



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

February 20, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services; and

The Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

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

Hearing: February 22, 2019, 2:45 p.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, 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, the Family Reunification Working Group, and other stakeholders to develop a plan to develop visitation centers at the state's correction facilities. Planning and collaboration will require additional staff resources and funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

February 18, 2019

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

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.

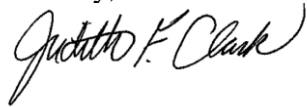
Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SR 7/SCR 7 Requesting the Department of Human Services, in Consultation with the Department of Public Safety, to Work with the Family Reunification Working Group and Other Community Stakeholders to Develop 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 initial 'J' and 'C'.

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

February 20, 2019

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means/Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

From: Laura Nevitt, Director of Public Policy
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **S.C.R. 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 State Capitol, Room 016 , February 22, 2019, 2:45 PM

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. We write in SUPPORT of S.C.R. 7

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.

For these reasons, HCAN asks the committee to pass S.C.R. 7.

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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



COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Sen. Russell Ruderman, Chair

Sen. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL and MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Chair

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Friday, February 22, 2019

2:45 pm

Room 016

SUPPORT for SCR 7/SR 7 - DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR VISITATION CENTERS

Aloha Chairs Ruderman and Nishihara, Vice Chairs Rhoads and Wakai, and Committee Members!

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/SR 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports 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!

S. Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services & Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

RE: SCR7

POSITION: **STRONG SUPPORT**

February 20, 2019

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members of the committee:
Chair Nishihara, 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.

S. Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto

The following are reasons for **STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR7:**

- 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

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 1:19:14 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/22/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services & Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

RE: 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 operated correctional centers and jails.

POSITION: **STRONGSUPPORT**

February22, 2019 2:45 PM Room 016

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

My name is Stephen Morse. I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change (BFC) and am here today to supportSCR 7.

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 very much aligns 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, rude treatment, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no activities for children; and such conditions do not encourage frequent visits between incarcerated parents and their children, despite findings from studies suggesting 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.

Visitation Centers can help reduce these adverse childhood experiences and keep families together. This bill is important for 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.

In summary, the following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR7:

1. National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society.
2. Visitation centers will help keep families with incarcerated parents in communication and together, and it is important that they are planned and developed properly, with the input of many different stakeholders.
3. The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families.
4. 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.

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

From: [Saw Thinn](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: Support SCR7, Visitation Centers at Correctional Facilities
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 1:44:49 PM

From: smthinn@gmail.com <Saw Thinn>

Message:

Chairman Ruderman, Chairan Nishihara and members of the Human Services and Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs Committees,

I write in SUPPORT of S.C.R. 7

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.

For these reasons, I ask the committee to pass S.C.R. 7.

Saw Thinn

Honolulu

Hawaii

From: [Karen Worthington](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: Support SCR7, Visitation Centers at Correctional Facilities
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 1:46:49 PM

From: karen@karenworthington.com <Karen Worthington>

Message:

Chairman Ruderman, Chairan Nishihara and members of the Human Services and Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs Committees,

I write in SUPPORT of S.C.R. 7

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.

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For these reasons, I ask the committee to pass S.C.R. 7.

Karen Worthington

Kula

Hawaii

SCR-7

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 1:49:06 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/22/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauralee Baoy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SCR7 as a way for children to have positive interaction with the incarcerated parent. This provides inmates hope of reunification with their children and family in the future and strengthen the bond that they have with their children.

From: [Cristen Clark](#)
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Subject: Support SCR7, Visitation Centers at Correctional Facilities
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 4:26:26 PM



From: c3clark@yahoo.com <Cristen Clark>

Message:

They should never be deprived of love especially the love they created.

Chairman Ruderman, Chairan Nishihara and members of the Human Services and Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs Committees,

I write in SUPPORT of S.C.R. 7

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.

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For these reasons, I ask the committee to pass S.C.R. 7.

Cristen Clark

kailua

Hawaii