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No. _____

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT 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
House Committee on Judiciary
Representative Chris Lee, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 17, 2019; 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Chair Lee, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports the intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 7, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which aims 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 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.



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

April 16, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Chris Lee, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR 7 SD1 – 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.**

Hearing: April 17, 2019, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, 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 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.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Rep. Chris Lee, Chair

Rep. Joy SanBuenaventura, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

3:00 pm

Room 325

STRONG SUPPORT for SCR 7 SD1 - DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR VISITATION CENTERS

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair SanBuenaventura & 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 stakeholders to develop a plan to establish visitation centers at all state correctional facilities and jails.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this resolution. We are part of the Family Reunification Working Group and stand ready to assist the Department of Human Services in developing a plan to keep incarcerated people connected to their families and loved ones. We cite research to show that this is a proven strategy to reduce recidivism.

THE RESEARCH:

The Effects of Prison Visitation on Offender Recidivism

https://mn.gov/doc/assets/11-11MNPrisonVisitationStudy_tcm1089-272781.pdf

Minnesota Department of Corrections (St. Paul, MN) 2011

Visitation has a significant effect on recidivism. “Any visit reduced the risk of recidivism by 13 percent for felony reconvictions and 25 percent for technical violation revocations, which reflects the fact that visitation generally had a greater impact on revocations. The findings further showed that more frequent and recent visits were associated with a decreased risk of recidivism” (p. 27).

Inmate Social Ties and the Transition to Society Does *Visitation Reduce Recidivism?*

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.865.9780&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

William D. Bales, Daniel P. Mears - Florida State University

...Consonant with the few extant empirical studies of the topic (e.g., Adams and Fischer 1976; Holt and Miller 1972; Ohlin 1951), any visitation and more frequent visitation were both associated with a lower likelihood of recidivism. Additional, more nuanced analyses conveyed similar findings, such as the notion that visitation over many different months exerts a greater effect than visits over fewer months. Visitation was also associated with delaying the onset, or timing, of recidivism.

Blessed Be the Social Tie That Binds: The Effects of Prison Visitation on Offender Recidivism

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403411429724> - Grant Duwe1 and Valerie Clark, December 2011

...we found that visitation significantly decreased the risk of recidivism, a result that was robust across all of the Cox regression models that were estimated. The results also showed that visits from siblings, in-laws, fathers, and clergy were the most beneficial in reducing the risk of recidivism, whereas visits from ex-spouses significantly increased the risk. The findings suggest that revising prison visitation policies to make them more “visitor friendly” could yield public safety benefits by helping offenders establish a continuum of social support from prison to the community.

The data and research show that keeping families and loved ones connected does reduce recidivism. Let’s stop the intergenerational incarceration in Hawai`i noted by the Department of Justice when they came here in 1998. Of the eight jurisdictions they visited, they found that Hawai`i had more intergenerational incarceration than any other jurisdiction they visited.

WE CAN DO THIS! The community stands ready to help.

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our research and to testify!

LATE

Testimony on SCR 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 centers⁵ before the House Committee on Judiciary

April 17, 2019

3:00 pm

Conference Rm. 325

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Sanbuenaventura, and members of the House Committee on 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,** 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

Members, for the record, BFC is the fiscal, technical, and administrative support entity for seven Neighborhood Place centers statewide that provide support and strengthening services to families at risk of child abuse and neglect under a POS contract with the Department of Human Services. Historically, our work has focused on traditional risk factors for child abuse, including homelessness or unstable housing, unemployment and low incomes, substance abuse, chronic health problems, and physical disabilities. However, in 2014, after much research and analysis, BFC determined that one of the most severe risk factors for child neglect in the families we serve is that there is at least one parent who is incarcerated.

An estimated 2.7 million children nationwide have at least one parent that is incarcerated, and studies conducted by the National Fatherhood Initiative show that in terms of negative impacts on children, incarceration may be worse than the death of a parent or the divorce of parents. Even more disheartening is the evidence that children of incarcerated parents are more likely to become incarcerated themselves as teenagers or adults, thus continuing the “cycle of incarceration” that sadly becomes generational in some families.

Because of these alarming statistics, BFC, in January 2014, helped organize and convene a working group to explore the issues surrounding children and families impacted by parental incarceration and to come up with solutions. Called the Family Reunification Working Group (FRWG), the group is comprised of representatives from several child and family serving organizations and service providers. Besides ourselves, it includes, Hawaii Prisoners Resource Center, dba Holomua Center, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, ALU LIKE, Inc., Lili`uokalani Trust, Keiki O Ka Aina, Family Programs Hawaii, Adult Friends for Youth, Community Alliance on Prisons, the Ka Hale Ho`ola No Na Wahine Program at the Fernhurst YWCA, Hawaii Technology Institute, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery, Makana O Ke Akua Clean and Sober Living, Holomua Pu`uhonua, and the University of Hawai`i Center on the Family. It also includes parents of children who have been affected by incarceration, adults who were former children of incarcerated parents, ex-offenders, and Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners. The group established two immediate priorities to work on, one of which was to develop a database of children in Hawaii impacted by incarceration. During the 2015 State Legislature, the group was successful in getting a measure passed and signed into law (Act 16, SLH 2015) that requires the Hawaii Department of Public Safety’s Corrections Division to collect data at the point of intake on the number of minor children under the age of 18 that offenders entering the Hawaii corrections system have.

We now have three years of data collected from Public Safety, and although there remains some reliability issues relating to the collection, a problem we are working with Public Safety on to fix, we feel safe in saying two things: (1) of the inmates being processed through intake during this period of time, at least 30% identified themselves as parents; and (2) approximately 4,000 children under the age of 18 are annually affected by parental incarceration. Again, this is based only on the intake data and does not include the number of minor children of parents who have been in the correctional system for several years.

This resolution is important because we believe it will help the State improve its visitation programs at state correctional facilities. The prison environment can be frightening and traumatizing for children,

Visits can include long waits, body frisks, rude treatment, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no activities for children. Such conditions do not encourage frequent visits between incarcerated parents and their children and yet, findings from studies suggest the maintenance of family ties and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release success, lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations. They also studies suggest that the alarming rates of intergenerational incarceration may be attributed to the lack of communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated parent relationships.

Visitation Centers can help reduce these adverse childhood experiences and keep families together. This resolution is important to not only help keep families together but for creating a more therapeutic healing system in correctional facilities. It looks 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 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 this resolution includes representation from the Department of Human Services and community-based social service providers, in addition to the Department of Public Safety.

Mahalo for allowing us to share this testimony with the Committee.

LATE

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2019 1:42:17 AM

Testimony for JUD on 4/17/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Democrats Legislative Priorities Committee	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Chris Lee, the Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, and members of the Committee on Judiciary:

The O`ahu County Democrats Legislative Priorities Committee submits its testimony in support of SCR 7, SD I, as Hawai'i's correctional system can benefit from the establishment of visitation centers at all local correctional prisons and jails with the hope to strengthen, rebuild, and reunify children with their incarcerated parents and ensure the welfare and wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on SCR7, SDI.

Mahalo nui loa,

Melodie Aduja

Chair, O`ahu County Democrats Legislative Priorities Committee

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/15/2019 2:10:54 PM

Testimony for JUD on 4/17/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/16/2019 7:45:56 AM

Testimony for JUD on 4/17/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
E. Ileina Funakoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/16/2019 2:29:38 PM

Testimony for JUD on 4/17/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS LEE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Aaron Shugo Pono Farias
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, Student
2430 Campus Rd
Honolulu, HI 96822

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

In Support of SCR 7, SD1
REQUESTING TO ESTABLISH VISITATION CENTERS

Aloha, my name is Aaron Farias and I am a social work graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am testifying in favor of SCR 7, SD1.

My studies at the University specialize in behavioral health and establishing visitation centers at all State correctional facilities will significantly benefit the welfare of inmates and their children. The Senate Concurrent Resolution, as it stands, includes an abundance of factual information that concludes it is in the community's best interest to move forward with developing a plan among stakeholders. I have personally experienced the difficulty of parenting under those circumstances; and the discomfort for parents and their children. Justice demands certain consequences for our actions as civilians, but I would implore this committee to minimize the repercussions endured by the children of this State.

I would like to close this testimony by thanking the committee for their active dedication to bettering the lives of the people who reside in this great State. I appreciate your hard work and consideration of supporting measure SCR 7, SD1.

LATE

SCR-7-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/17/2019 9:58:38 AM

Testimony for JUD on 4/17/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jamee Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

On behalf of myself and my 'ohana, we strongly support SCR 7 for the creation of visitation centers across the prisons and jails in Hawai'i, as written in this resolution. Our son has been incarcerated for almost seven years. The facilities he has been imprisoned at include OCC, Halawa, Saguaro, Waiawa and now Laumaka. Visits have been vital for our family and most especially our son for obvious reasons. It keeps us connected as an 'ohana, continues to provide support that our son needs whereas the criminal justice system could not ever provide, nor should it. It helps all of us heal so that when he is released back to our family and community, he can be SUCCESSFUL! It is unfortunate that not all inmates have a supportive family such as ours. Recent data points to healthy, family centered visitation centers as an integral step towards healing for the inmate, the family community and the system. Overall, it reduces recidivism and instead supports transformation for productivity by the inmate.

SCR 7 as written also provides a voice for children and family that are often not heard. Again, we strongly support SCR 7 and ask for your support as well.

Thank you for your time and public service,

Dr. Jamee M. Miller

Resident of Punalu'u, O'ahu