
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ADOPT, AMEND, OR
REPEAL RULES IN ORDER TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT THE HAWAIIAN
SYSTEM OF HANAI DURING THE LICENSING OF FOSTER PARENTS.

1 WHEREAS, over 50 percent of children in foster care, or
2 approximately 1,400 children, are of Hawaiian ancestry; and
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4 WHEREAS, only about one-half of the foster children who are
5 of Hawaiian ancestry are placed in foster homes that share their
6 Hawaiian culture; and
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8 WHEREAS, native Hawaiian communities and families have
9 expressed concern that cultural needs are not considered as
10 heavily as they should be in the placement of foster children;
11 and
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13 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian culture has long embraced the
14 traditional system of "hanai" which allows a person other than a
15 child's parent to play a substantial role in the material
16 support and upbringing of the child; and
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18 WHEREAS, in many cases, the people raising children of
19 Hawaiian ancestry in a hanai relationship are the children's
20 grandparents; and
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22 WHEREAS, due to age and economic circumstances, many
23 caregivers in a hanai relationship are unable to satisfy the
24 Department of Human Services' (DHS) requirements for the
25 licensing of foster parents, which results in children being
26 taken into the department's custody; and
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28 WHEREAS, the State is mandated to protect and preserve the
29 customs and traditions of Hawaiians pursuant to Article XII,
30 section 7, of the Hawaii Constitution; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
2 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
3 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that DHS is requested to adopt,
4 amend, or repeal rules in accordance with Chapter 91, Hawaii
5 Revised Statutes, to recognize and respect the Hawaiian culture
6 and system of hanai during the licensing process for foster
7 parents; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DHS is requested to submit a
10 report to the Legislature of its findings and recommendations,
11 including proposed legislation, no later than 20 days prior to
12 the convening of the Regular Session of 2010; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
15 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human
16 Services, the Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and
17 the program director of Kokua Ohana.

