
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO NETWORK AND COOPERATE TO
SUPPORT FOSTER FAMILIES IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, children are our state's most precious resource,
2 making it in our greatest interest to nurture and provide them
3 with the opportunities and resources they need to reach their
4 highest potential; and
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6 WHEREAS, according to the State of Hawaii Department of
7 Human Services, more than 4,000 children entered foster care in
8 Hawaii in 2006, which constitutes a significant decrease from
9 past years due to new and innovative programs that have been
10 developed to better protect and serve our children and families;
11 and
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13 WHEREAS, foster children come from all backgrounds and age
14 groups, from birth to age 18, and 45 per cent of foster children
15 are of Hawaiian or part Hawaiian descent; and
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17 WHEREAS, children enter foster care for various reasons,
18 the most common of which are physical abuse, sexual abuse,
19 domestic violence, and parental drug use; and
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21 WHEREAS, we have a shared responsibility to serve the needs
22 of foster children and to support the foster families that
23 strive to provide these children with safe, healthy, and loving
24 homes; and
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26 WHEREAS, as of 2006, there were fewer than 2,000 foster
27 homes, representing only a portion of homes that are needed; and
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29 WHEREAS, Kokua 'Ohana, a foster care program that was the
30 result of a collaborative effort between the Partners in
31 Development Foundation and the Department of Human Services,
32 works with churches and community organizations in the native

1 Hawaiian community to recruit, train, and support foster
2 families through the general licensing process, with the goal of
3 striving for cultural harmony within Hawaii's child welfare
4 system by uniting churches, community organizations, and
5 families to care for and nurture Hawaii's foster keiki; and
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7 WHEREAS, Kokua 'Ohana offers to help churches build a foster
8 family ministry, members of which recruit others to become
9 foster families, encourage others to become members of the
10 ministry, support other foster families, accept and distribute
11 donations, enjoy fellowship activities, mentor new foster
12 families, help with household projects, and provide childcare;
13 and
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15 WHEREAS, Kokua 'Ohana will train foster family ministry
16 members about foster care and develop an action plan to reach
17 the hearts of congregations, funnel community donations to
18 foster families in the church, help build relationships with
19 local social workers to improve communication and services
20 provided by the State, and provide support for prospective
21 foster parents throughout the general licensing process; and
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23 WHEREAS, Kokua 'Ohana sets a laudable example of what a
24 faith-based organization can do to provide and assist foster
25 families in Hawaii, and collaboration of other faith-based
26 organizations to help our children in foster care in this way
27 would have far-reaching benefits for society; now, therefore,
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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
30 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
31 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that faith-based organizations
32 in the state are urged to network and cooperate to support
33 foster families in Hawaii, such as by forming foster family
34 ministries; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
37 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
38 of Human Services, Director of Kokua 'Ohana, Executive Director
39 of Hawaii Youth Services Network, and President of Family
40 Programs Hawaii.