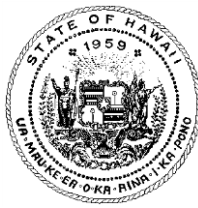


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 17
AND HOUSE RESOLUTION 14
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.

by

Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

House Committee on Public Safety
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 8, 2018; 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 429

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Gates, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **supports the intent** of House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 17 and House Resolution (HR) 14, which encourages the Department of Human Services (DHS) to work with the Family Reunification working Group and other stakeholders, in consultation with PSD, in developing a plan to establish visitation centers at State correctional facilities.

As presented in testimony before Senate Standing Committees on Senate Bill (SB) 2305, Senate Draft (SD) 1, the Department has already been working with all of the named entities towards such a program and intends to continue doing so with or without the passage of HCR 17/HR 14.

The Department's current programs, such as, Keiki O Ka Aina (Play and Learn), Read Aloud, Read-to-me, Keala Hou, Family Days at WCCC, etc., offer

incarcerated parent(s) opportunities to learn parenting skills and other child-bonding activities. Parents also receive support services and family therapy as they transition through to the community, all of which serve to better prepare them to participate in a visitation program and maximize the benefits to the children and parents, alike.

PSD appreciates the impetus of the proposal and offers the following comments.

Research has shown that although the environment in which the visits take place is important, child-parent bonding is better supported by regular and sustained visitations. A carefully planned program would include help for parents to increase parental skills through proper parenting and cognitive programming, and the provision of appropriate support services (inclusive of therapy) for the child(ren), and additional resources to support the caretakers of said child(ren).

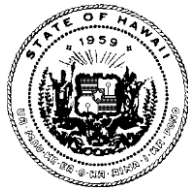
Because the parents are offenders, the Department is concerned that the visitation centers be safe and secure while providing a caring and nurturing environment for all participants, including wrap-around support services for the child(ren), incarcerated parent(s), and caretaker(s).

Ideally, PSD would invite conversation for such visitation centers to be connected with minimum security correctional facilities as proposed in SB 2305, SD 1 and also suggests that consideration be given to placing the Visitation Centers in the community, where children and caretakers have easy access to incarcerated parents, possibly in close proximity to Work Furlough program sites. A pilot program may be considered as an intermediate step in a comprehensive plan.

PSD looks forward to continuing its work with DHS-CWS and community partners to enhance a sound and effective family reunification process, ensuring that Court Order Visits, Special Visits, and available parenting classes are provided to incarcerated parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96808

LATE

March 7, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
House Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HCR17/HR14 - RELATING TO INCARCERATED PARENTS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 8, 2018, 9:30 am
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the resolutions to support appropriate child-parent relationships of children of incarcerated parents and provides comments. DHS defers to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) as the resolution involves DPS facilities and oversight, and population of children of incarcerated parents that most likely will be greater than the small number involved with Child Welfare Services.

PURPOSE: The purpose of these resolutions is to request that DHS, in consultation with DPS, 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.

DHS is open to further discussions and collaboration with DPS, the Family Reunification Working Group, and other stakeholders to develop a plan for visitation centers at the state's correctional facilities. However, while DHS is an important stakeholder in the conversation, it does not have the authority over DPS, its facilities, its operations, or the population of incarcerated parents. DHS respectfully requests that the Legislature, through the Keiki Caucus, remain the lead entity to further develop a statewide visitation program for children of incarcerated parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Hawaii State Legislature
March 7, 2018

House Resolution 14
Family Visitation Center at State Correctional Facilities and Jails

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Gates and Members of the Committee,

The Ka Lāhui Hawaii Political Action Committee (KPAC) supports House Resolution 14 which urges the Department of Human Services (DHS), in consultation with the Department of Public Safety (DPS), to work with the family reunification working group and other stakeholders to develop a plan to establish visitation centers at all State Correctional Facilities and Jails.

According to Dr. RaeDeen Keahiolalo-Karasuda, in her doctoral dissertation, *The Colonial Carceral and Prison Politics in Hawai‘i*, Kanaka Maoli make up more than 60% of inmates in Hawai‘i, however, they only make up 24% of Hawai‘i’s population. The OHA study on the Disparate Treatment of Native Hawaiians in the Criminal Justice System (2010) found that, “time spent away from community and family while in prison can make transition back to the community difficult, potentially increasing the likelihood of returning to prison.” Family contact is the imperative to the ‘rehabilitation’ of Kanaka Maoli inmates and a start to reforming Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system that have historically and systematically targeted the indigenous peoples of this land starting with the criminalization of our traditional beliefs and practices till today where Kanaka Maoli are more likely to serve prison time and receive longer sentences than any other ethnic group in Hawai‘i. In “The Effects of Prison Visits From Family Members on Prisoners’ Well-Being, Prison Rule Breaking, and Recidivism *A Review of Research Since 1991*” (De Claire & Dixon 2005) visitations were found to reduce depression, increase good behavior, reduce recidivism, and increase chances of survival when reentering the community.

KPAC also supports DHS and DPS working with community organizations like Keiki O Ka ‘Āina Family Learning Centers whose program (KOKA-FLC), Families Affected by Incarceration (SFAI), serves children and youth with a parent or parents in prison, family members who are taking care of the children and youth and the incarcerated parent. By strengthening family bonds through educational and Hawaiian culturally based activities and interactions, KOKA-FLC are helping to build resiliency in the child, incarcerated parent and family members reducing the child’s chances of incarceration significantly.

House Resolution 14 is a great step toward Criminal Justice Reform. Currently the State of Hawai‘i spends \$50,000 a year per inmate. Reform that starts with visitation centers not only saves money but helps save Kanaka Maoli lives, families and communities.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Healani Sonoda-Pale
Chair, KPAC

LATE

HR-14

Submitted on: 3/8/2018 1:16:52 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/8/2018 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

PRESENTATION OF THE
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018
Thursday, March 8, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329

RE: Testimony in Support of **HR14**

To the Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair; the Honorable Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety:

Good morning, my name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HR14**, to REQUEST 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

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **HR14** and support its passage.

HR14, is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it requests that during the 2018 legislative interim, the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, work with the Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification Working Group and other community stakeholders to develop a plan to establish children and family friendly visitation centers at all local correctional prisons and jails to ensure the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents and their families.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides, "We support restorative justice that repairs the harm caused by criminal behaviors and reintegrates the offenders as

contributing members of society. Likewise we support opportunities for those who have been incarcerated to effect a smooth transition back into the community. " (Platform of the DPH, P. 5, Lines 273-275 (2016)).

"We believe that all families should have an equal opportunity to build their assets and become self-sufficient; and we support a strong safety net of programs that will afford them the opportunity to do so. We must protect our children, our future, from violence and neglect and provide them with a safe and healthy environment in which to grow and thrive." (Platform of the DPH, P. 4, Lines 184-187(2016)).

Given that **HR14** requests that during the 2018 legislative interim, the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, work with the Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification Working Group and other community stakeholders to develop a plan to establish children and family friendly visitation centers at all local correctional prisons and jails to ensure the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents and their families, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Text/Tel.: (808) 258-8889

LATE

HR-14

Submitted on: 3/8/2018 8:36:48 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/8/2018 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcella Alohalani Boido	Individual	Support	No

Comments: