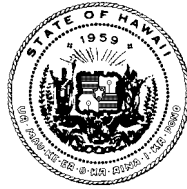


DAVID Y. IGE  
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PANKAJ BHANOT  
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CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96808**

February 18, 2020

TO: The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Chair  
Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR14 and SR15 - RELATING TO EFFECTIVE AND SAFE DISCIPLINE**

Hearing: February 19, 2020, 2:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of these resolutions, respectfully opposes to lead such a task force, and offers comments.

**PURPOSE:** These resolutions request the Department of Human Services, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to convene a task force to establish safe and effective discipline for all children in Hawaii.

Currently, there are different working groups working on child abuse prevention strategies and plans: Hawaii Community Foundation is the lead on a collaborative effort to develop Hawaii's Statewide Child Abuse Prevention Plan, and there is a department-led action-group developing Hawaii's federal Family First Prevention and Services Act State Plan. The Keiki Caucus of the Legislature also addresses the issue of safe and effective discipline. An additional task force is not needed.

However, as noted in the resolutions, DHS believes and agrees with the conclusions of the medical and other professional organizations to ban corporal punishment, as the use of corporal punishment is minimally effective and is linked to increased negative outcomes. The

American Academy of Pediatrics in its policy statement "Effective Discipline to Raise Healthy Children,"<sup>1</sup> states that,

"Aversive disciplinary strategies, including all forms of corporal punishment and yelling at or shaming children, are minimally effective in the short-term and not effective in the long-term. With new evidence, researchers link corporal punishment to an increased risk of negative behavioral, cognitive, psychosocial, and emotional outcomes for children."

The work of DHS is aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect, intervening when necessary, and addressing root causes of poverty that increase the risk of children to be maltreated and neglected. In this work, DHS must also recognize that State law permits corporal punishment in certain circumstances. As long as State law permits corporal punishment, this societal norm will be slow to change even with prevention and intervention efforts. Given the State law, DHS respectfully requests that the Legislature may be the more appropriate body to lead such a task force. DHS will participate as a member in such a task force.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Sege RD, Siegel BS; Council on Child Abuse and Neglect; Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health. Effective Discipline to Raise Healthy Children. *Pediatrics*. 2018;142(6):e20183112, see: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/142/6/e20183112.full.pdf>



**TO:** Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services and Chair Baker, Vice Chair Change and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

**DATE/LOCATION:** February 19, 2020; 2:45 p.m., Conference Room 016

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 14 and SR 15 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO ESTABLISH SAFE AND EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE FOR ALL CHILDREN IN HAWAII.**

*We agree with the legislature’s findings that “studies have shown that corporal punishment is not an effective form of discipline and instead is linked to an increased risk of negative behavioral, cognitive, psychosocial, and emotional outcomes for children...” and that “there is overwhelming scientific evidence that using physical discipline to punish children: is ineffective in teaching responsible behavior; impacts normal brain development; delays language development; increases the likelihood of abuse and injury in children; increases aggression in pre-school and school-aged children; increases the likelihood that children will become more defiant and aggressive; teaches children that aggression is an acceptable method of problem solving; increases mental health disorders in children; and has a negative effect on the parent- child relationship.”*

We are grateful for both the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health for their leadership and partnership in the work of caring for our keiki and families across our state.

**Every keiki in Hawaii deserves a safe and nurturing home.**

Early childhood neuroscience is clear that the first 1,000 days of each life provides the foundation for future development. Working with parents and their keiki at an early age to promote healthy child development, school readiness, nurturing parenting skills, and reduce toxic family stress is critical for future success. Child abuse prevention programs have played a critical role in ensuring that parents and keiki get the support they need to help them create strong foundations needed to build upon for future success. These programs provide quality care

for both a child along with their family during the most critical years of a child's development increasing future health, educational, social and emotional development for a child and their entire family network. As a provider of child abuse prevention programs in Hawaii, Parents And Children Together supports the creation of a task force to provide expertise on and support safe and effective discipline in Hawaii.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building and economic development programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **SCR 14 and SR 15**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.



Hawaii  
Children's Action Network Speaks!  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Senator Ruderman, Chair  
Senator Rhoads, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

Senator Baker, Chair  
Senator Chang, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

Re: **SCR 14 and SR 15**  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 016  
2:45 PM, 2/19/2020

Chair Ruderman, Chair Baker, Vice Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Chang, and committee members,

**On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!** I am writing in **SUPPORT** of SCR 14 and SR 14, requesting the Department of Human Services in collaboration with the Department of Health, to convene a task force to establish safe and effective discipline for all children in Hawaii.

The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a statement declaring the use of corporal punishment an ineffective disciplining technique<sup>1</sup>. This builds on the previous recommendation of discouraging the use of corporal punishment and is founded in research that using corporal punishment can have long-term negative impacts to the child, including increased aggression in school and increased mental health disorders.

In Hawai'i, corporal punishment was used against the royal children in the High Chiefs' Children's School by the missionaries because the missionaries believed the children were "ignorant, sinful, and unruly lower citizens".<sup>2</sup> Additionally, corporal punishment was not part of the traditional child rearing practices<sup>3</sup>. We should move away from the harmful and ineffective practices of colonization. However in moving away from corporal punishment, we need to recognize the trap that many Native Hawaiian families have fallen into by adopting the use of corporal punishment and becoming the recipients of services by Child Welfare. Therefore, representation of a culturally based family strengthening program may be a welcome addition to the task force.

Corporal punishment has no place in our families and discipline system today. **For these reasons, HCAN SPEAKS! respectfully requests the Committee to support these measures.**

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aappublications.org/news/2018/11/05/discipline110518>

<sup>2</sup> Keahiolalo-Karauda, RaeDeen, "A genealogy of punishment in Hawai'i: the public hanging of chief kamanawa II" [http://www.ksbe.edu/assets/spi/hulili/hulili\\_vol\\_6/7\\_A\\_Genealogy\\_of\\_Punishment\\_in\\_Hawaii.pdf](http://www.ksbe.edu/assets/spi/hulili/hulili_vol_6/7_A_Genealogy_of_Punishment_in_Hawaii.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "The Roles of Family Obligation and Parenting Practices in Explaining the Well-Being of Native Hawaiian Adolescents Living in Poverty", [http://kamehamehapublishing.org/assets/publishing/hulili/Hulili\\_Vol3\\_7.pdf](http://kamehamehapublishing.org/assets/publishing/hulili/Hulili_Vol3_7.pdf)

**SR-15**

Submitted on: 2/15/2020 1:26:40 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/19/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: