
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES AND JUVENILE JUSTICE STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL TO EXAMINE THE AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF AINA-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS OFFERED TO YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE LEGAL SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, research shows that charging fees, fines, costs,
2 and restitution to youth is harmful to young people and their
3 families; and

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5 WHEREAS, in Hawaii, the consequences of such costs fall
6 disproportionately on Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and
7 African-American youth, who are more likely to be arrested,
8 detained, and unable to afford fees, fines, costs, and
9 restitution; and

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11 WHEREAS, youth involved in the juvenile justice system are
12 frequently ordered to complete hours of community service in
13 lieu of court costs; and

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15 WHEREAS, in Hawaii, typical community service opportunities
16 do not give youth a chance to connect back with their culture
17 and the land, preventing rehabilitation and healing; and

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19 WHEREAS, this disconnection from culture increases the
20 likelihood of intergenerational trauma and recidivism; and

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22 WHEREAS, aina-based learning is grounded in teaching and
23 learning through aina, which encompasses the land, ocean, air,
24 and all living things; and

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26 WHEREAS, aina-based learning offers an opportunity for
27 minors to carry on the practices of their kupuna, strengthening
28 families and communities; and



1 WHEREAS, through aina-based approaches, learners can deepen
2 their relationships with the natural environment, cultivating
3 connections with their communities and building critical skills
4 that can be applied to real-world issues; and
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6 WHEREAS, the majority of organizations utilizing aina-based
7 learning are not-for-profit organizations eager to support
8 youth; and
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10 WHEREAS, Hawaii has already committed to providing aina-
11 based education and stewardship opportunities to youth through
12 the Aloha+ Challenge; and
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14 WHEREAS, the State can do more to refer youth to
15 organizations employing aina-based learning to complete
16 community service obligations; now, therefore,
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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
20 of 2025, that the Department of Human Services' Office of Youth
21 Services and Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council are
22 requested to examine the availability and utilization of aina-
23 based learning programs offered to youth in the juvenile legal
24 system; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
27 Services' Office of Youth Services and Juvenile Justice State
28 Advisory Council are requested to create and disseminate a list
29 of organizations employing aina-based learning that the courts
30 may use to assign community service to minors in the family
31 court system; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services,
35 Executive Director of the Office of Youth Services, and
36 Chairperson of the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council.

