

MAR 09 2018

S.R. NO. 116

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS TO REVIEW THE EXISTING RESEARCH ON THE
IMPACT OF SCREEN TIME AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION ON CHILDREN'S
AND ADOLESCENTS' PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH.

1 WHEREAS, it is becoming increasingly common for the
2 children of Hawaii, and the United States more generally, to be
3 exposed to screens, including smartphones, tablets, computers,
4 and televisions, for many hours every day at ever-younger ages;
5 and
6

7 WHEREAS, occupational therapists report increasing rates of
8 a wide range of developmental delays among young children
9 exposed to substantial amounts of screen time; and
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11 WHEREAS, researchers from Stanford, Harvard, Princeton, and
12 elsewhere have found correlations between excessive screen time
13 and obesity, attention issues, poor inter-personal skills, and
14 strained parent-child relationships; and
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16 WHEREAS, anecdotal accounts from teachers consistently
17 report that "digital native" children give up more quickly when
18 solving problems, have shorter attention spans, have less
19 physical dexterity, and demonstrate impaired capacity for deep
20 play, creativity, and thought; and
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22 WHEREAS, in its 2018 guidelines, the California Department
23 of Public Health encourages people, especially children, to
24 limit their cell phone exposure due to potential negative
25 effects on memory and learning; and
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27 WHEREAS, the World Health Organization just classified
28 videogame addiction as a disease and researchers from Iowa State
29 University found nearly one in ten gamers have pathological
30 playing patterns; and
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32 WHEREAS, addictions started in adolescence are much harder
33 to overcome and, according to Common Sense Media, fifty percent



1 of teenagers say they are addicted to their phones, with sixty
2 percent of their parents agreeing; and
3

4 WHEREAS, researchers at the University of Maryland found
5 that students exhibited withdrawal, cravings, and anxiety after
6 giving up all media for less than twenty-four hours; and
7

8 WHEREAS, San Diego State University researcher Jean Twenge
9 has linked growing smartphone penetration among teens to their
10 deteriorating mental health, finding teens who consume more than
11 three hours of screen time a day show a pronounced increase in
12 their likelihood of exhibiting a suicide risk; and
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14 WHEREAS, smartphone penetration among teens reached fifty
15 percent in 2012; and
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17 WHEREAS, between 2007 and 2015, suicide deaths among
18 teenage girls doubled and suicide deaths among teenage boys rose
19 thirty percent, and suicide deaths now make up two-thirds of all
20 gun deaths; and
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22 WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Mental
23 Health, mental health issues are now the number one cause of
24 disability for United States workers; and
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26 WHEREAS, major investors in Apple, including the California
27 Teacher Retirement System, recently called on Apple to study the
28 impacts of smartphones and tablets on children because of the
29 growing body of research; and
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31 WHEREAS, a growing number of high-level tech executives and
32 ex-tech executives are expressing guilt and concern about the
33 impact their companies are having on children and society; and
34

35 WHEREAS, China, South Korea, and Taiwan have enacted
36 legislation and programs that aim to limit screen time among
37 children and teens to a healthy level, including public health
38 campaigns, tax-funded counseling, and mandatory classes for
39 children and parents; and
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1 WHEREAS, the State Department of Health's mission is to
2 protect and improve the health and environment for all people in
3 Hawaii; and
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5 WHEREAS, the mission of the Department of Commerce and
6 Consumer Affairs is to uphold fairness and public confidence in
7 the marketplace, promote sound consumer practices, and increase
8 knowledge, opportunity, and justice in our community; and
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10 WHEREAS, children are the future leaders of society and the
11 most valuable asset and society has a moral obligation to
12 protect them; now, therefore,
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14 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
15 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018,
16 that the Department of Health and Department of Commerce and
17 Consumer Affairs are requested to review the existing research
18 on the impact of screen time and media consumption on children's
19 and adolescents' physical, cognitive, and emotional health, as
20 well as policies other states and countries have implemented to
21 address this issue; and
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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health, in
24 collaboration with the Department of Commerce and Consumer
25 Affairs, is requested to submit a report of its findings and
26 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
27 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
28 the Regular Session of 2019; and
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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report is requested to
31 include:
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- 33 (1) The key points from existing research, including which
34 effects linked to screens are most concerning, as well
35 as the overall assessment of the importance and
36 urgency of this issue;
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- 38 (2) A list of policies other states and countries have
39 instituted, including but not limited to public health
40 campaigns, mandatory classes for parents and children,
41 and counseling, and an assessment of their



appropriateness for Hawaii, as well as any novel
policy ideas;

(3) Plans for future Department of Health and Department
of Commerce and Consumer Affairs action to address
this issue; and

(4) An explanation of the division of responsibility
between the Department of Health and Department of
Commerce and Consumer Affairs regarding this issue;
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and Director
of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

OFFERED BY:



















