

MAR 10 2023

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE ESTABLISH THE MALAMA OHANA WORKING GROUP TO IDENTIFY, DESIGN, AND RECOMMEND TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGES TO THE STATE'S CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, there is increasing criticism of the State's child
2 welfare system, which is accentuated when there is a tragedy;
3 and

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5 WHEREAS, shortcomings in the State's child welfare system
6 are not new, and there is a strong desire in the community to
7 address these concerns; and

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9 WHEREAS, although Native Hawaiian children and families are
10 overrepresented in the State's child welfare system, all
11 children in the system have similar issues and needs; and

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13 WHEREAS, in 2018 members of Nā Kama a Hāloa, a network of
14 community-based organizations and representatives of the
15 Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Services Branch,
16 came together to seek ways to address overrepresentation of
17 Native Hawaiians in the State's child welfare system; and

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19 WHEREAS, Nā Kama a Hāloa demonstrates the value of
20 collaborating for collective impact, and since its formation,
21 the efforts of its working groups have resulted in various
22 positive outcomes, including requiring cultural training
23 programs for new Child Welfare Services Branch workers and
24 resource caregivers and a greater focus by the Department of
25 Human Services on supporting and encouraging children in the
26 child welfare system to connect with their siblings and
27 reflecting the voices of the childrens' parents in their care;
28 and

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1 WHEREAS, the problems faced by children and families in the
2 State's child welfare system are extremely complex and cannot be
3 resolved by the Department of Human Services alone; and
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5 WHEREAS, the State must work with the community and various
6 stakeholders to address and resolve these diverse and multi-
7 faceted problems; and
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9 WHEREAS, Act 291, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, established
10 the Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the
11 Governor on a temporary basis; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Office of Wellness and Resilience was
14 established to address the various barriers that impact the
15 physical, social, and emotional well-being of all people in the
16 State by building wellness and resilience through trauma-
17 informed, strength-based strategies and support agencies in
18 their individual efforts to address trauma-informed care and
19 move toward a collaborative, shared purpose of collective system
20 reform; and
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22 WHEREAS, the Office of Wellness and Resilience is uniquely
23 equipped to host a Malama Ohana working group that consists of
24 members of the Department of Human Services' Child Welfare
25 Services Branch, institutions serving Native Hawaiians,
26 contracted service providers, community-based organizations,
27 birth parents, and youth with lived experience in the State's
28 child welfare system; and
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30 WHEREAS, the Malama Ohana working group can expand on the
31 work done by Nā Kama a Hāloa to identify and recommend
32 transformative changes to the State's child welfare system,
33 which will improve outcomes for all children and families in the
34 State's child welfare system; and
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36 WHEREAS, the Malama Ohana working group can also contribute
37 to the development of more effective community support while
38 allowing the community to be heard and to take more
39 responsibility for the well-being and welfare of children; now,
40 therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023,
3 that the Office of Wellness and Resilience is requested to
4 establish the Malama Ohana working group to identify, design,
5 and recommend transformative changes to the State's child
6 welfare system; and

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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
9 to consist of the following individuals or their designees:

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11 (1) The Executive Director of Effective Planning and
12 Innovative Communication, Inc., operating as EPIC
13 'Ohana, Inc., who is requested to serve as co-chair of
14 the working group;
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16 (2) The Chief Executive Office of Hale Kipa, Inc., who is
17 requested to serve as co-chair of the working group;
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19 (3) The Director of Human Services;
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21 (4) Two members of the Department of Human Services' Child
22 Welfare Services Branch, representing its
23 investigators, case managers, or assistants, to be
24 appointed by the Director of Human Services;
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26 (5) The Director of the Office of Wellness and Resilience;
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28 (6) The Chairperson of the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force
29 established pursuant to Act 209, Session Laws of
30 Hawaii 2021;
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32 (7) The Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian
33 Affairs;
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35 (8) The Chief Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools; and
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37 (9) The President and Chief Executive Officer of
38 Lili'uokalani Trust; and
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the co-chairs of the working
41 group are requested to invite the following individuals to
42 participate in the working group:



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- (1) Two former foster youth;
- (2) Two birth parents who were involved in the Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Services Branch;
- (3) Two licensed resource caregivers; and
- (4) Two kinship resource caregivers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to:

- (1) Conduct informational meetings through the State with affected constituencies;
- (2) Convene meetings to develop recommendations to better coordinate and improve the protection and well-being of children and families in the State's child welfare system;
- (3) Identify training, best practices, assessment criteria, and methods to sustain an effective workforce within the Child Welfare Services Branch and within the larger circle of community agencies serving the child welfare system;
- (4) Identify best practices, including any Native Hawaiian cultural practices, to assist children and youth and their families who are involved in the child welfare system;
- (5) Identify other cultural practices that build wellness and resilience in communities and collaboration between communities and the Child Welfare Services Branch; and
- (6) Collaborate with the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force and, where appropriate, conduct joint informational meetings; and



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the working group
2 shall serve without compensation; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
5 to submit a report of its findings and recommendations,
6 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
7 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
8 of 2024; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services;
12 Director of the Office of Wellness and Resilience; Chief
13 Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Chairperson
14 of the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force; Executive Director of
15 Effective Planning and Innovative Communication, Inc., operating
16 as EPIC 'Ohana; Chief Executive Officer of Hale Kipa, Inc.; Chief
17 Executive Officer of Kamehameha Schools; and President and Chief
18 Executive Officer of Lili'uokalani Trust.

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OFFERED BY:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a name like 'J. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.