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SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND JUDICIARY TO INCORPORATE RESEARCH AND STRATEGIES REGARDING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES INTO THEIR WORK WITH CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM TRAUMA.

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences are defined as abuse, neglect, and other traumatic or disruptive events that occur during childhood, causing serious damage to a child's developing brain; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences cover a broad range of traumatic events, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; domestic violence; community and school violence; loss of loved ones through death; severe accidents or life-threatening illnesses; parental incarceration; natural disasters; and acts of terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults," is one of the largest investigations on childhood abuse and neglect and lifetime health and well-being and involved a study from 1995 to 1997 of over 17,000 Kaiser Permanente members; and

WHEREAS, two-thirds of study participants had at least one adverse childhood experience, and more than one in five had three or more adverse childhood experiences; and

WHEREAS, the study concluded that:

(1) Adverse childhood experiences are common but typically unrecognized;

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(2) Having one adverse childhood experience means a high probability of having additional adverse childhood experiences;

- (3) Adverse childhood experiences are the nation's most basic public-health problem; and
- (4) The effects of adverse childhood experiences are cumulative: The more adverse childhood experiences a person had, the greater the risk for problems in behavior; social, mental, and physical health; and learning and academic achievement throughout the person's life; and

WHEREAS, high-risk behaviors linked to adverse childhood experiences include but are not limited to alcoholism and alcohol abuse; abuse of illegal drugs; smoking, including beginning smoking at an early age; having multiple sexual partners; early initiation of sexual activity; rape; risk of domestic violence and sexual assault; social isolation and withdrawal; and poor impulse control; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences affect a person's social skills over the course of a lifetime, including the ability to form relationships with others; ability to identify with others; ability to adjust and express emotions; ability to meet age-appropriate developmental norms; ability to establish trust in relationships; personality formation, including morals, values, and social conduct; respect for social institutions; and bullying toward peers; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences can also cause serious mental- and physical-health problems by producing toxic stress, which is the overload of stress hormones, which can cause damage to a person's neurodevelopment, the physical and biological growth of the brain; damage to a person's nervous system and endocrine system; organic disease; heart disease; depression; severe obesity; physical inactivity; suicide; sexually transmitted infections; unintended pregnancies; adolescent pregnancy; fetal death; and early death; and

S.C.R. NO. 136

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences impair learning and academic achievement by affecting a person's concentration and ability to absorb new information; by causing poor school performance in terms of lower grades, increased absenteeism, and higher dropout and expulsion rates; and through disruption to the classroom environment by causing a child to be more aggressive, noisier, and less likely to cooperate or relate well with others; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences create an intergenerational cycle because children exposed to domestic violence are at an increased risk of becoming involved in family violence as adults; children exposed to sexual assault are also at an increased risk of becoming involved in sexual assault as adults; and children exposed to any type of adverse childhood experience are at an increased risk of repeating that same adverse childhood experience as adults; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences affect not only the victim but also families, neighborhoods, schools, communities, social-service delivery systems, and society at large; and

WHEREAS, the effects of adverse childhood experiences expand beyond the child's personal experiences to the health-care, social-welfare, criminal-justice, and education systems; and

WHEREAS, more public awareness and information are needed to properly identify adverse childhood experiences, and recognition of the effects of adverse childhood experiences is essential for appropriate treatment and care; and

 WHEREAS, the negative consequences of adverse childhood experiences are not inevitable: With proper support and interventions from their loved ones and the community, most children are able to overcome traumatic experiences; and

WHEREAS, by establishing strong partnerships and networks with families and consumers and across service systems, we can collectively address childhood trauma; and

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S.C.R. NO. 136

WHEREAS, the solution to adverse childhood experiences does not rely on the prevention of a particular type of trauma but rather in providing proper support to children, families, organizations, systems, and communities with the necessary resources to develop resilience, which is the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt to acute stress, trauma, tragedy, or threats; and

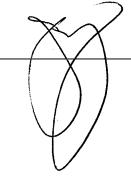
WHEREAS, building resilience in young children promotes well-being and positive functioning, which can reverse the accumulated damage from adverse childhood experiences; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Department of the Attorney General, and Judiciary are encouraged to incorporate research and strategies regarding adverse childhood experiences into their work with children suffering from trauma; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than 20 days before the convening of the Regular Session of 2018, each of these agencies is requested to submit a report to the Legislature on the status of its plans to incorporate research and strategies regarding adverse childhood experiences into its work with children suffering from trauma; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, Director of Health, Director of Human Services, Attorney General, and Chief Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court.

OFFERED BY:



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