
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 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 receive as
12 many as two thousand 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 receives millions of visitors each year
22 and maintains a major tourism economy, which traffickers may
23 exploit to facilitate the commercial sexual exploitation of
24 vulnerable individuals; and

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26 WHEREAS, investigations involving human trafficking are
27 complex and require specialized training, dedicated personnel,
28 and coordinated efforts among law enforcement agencies,



1 prosecutors, social services providers, and federal partners;
2 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 and
17 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 Department
22 of Law Enforcement are urged to strengthen law enforcement
23 capacity to combat human trafficking and the commercial sexual
24 exploitation of children by strengthening statewide enforcement
25 initiatives and generating a plan to expand specialized
26 investigative personnel; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Operation Shine the Light
29 initiative is urged to be expanded to include all county police
30 departments to strengthen coordination among county police
31 departments, prosecutors, the Department of Human Services, and
32 federal law enforcement agencies and to improve victim
33 identification, investigation, and prosecution of trafficking
34 crimes; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Operation Shine the Light
37 initiative is urged to consider the establishment of specialized
38 runaway youth recovery teams in each county law enforcement
39 department to rapidly locate missing youth who may be at risk of
40 trafficking or exploitation; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of the Attorney
2 General and Department of Law Enforcement are urged to conduct
3 an assessment to determine the need for any additional
4 specialized investigative personnel; and
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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of the Attorney
7 General and Department of Law Enforcement are requested to
8 submit a report of findings and recommendations, including
9 proposed staffing levels, training needs, and funding
10 requirements necessary to support a statewide enforcement
11 initiative, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
12 to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
15 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Attorney General,
16 Director of Law Enforcement, Director of Human Services, and
17 chiefs of police of each county.

