
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE HAWAII'S
HOME VISITING PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, positive experiences in early childhood promote
2 healthy socio-emotional and physical development, and a healthy,
3 nurturing home is imperative for families of newborns throughout
4 the State; and

5
6 WHEREAS, home visiting programs provide individually
7 tailored support, resources, and information to expectant
8 parents and families with young children, which is especially
9 important for families at risk of child maltreatment and neglect
10 and other adverse childhood experiences, including living with
11 parents involved in domestic violence, substance abuse, mental
12 health problems, or incarceration; and

13
14 WHEREAS, home visiting services can reduce the risk of
15 child abuse and developmental delays by reducing risk factors,
16 fostering family functioning, promoting infant mental health and
17 development, enhancing positive parenting skills, and linking
18 parents to community resources, including childcare, housing,
19 employment, health and mental health services, early childhood
20 education, family literacy, and social services; and

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22 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Healthy Start program was pioneered in
23 Hawaii in 1985 and became a model for the national Healthy
24 Families American program, and the Hawaii programs were
25 certified as Healthy Families American programs during the
26 2000s; and

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28 WHEREAS, the Healthy Families America-Hawaii program, run
29 by the Department of Health, was the State's primary home
30 visiting child abuse prevention program, serving around 2,400
31 high-risk families annually, with an excellent track record



1 consistently showing a ninety-nine percent non-abuse rate among
2 children of families served; and
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4 WHEREAS, the Healthy Families America-Hawai'i program was
5 dismantled in 2008 due to budget restrictions, leaving only the
6 Hilo and Wai'anae sites; and
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8 WHEREAS, a Hawai'i home visiting program was established
9 within the Department of Health for hospital-based screening and
10 home visiting services for newborns' families, by Act 91,
11 Regular Session of Hawaii 2013; and
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13 WHEREAS, a study of the Healthy Families America-Hawai'i
14 program in the 2014 Journal of Family Violence showed that among
15 4,466 O'ahu families screened as high-risk, children of families
16 not receiving services were hospitalized four times more
17 frequently than families receiving services, affirming that the
18 services were effective among the highest-risk families; and
19

20 WHEREAS, in 2018, the Department of Health successfully
21 obtained competitive funding from the United States Department
22 of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services
23 Administration for a Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home
24 Visiting program that included the two existing Healthy Families
25 America-Hawai'i sites, Parents as Teachers services, and Home
26 Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters services, two
27 initiatives that are evidence-based models targeting specific
28 outcomes including cognitive development and school readiness,
29 intervention with developmental delays, and prevention of child
30 abuse; and
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32 WHEREAS, while intake criteria for the Maternal, Infant,
33 and Early Childhood Home Visiting program includes low income,
34 history of child welfare, substance abuse, developmental delays,
35 low educational status, smoking, and being in the military, it
36 does not include the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths
37 tools; and
38

39 WHEREAS, conditions for many families in Hawai'i have become
40 more stressful since 2008, with forty-eight percent of families
41 living below or near the poverty level per a recent Aloha United



1 Way Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed report, and more
2 families are living in extremely stressful financial conditions
3 including lack of housing, which makes safe child rearing often
4 impossible; and
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6 WHEREAS, Department of Health data from the former
7 statewide program showed that between ten and twelve percent of
8 families, or around 1,377 families, had very high-risk
9 assessments, meaning a score of forty and above on the parent
10 survey, similar to four or more adverse childhood experiences
11 (ACEs); and
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13 WHEREAS, such data correlates well with data from ACE
14 studies that estimate that about twelve percent of families with
15 ACE scores of four and above experience high levels of negative
16 outcomes related to health, including high rates of drug use,
17 HIV/AIDS, depression and attempted suicide, and poor work
18 attendance; and
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20 WHEREAS, the ACE study showed that without interventions,
21 children of parents with multiple ACEs tend to experience the
22 same problems thereby creating an intergenerational cycle of
23 trauma, and that there remains a need for services that can
24 identify and effectively serve families at highest risk for
25 child abuse and neglect who have experienced multiple ACEs; and
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27 WHEREAS, services that are specifically designed to reduce
28 ACE risk factors and avert abuse and neglect can reduce
29 intergenerational trauma and the social impact of this trauma
30 related to mental health and attempted suicide, substance
31 dependence, anti-social and criminal behavior, and related
32 costs, which recent state budgets total nearly \$1,000,000,000
33 annually for Hawai'i; and
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35 WHEREAS, the ACE risk reduction services can augment the
36 Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program,
37 potentially forming two levels of needed services, including
38 comprehensive services for lower and moderate-risk families and
39 intensive evidence-based risk reduction services for families at
40 very high-risk for child abuse and neglect; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
2 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of
3 Representatives concurring, that the Department of Health is
4 urged to continue expanding and improving its home visiting
5 program, including reinstatement of a network of evidence-based
6 home visiting services for families at highest risk for child
7 abuse and neglect; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
10 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health
11 and Executive Director of the Hawaii Family Support Institute at
12 the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

