
SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE PROVISION OF ORIENTATION AND ADDITIONAL TRAINING TO INCREASE THE ABILITY OF STATE AGENCY CASE WORKERS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES FACED BY GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN.

1 WHEREAS, as a result of the work of the Joint Legislative
2 Committee on Family Caregiving, Act 11, Special Session Laws of
3 Hawaii 2008, established a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
4 Task Force to assess and report on the needs and issues of
5 grandparents raising grandchildren; and
6

7 WHEREAS, the final report generated by the Grandparents
8 Raising Grandchildren Task Force found as a result of a March
9 2009 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Focus Group that
10 participants with grandchildren in the custody of Child
11 Protective Services (CPS) or the Department of Human Services
12 (DHS) expressed common frustration with DHS case workers because
13 grandparents did not receive enough information from DHS
14 workers; and
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16 WHEREAS, observations in the March 2009 GRG Focus Group
17 show that:
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- 19 (1) Grandparents have little or no understanding of laws
20 that drive a CPS case and may misunderstand the role
21 of a DHS case worker;
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- 23 (2) Grandparents raising grandchildren often feel afraid,
24 intimidated, helpless, and angry;
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- 26 (3) Many grandparents raising grandchildren do not seek
27 help from DHS because they are afraid that "the
28 system" will remove their grandchildren from their
29 care;
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- 31 (4) Some DHS case workers:
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- 1 (A) Do not respect cultural values related to the
- 2 sacredness of the grandparent/grandchild
- 3 relationship;
- 4
- 5 (B) Do not respect the senior as the grandparent with
- 6 knowledge about the history of the child's
- 7 family;
- 8
- 9 (C) Do not acknowledge a grandparent's right to have
- 10 a view of the best interest of the grandchildren;
- 11 and
- 12
- 13 (D) Do not provide the grandparent with emotional
- 14 support; rather the grandparents reported
- 15 experiencing distress in relations with some
- 16 workers; and
- 17
- 18 (5) Many grandparents do not know about current laws and
- 19 subsidies that are designed to help and protect them;
- 20 now, therefore,
- 21

22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
 23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,
 24 that the Department of Human Services is urged to provide
 25 orientation and additional training to increase the ability of
 26 DHS case workers to address the issues faced by grandparents who
 27 raise grandchildren, including increasing case workers'
 28 awareness about:

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- 30 (1) Local cultural beliefs regarding the important roles
- 31 of grandparents within the family structure,
- 32 especially when grandchildren need care;
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- 34 (2) What grandparents experience (fear, helplessness, and
- 35 anger) when their grandchildren are taken into custody
- 36 by Child Protective Services or placed in foster care,
- 37 and there are rules for having contacts with their
- 38 grandchildren; and
- 39
- 40 (3) Grandparents' need for clear explanations to
- 41 understand guidelines for managing cases involving
- 42 children in state custody who need foster care and a
- 43 safe permanent home; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
2 Services is requested to submit a report to the Legislature no
3 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2011
4 Regular Session on the initiatives the Department has
5 implemented to increase the ability of DHS case workers to
6 understand and address the issues faced by grandparents who
7 raise grandchildren; and

8
9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
10 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services, the
11 Director of the Executive Office on Aging, the County Executive
12 of the City and County of Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division, the
13 Coordinator for the Department of Health Foster Care Licensing
14 Unit, and the Administrator of the Social Services Division of
15 the Department of Human Services.

