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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE BREASTFEEDING AMONG MOTHERS WHO RECEIVE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FROM MEDICAID.

1           WHEREAS, although the health benefits of breastfeeding are  
2 well-established, few budget analysts consider breastfeeding as  
3 a health cost-savings strategy; and  
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5           WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture's  
6 Economic Research Service estimates that at least \$3,600,000,000  
7 in medical expenses could be saved each year if the number of  
8 children breastfed for at least six months increased from forty-  
9 three per cent for babies born in 2006, to fifty per cent, as  
10 recommended by the United States Surgeon General; and  
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12           WHEREAS, a study reported in *Pediatrics* concluded that, for  
13 every one thousand babies who are not breastfed, there are 2,033  
14 more medical office visits, 212 extra days of hospitalization,  
15 and 609 excess prescriptions; and  
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17           WHEREAS, breastfed infants experience fewer or less severe  
18 cases of diarrhea, respiratory infections, pneumonia, urinary  
19 infections, and ear infections. Breastfeeding also is  
20 associated with a lower risk of asthma, childhood obesity,  
21 diabetes, childhood leukemia, and sudden infant death syndrome;  
22 and  
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24           WHEREAS, in addition to the benefits to babies, mothers who  
25 breastfeed experience less postpartum bleeding, an earlier  
26 return to pre-pregnancy weight, a reduced risk of ovarian cancer  
27 and premenopausal breast cancer, and a lower risk of  
28 osteoporosis; and  
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30           WHEREAS, forty-one per cent of births in the country are  
31 covered by Medicaid, and increasing breastfeeding rates among  
32 these infants may be one potential strategy for state budget  
33 savings; and



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WHEREAS, young mothers, those with less formal education, and African-American mothers are the least likely to breastfeed. In 2006, only twenty-four per cent of mothers under age twenty breastfed their infants at six months of age, compared with 50.4 per cent of mothers age thirty or older; and

WHEREAS, the National Business Group on Health notes that workplace breastfeeding programs may reduce health care costs by decreasing the risk of some health issues for women and children, reducing lost productivity and reducing absenteeism associated with caring for a sick child; and

WHEREAS, in the current fiscally challenging environment, the State would be wise to seek additional ways to reduce health care costs by considering the economic benefits of breastfeeding; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Health, is urged to develop a program to encourage breastfeeding among mothers who receive medical assistance from Medicaid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Directors of Human Services and Health.

OFFERED BY: Marilyn B. Lee

John M. M... By a joint resolution


Phil. ... Mark ...

K... Jessica Woolly

Phil ... ...

Jessica Woolly ...

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