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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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.

1           WHEREAS, as states grapple with the alarming statistics  
2 regarding children of incarcerated parents nationwide, child  
3 welfare services and public safety stakeholders are  
4 acknowledging the adverse childhood experiences and trauma faced  
5 by children of incarcerated parents; and

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7           WHEREAS, child welfare services and public safety  
8 stakeholders are declaring that they will fulfill their duty to  
9 ensure the rights and wellbeing of all children, including the  
10 children of incarcerated parents; and

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12           WHEREAS, parental incarceration is a strong risk factor for  
13 many adverse outcomes for children, including antisocial and  
14 violent behavior, mental health problems, failure to graduate  
15 from school, and unemployment; and

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17           WHEREAS, parental incarceration is now recognized as an  
18 adverse childhood experience and is distinguishable from other  
19 adverse childhood experiences by the unique combination of  
20 trauma, shame, and stigma; and

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22           WHEREAS, the prison environment can be frightening and  
23 traumatizing for children, both in the attitudes and behaviors  
24 of prison staff as well as the physical setting of approved  
25 visitation sites; and



1 WHEREAS, visits can include long waits, body frisks, rude  
2 treatment, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no  
3 activities for children; and  
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5 WHEREAS, such conditions do not encourage frequent visits  
6 between incarcerated parents and their children, despite  
7 findings from studies suggesting the maintenance of family ties  
8 and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release  
9 success, lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations;  
10 and  
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12 WHEREAS, studies suggest that the alarming rates of  
13 intergenerational incarceration may be attributed to the lack of  
14 communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated parent  
15 relationships; and  
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17 WHEREAS, caring for children who are experiencing the  
18 stigma and blame associated with parental incarceration is  
19 particularly difficult for caregivers and may be emotionally and  
20 physically taxing; and  
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22 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's correctional system can benefit from the  
23 establishment of visitation centers at all local correctional  
24 prisons and jails with the hope to strengthen, rebuild, and  
25 reunify children with their incarcerated parents and ensure the  
26 welfare and wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents; and  
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28 WHEREAS, in January 2014, the legislative Keiki Caucus  
29 established a working group to explore the issues surrounding  
30 children and families impacted by incarceration, called the  
31 Family Reunification Working Group, which consisted of  
32 representatives from Blueprint for Change; Hawai'i Prisoner  
33 Resource Center, dba Holomua Center; the Office of Hawaiian  
34 Affairs; ALU LIKE, Inc.; Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center;  
35 Keiki O Ka Aina Learning Centers; Family Programs Hawai'i; Adult  
36 Friends for Youth; Community Alliance on Prisons; TJ Mahoney;  
37 Chaminade University's Native Hawaiian Program; and Makana O Ke  
38 Akua Clean and Sober Living, and included parents of children  
39 affected by incarceration; now, therefore,



1 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
 2 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of  
 3 2019, the Senate concurring, that, during the interim following  
 4 the Regular Session of 2019, the Department of Human Services,  
 5 in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, is  
 6 requested to work with the Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification  
 7 Working Group and other community stakeholders to develop a plan  
 8 to establish children-friendly and family-friendly visitation  
 9 centers at all State correctional prisons and jails to ensure  
 10 the wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents and their  
 11 families; and

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 13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
 14 Services is requested to submit a report on the status of  
 15 visitation centers, including any findings, recommendations, and  
 16 proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty  
 17 days prior to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2020 and  
 18 2021; and

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 20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human  
 21 Services is requested to include in its reports to the  
 22 Legislature an assessment of any child accommodations in current  
 23 visitation areas in prisons and jails and recommendations to  
 24 address any specific issues; and

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 26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 27 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human  
 28 Services, Director of Public Safety, and Chairperson of the  
 29 Keiki Caucus of the Legislature.

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OFFERED BY: *John M. ...*  
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