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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FAMILY RESILIENCE PILOT PROGRAM.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that more programs and  
2 resources are necessary to increase family resilience and reduce  
3 the risk of child abuse or neglect. Many families at high risk  
4 of entering the child welfare system are unaware of available  
5 services or how to access them, or public benefits are not  
6 available to address the economic or other fiscal challenge they  
7 are facing.

8           The malama ohana working group was established by Act 86,  
9 Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, within the office of wellness and  
10 resilience to seek, design, and recommend transformative changes  
11 to the State's existing child welfare system. In its report  
12 submitted to the 2025 legislature, the malama ohana working  
13 group stated there is a shortage of resources in Hawaii  
14 dedicated to preventing children and families' involvement with  
15 child welfare services, especially primary prevention and  
16 universal support. The malama ohana working group recommended  
17 the establishment of primary prevention and universal support



1 programs that are trauma-informed and culturally responsive in  
2 an effort to divert children and families away from involvement  
3 with the child welfare system.

4 The legislature also finds that community- and school-based  
5 organizations are safe, accessible, and non-judgmental spaces  
6 where families can access formal and informal supports and  
7 referrals. Providing family strengthening programming helps to  
8 increase parents' protective factors, including: parental  
9 resilience, social connections, concrete support, knowledge of  
10 parenting and child development, and social-emotional competence  
11 of children. Community- and school-based organizations, such as  
12 family resource centers, have been successful in reducing the  
13 number of families reported to the child welfare system.

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a  
15 two-year family resilience pilot program within the office of  
16 wellness and resilience.

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the office of  
18 wellness and resilience a family resilience pilot program to  
19 build family resilience and provide comprehensive specialized  
20 support services to eligible families. The program shall:



- 1           (1) Hire and train five trauma-informed peer support  
2           resource navigators to assist up to eighty families  
3           with enrollment in public or other benefits, parenting  
4           classes, and cultural family strengthening program  
5           services; provided that each peer support resource  
6           navigator shall be trained in alignment with the  
7           recommendations of the peer support specialists  
8           working group established by Act 88, Session Laws of  
9           Hawaii 2024; provided further that each peer support  
10          resource navigator shall use motivational interviewing  
11          methods and serve not more than twenty families;
- 12          (2) Train program staff on eligibility screening to ensure  
13          families meet temporary assistance for needy families  
14          (TANF) or related eligibility criteria and connect  
15          interested and eligible families with peer support  
16          resource navigators;
- 17          (3) Assist families to identify goals, connect them to  
18          community resources and supports, and assist them with  
19          applications for public assistance benefits, housing,  
20          education, or employment that are in alignment with  
21          their identified goals; and



1 (4) Identify monthly parenting classes or cultural family  
2 strengthening services offered by contracted or  
3 subcontracted providers and connect families to those  
4 classes and services as appropriate.

5 (b) The office of wellness and resilience may contract  
6 with a third-party administrator to operate the family  
7 resilience pilot program.

8 (c) The office of wellness and resilience shall submit a  
9 report of its findings and recommendations, including any  
10 proposed legislation, on the family resilience pilot program to  
11 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening  
12 of the regular session of 2028. The report shall include the  
13 number of eligible families who:

14 (1) Connected to and are receiving community resources and  
15 supports;

16 (2) Applied for public assistance benefits, housing,  
17 education, or employment;

18 (3) Participated in parenting classes and cultural family  
19 strengthening services; and

20 (4) Reported favorable changes in their knowledge,  
21 attitudes or beliefs, skill acquisition, behavior, and



1 relationships as a direct result of program  
2 participation.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated or authorized from the  
4 temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) funds the sum of  
5 \$600,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
6 2026-2027 for the family resilience pilot program established  
7 pursuant to section 2 of this Act, including the contracting of  
8 services to implement and operate the program.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
10 human services for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 4. If any part of this Act is found to be in  
12 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed  
13 condition for the allocation of federal funds to the State, the  
14 conflicting part of this Act is inoperative solely to the extent  
15 of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly  
16 affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the  
17 remainder of this Act in its application to the agencies  
18 concerned.

19 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026, and  
20 shall be repealed on June 30, 2028.



S.B. NO. 3204  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1  
C.D. 1

**Report Title:**

Office of Wellness and Resilience; DHS; Family Resilience Pilot Program; Report; Peer Support Resource Navigators; TANF; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a two-year Family Resilience Pilot Program within the Office of Wellness and Resilience. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds to be expended by the Department of Human Services for the pilot program. Sunsets 6/30/2028. (CD1)

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