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# SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR TO UPDATE ITS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES BRANCH ASSESSMENT STANDARD PURSUANT TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 165, REGULAR SESSION OF HAWAII 2010.

1           WHEREAS, the Child Welfare Services Branch of the  
2 Department of Human Services has a responsibility to protect the  
3 well-being of the children of Hawaii, including children who are  
4 wards of the State and children who have allegedly been  
5 neglected or abused; and

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7           WHEREAS, in November 2021, two individuals who were  
8 resource givers with the Child Welfare Services Branch, as well  
9 as adoptive parents, were arrested and charged with child abuse  
10 and the murder of their six-year-old adopted daughter in  
11 Waimanalo, Oahu; and

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13           WHEREAS, the Child Welfare Services Branch improved its  
14 outcomes after failing to pass the United States Department of  
15 Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and  
16 Families' periodic Child and Family Services Review to assess  
17 state performance in meeting certain safety, permanency, and  
18 well-being outcomes for children involved in the child welfare  
19 system during the last three reviews conducted, which were in  
20 2003, 2009, and 2017; and

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22           WHEREAS, the Child Welfare Services Branch is experiencing  
23 difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff, and at the start  
24 of 2022 had eighty-seven vacant positions (a twenty-two-percent  
25 vacancy rate), forty-four of which were for social workers; and

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27           WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution No. 165, Regular  
28 Session of Hawaii 2010, sought to request from the Auditor a  
29 program audit on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Child  
30 Welfare Services Branch in processing and investigating  
31 complaints but the Auditor by letter dated May 6, 2013, failed  
32 to conduct such audit as being problematic and duplicative of



1 federal review by the National Resource Center for Child  
2 Protective Services, which conducts on-site visits; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Auditor's letter failed to be updated after  
5 the 2010 federal requirement for the Child Welfare Services  
6 Branch to implement a second Program Improvement Plan to avert a  
7 penalty; nor did it conduct an assessment on the triage  
8 procedure required by the federal Child Abuse Prevention and  
9 Treatment Act that was reauthorized by the Keeping Children and  
10 Families Safe Act of 2003; and

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12 WHEREAS, the Office of the Auditor may be able to assist  
13 the Child Welfare Services Branch in evaluating improvements  
14 made since the 2017 federal review and in improving the  
15 recruitment and retention of staff; now, therefore,

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17 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first  
18 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,  
19 that the Office of the Auditor is requested to update its Child  
20 Welfare Services Branch assessment standard pursuant to House  
21 Concurrent Resolution No. 165, Regular Session of Hawaii 2010,  
22 to include the second Program Improvement Plan required by the  
23 United States Department of Health and Human Services in 2010;  
24 and

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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the performance audit is  
27 requested to include the triage procedure required by the  
28 federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act that was  
29 reauthorized by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of  
30 2003; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of the Auditor is  
33 requested to submit its performance audit, including any  
34 findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation, to the  
35 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
36 the Regular Session of 2023; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
39 Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor, Director of Human  
40 Services, and Administrator of the Child Welfare Services Branch  
41 of the Department of Human Services.

