
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO STRENGTHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN BY STRENGTHENING STATEWIDE ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES AND GENERATING A PLAN TO EXPAND SPECIALIZED INVESTIGATIVE PERSONNEL.

1 WHEREAS, human trafficking and the commercial sexual
2 exploitation of children are among the most severe and inhumane
3 criminal offenses affecting vulnerable individuals across the
4 United States and within the State of Hawaii; and

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6 WHEREAS, victims of trafficking are often among the most
7 vulnerable members of society, including runaway youth, homeless
8 youth, foster youth, and individuals experiencing poverty or
9 instability; and

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11 WHEREAS, law enforcement agencies in the State of Hawaii
12 receive as many as 2,000 runaway youth reports each year, and
13 national studies indicate that one in seven runaway youth are
14 likely victims of human trafficking; and

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16 WHEREAS, traffickers frequently exploit vulnerable youth by
17 using coercion, manipulation, and violence, often operating
18 through hotels, online platforms, and organized criminal
19 networks; and

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21 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii receives millions of visitors
22 each year and maintains a major tourism economy, which
23 traffickers may exploit to facilitate the commercial sexual
24 exploitation of vulnerable individuals; and

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26 WHEREAS, investigations involving human trafficking are
27 complex and require specialized training, dedicated personnel,



1 and coordinated efforts among law enforcement agencies,
2 prosecutors, social service providers, and federal partners; and
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4 WHEREAS, current law enforcement resources dedicated
5 specifically to investigating human trafficking and locating
6 runaway youth are limited and insufficient to address the
7 growing scale and complexity of trafficking crimes; and
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9 WHEREAS, increasing the number of trained investigators
10 dedicated to trafficking enforcement would improve the State's
11 ability to identify victims, locate missing youth, dismantle
12 criminal trafficking networks, and bring offenders to justice;
13 and
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15 WHEREAS, protecting children and vulnerable individuals
16 from exploitation must remain a top priority for the State of
17 Hawaii and its law enforcement agencies; now, therefore,
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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
20 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
21 of 2026, the Department of the Attorney General and the
22 Department of Law Enforcement are urged to strengthen law
23 enforcement capacity to combat human trafficking and the
24 commercial sexual exploitation of children by strengthening
25 statewide enforcement initiatives and generating a plan to
26 expand specialized investigative personnel; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Operation Shine the Light Initiative
29 should be expanded to include all county police departments to
30 strengthen coordination among county police departments,
31 prosecutors, the Department of Human Services, and federal law
32 enforcement agencies and to improve victim identification,
33 investigation, and prosecution of trafficking crimes; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the initiative consider the
36 establishment of specialized runaway youth recovery teams in
37 each county law enforcement department to rapidly locate missing
38 youth who may be at risk of trafficking or exploitation; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an assessment be conducted to
2 determine the need for any additional specialized investigative
3 personnel; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of the Attorney
6 General and the Department of Law Enforcement are requested to
7 submit a report of findings and recommendations, including
8 proposed staffing levels, training needs, and funding
9 requirements necessary to support this statewide enforcement
10 initiative, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
11 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
14 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Attorney General,
15 the Director of the Department of Law Enforcement, the Director
16 of Human Services, and the chiefs of police of each county in
17 the State of Hawaii.
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OFFERED BY: *Danner*

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