



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 18, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR 7 SD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED PARENTS**
SR 7 SD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED PARENTS

Hearing: March 19, 2019, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of these resolutions to support appropriate child-parent relationships of children of incarcerated parents, and provides comments. DHS defers to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) with the authority over correctional facilities and programs, including any planning and resource needs necessary to implement.

PURPOSE: The purpose of SCR7 and SR7 is to require the development of a plan for visitation centers for children of incarcerated parents at all state operated correctional facilities.

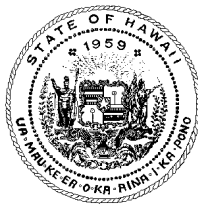
DHS is open to further discussions and collaboration with the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Family Reunification Working Group, and other stakeholders to develop a plan to develop visitation centers at the state's correction facilities.

DPS has already established programs to promote parenting skills and other child-bonding activities such as Keiki O Ka Aina's Play and Learn, Read Aloud, Read-to-me, Keala Hou, Family Days, etc. Assessment, planning, collaboration and recommendation for the development of this effort will require new staff resources and funding. New ongoing

funding will also be required to implement and sustain a statewide DPS visitation program at all facilities, based on the recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

NOLAN P. ESPINDA
DIRECTOR

Maria C. Cook
Deputy Director
Administration

Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata
Deputy Director
Corrections

Renee R. Sonobe Hong
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

LATE

No. _____

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 7, SENATE DRAFT 1
AND SENATE RESOLUTION 7, SENATE DRAFT 1
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, TO WORK
WITH THE FAMILY REUNIFICATION GROUP AND OTHER COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH VISITATION
CENTERS AT ALL STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND JAILS.

Presented by Nolan P. Espinda
Director, Department of Public Safety
to the
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 19, 2019; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports the intent of the above referenced resolutions, which aim to have established, at all State correctional facilities and jails, family-oriented visitation centers.

PSD appreciates the support of the Department of Human Services (DHS) in being open to further discussion and collaboration and in providing the comment that such planning and collaboration will require increased staffing and resources.

The Department also notes that because the parents are offenders, visitation centers must be safe and secure, while providing a caring and nurturing environment for all participants. Ideally, PSD would invite discussion for such

visitation centers to be located at minimum security correctional facilities and include wrap-around support services for the children, incarcerated parents, and caretakers, or that consideration be given to placing the visitation centers in close proximity to Work Furlough program sites in the community to be more accessible to all participants.

Should the resolution(s) be adopted, PSD looks forward to collaborating with the DHS Child Welfare Services Division (DHS-CWS), the Keiki Caucus's Family Reunification Working Group, and other entities to develop a plan to establish family-friendly visitation centers to promote the well-being of children of incarcerated parents and to facilitate a sound and effective family reunification process that ensures that Court-ordered visits, special visits, and parenting support services are provided to incarcerated parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of West Hawaii

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

March 15, 2019

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Judiciary

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SR 7/SCR 7 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.

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SR 7/SCR 7 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.

Children of incarcerated parents experience grief and loss, similar to the experience of divorce or the death of a parent. Studies show that children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk of abuse or neglect, and more likely to have mental problems, and difficulty in school. Children of incarcerated parents are seven times more likely to enter the juvenile or adult correctional systems themselves. Regular visitation provides opportunities to sustain the parent-child bond while a parent is incarcerated, which can alleviate many of these problems.

Prisoners who have regular contact with their children benefit as well. They are less likely to violate prison rules and create trouble for prison authorities. They are more likely to take advantage of rehabilitation and educational opportunities while in prison. Regular contact with children increases the chances of successful reintegration into the community when a parent is released from prison.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

9:00 am

Room 016

STRONG SUPPORT for SCR 7 SD1 VISITATION CENTERS AT ALL CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Wakai and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai'i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the families of **ASHLEY GREY, DAISY KASITATI, JOEY O'MALLEY, JESSICA FORTSON AND ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED UNDER THE "CARE AND CUSTODY" OF THE STATE** as well as the approximately 5,400 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that more than 1,600 of Hawai'i's imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

SCR 7 SD1 requests 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 SD1 requests the Department of Human Services to include in its reports to the Legislature an assessment of any child accommodations in current visitation areas in prisons and jails and recommendations to improve any specific issues.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this important measure. Some of the impacts of incarceration on families, especially children, include:

- Economic/material effects (financial hardship, employment, homelessness etc.)
- Changes in family relationships and quality (changes in family structure, lack of contact, the effects on parenting etc.)
- Health problems (mental health, physical health, infant mortality etc.)
- Behavioral changes among the children (antisocial and risk/criminal behavior etc.)
- Effects in relation to schooling and education (prisoners' children)
- Social exclusion, inequality and citizenship (broader social effects and questions of democracy, rights and legitimacy)

The data and research show that keeping families connected reduces recidivism. Let's stop the intergenerational incarceration in Hawai'i noted by the Department of Justice when they came here in 1998, **WE CAN DO THIS!**

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committees to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

LATE

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: SCR 7, SD 1 and SR 7, SD 1 – 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 operated correctional centers and jails.

POSITION: **STRONG SUPPORT**

March 19, 2019

Conference Room 016

9:00 AM

Aloha, Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. **My name is Stephen Morse. I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change (BFC) and am here today to support SCR 7, SD 1 and SR 7, SD 1.**

Blueprint for Change is a non-profit organization with a strong track record for innovating and implementing effective support services that address the unique challenges facing Hawai‘i’s ‘ohana. The organization’s roots date back to 1994 when in response to a growingly overburdened Child Welfare System, the Hawai‘i State Legislature created the Child Welfare Services Reform Task Force for the purpose of developing a “Blueprint for reform in child protective services.”

SCR 7, SD 1 and SR 7, SD 1 very much align with these values and principles we are built upon. Since 2014, we have been a member of the Family Reunification Working Group, an ad hoc committee of the Legislative Keiki Caucus that has been identifying and developing solutions to problems that affect children and families affected by parental incarceration.

Parental incarceration is a strong risk factor for many adverse outcomes for children, including antisocial and violent behavior, mental health problems, failure to graduate from school, and unemployment. Parental incarceration is now recognized as an "adverse childhood experience"; it is important to note that it is distinguished from other adverse childhood experiences by the unique combination of trauma, shame, and stigma; and the prison environment can be frightening and traumatizing for children, both in the attitudes and behaviors of prison staff as well as the physical setting of approved visitation sites.

Visits can include long waits, body frisks, what may be considered as rude treatment by correction officers, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no activities for children. These conditions do not encourage frequent visits between incarcerated parents and their children, and yet frequent visits are exactly what all parties need. Findings from national studies suggest that the maintenance of family ties and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release success,

lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations; and studies suggest that the alarming rates of intergenerational incarceration may be attributed to the lack of communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated parent relationships.

We believe that family friendly Visitation Centers can help reduce these adverse childhood experiences and keep families together. These resolutions are important for helping keep families together by creating a safe place where healing can begin. They look at visitation centers through a social services lens, a place where children and significant other family members can remain unified with the offender and where professional social workers can begin to identify and focus strengthening services on children at risk of being part of the cycle of incarceration. This is why it is important that the working group created by these resolutions include representation from the Department of Human Services and community-based social service providers, in addition to the Department of Public Safety.

We strongly urge the committee to pass these resolutions. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

S. Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: SCR7 SD1

POSITION: **STRONG SUPPORT**

February 20, 2019

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee:

Blueprint for Change is a non-profit organization with a strong track record for innovating and implementing effective support services that address the unique challenges facing Hawai'i's 'ohana. The organization's roots date back to 1994 when in response to a growingly overburdened Child Welfare System, the Hawai'i State Legislature created the Child Welfare Services Reform Task Force for the purpose of developing a "Blueprint for reform in child protective services."

After several years of rigorous evaluation, the Committee finalized the core elements of the Neighborhood Place model, and in 2000, Blueprint for Change (BFC) was formed and incorporated as a nonprofit organization to serve as the Department of Human Services, master contractor for Neighborhood Place services and to continue the Committee's effort to improve the responsiveness of the State of Hawai'i – Child Welfare System.

By maintaining fluid relationships between state agencies, local service providers and community advocates, Blueprint for Change and the Neighborhood Place Partnership is able to significantly improve the responsiveness of the state's Child Welfare System while reducing instances of child abuse and neglect.

As part of the oversight of the (7) NP across the state, BFC collects Quarterly Activity Reports (QAR), which is designed to inform services, procedures, and practices moving forward. In 2013 the QAR were showing a significant increase in services delivered to families impacted by incarceration. This led BFC to exploring this issue further. Thus, the creation of the Family Reunification Working Group (FRWG). The FRWG gained support and interest through the Legislative Keiki Caucus, and began meeting regularly to explore and advocate for solutions to problems encountered by children and families in the State who are affected by incarceration.

The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR7:

LATE

S. Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto

- Family friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to begin the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the State millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.

I strongly urge the committee to pass SCR7. Mahalo a nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2019 1:29:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/19/2019 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chris Santomauro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2019 8:33:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/19/2019 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR 7 SD1 has as its goal to establish family visitation centers at all state correctional facilities and jails.

Research clearly indicates that strong family ties provide the foundation for strong support for incarcerated persons upon release and for the motivation to pursue rehabilitation.

Children of incarcerated persons benefit by maintaining a strong parental relationship that assists in their maturation and development. This is an inestimable benefit to society as well.

Absent a strong parental relationship, children may suffer negative health and behavioral effects.

A strong parental relationship may also help a child weather the impact of social exclusion and retaliation they may experience by having an incarcerated parent.

Given the overwhelming volume of research on this topic, our correctional system should make family visitation a priority and strive to make uniting families much much easier than it is now. In this regard, video-mediated visitation is expensive and a barrier to developing close family ties.

The entire community benefits by supporting strong families, which ultimately leads to improved public safety.

Please pass SCR 7 SD1.