
HOUSE 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,



