for each month the case was active for all children in
12 the child welfare system population;

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14 (6) The number of supervised parental visits made during
15 each month the case was active for all children in the
16 child welfare system population;

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18 (7) For all children in the child welfare system
19 population, the number of placements that have been
20 subject to an administrative review and the results of
21 the reviews;

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23 (8) For current active cases, the total number of children
24 involved, as they are identified in court documents,
25 the number of caseworkers serving these children, and
26 copies of any grievances, complaints, or
27 recommendations regarding active cases that have been
28 received by the Department of Human Services from any
29 source, with any personal identifying information
30 redacted; and

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32 (9) Complete copies of all research relating to
33 reunification and kinship placement that the
34 Department of Human Services administrators personally
35 have reviewed; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committees are requested to
38 report their findings to the Legislature no later than twenty
39 days before the convening of the Regular Session of 2007; and

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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
42 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairs of the House and Senate



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1 Committees on Human Services, the Governor, and the Director of
2 Human Services.

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OFFERED BY: *Sharonne Chun Dalland*

