

JAN 23 2006

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A COMMISSION ON FATHERHOOD.

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

1 SECTION 1. Act 156 Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, is amended  
2 by amending section 2 to read as follows:

3 "SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by  
4 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read  
5 as follows:

6 **"CHAPTER**

7 **COMMISSION ON FATHERHOOD**

8 § -1 **Findings and purpose.** The legislature finds that,  
9 across the United States, there is a renewed understanding of  
10 the unique importance of fathers in the lives of their children,  
11 families, and communities. It is widely recognized that  
12 children are more likely to thrive with support, guidance, and  
13 nurturing from both parents. The absence of one parent from a  
14 child's life can place that child at a greater risk of health,  
15 emotional, educational, and behavioral problems associated with  
16 the child's development. However, many young men today are  
17 themselves fatherless, lack appropriate role models, and are in



1 need of information and education regarding the appropriate  
2 roles and responsibilities of fathers.

3 The legislature further finds that the role of fathers in  
4 the raising of children and in the health and well-being of  
5 families is often unintentionally overlooked in government  
6 contracts, programs, and services dealing with children's  
7 health, welfare, and education.

8 It is the purpose of this chapter to provide for a  
9 statewide program to promote healthy family relationships  
10 between parents and children.

11 § -2 State commission on fatherhood. There is  
12 established the state commission on fatherhood within the office  
13 of the lieutenant governor for administrative purposes.

14 § -3 Members; terms; chair; quorum; compensation. (a)  
15 The commission shall consist of fifteen members and reflect the  
16 geographic and cultural diversity of the State. The membership  
17 shall include:

- 18 (1) Ex officio, the director of human services,  
19 superintendent of education, director of health,  
20 attorney general, [~~director of the office of children  
21 and youth,~~] the chief justice of the supreme court,

1 and executive director of the office of youth  
2 services, or their designees; and

3 (2) Eight voting members shall be appointed by the  
4 governor as provided in section 26-34, except as  
5 otherwise provided in this section, as follows:

6 (A) Two members shall be appointed by the governor  
7 from a list of three nominees submitted by the  
8 president of the senate, and two members shall be  
9 appointed by the governor from a list of three  
10 nominees submitted by the speaker of the house of  
11 representatives; and

12 (B) Four members shall be appointed by the governor  
13 from the community.

14 (3) One voting member shall be designated by the Hawaii  
15 Coalition for Dads.

16 (b) Of the appointed members, there shall be at least one  
17 member from each of the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii.

18 (c) All members shall serve for a term of two years. Any  
19 vacancies occurring in the membership of the commission shall be  
20 filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same  
21 manner as the original appointments.

1 (d) The chair and vice chair of the board shall be  
2 selected annually from the nongovernmental members of the  
3 commission appointed pursuant to subsection (a)(2). A simple  
4 majority shall constitute a quorum, whose affirmative vote shall  
5 be necessary for all actions.

6 (e) The members shall serve without compensation.

7 (f) Any member of the commission shall be immune from  
8 civil liability as provided in section 26-35.5.

9 **§ -4 Duties.** The commission shall serve in an advisory  
10 capacity to state agencies to promote healthy family  
11 relationships between parents and children. In addition, the  
12 commission may make recommendations on programs, services, and  
13 contracts relating to children and families, and may:

14 (1) Act as a central clearinghouse and coordinating body  
15 for governmental and nongovernmental activities and  
16 information relating to the promotion of healthy  
17 families;

18 (2) Identify promising best practices that support and  
19 engage both parents in the emotional and financial  
20 support of their children;

21 (3) Identify obstacles that impede or prevent the  
22 involvement of fathers in the lives of their children;



- 1 (4) Raise public awareness of the consequences that the  
2 absence of the father may cause in a child's life;
- 3 (5) Recommend policies and practices, both within and  
4 without state government, that sustain and reengage  
5 fathers in the lives of their children;
- 6 (6) Promote, foster, encourage, and otherwise support  
7 programs designed to educate and train young men who  
8 are both current and future fathers as to effective  
9 parenting skills, behaviors, and attitudes;
- 10 (7) Promote, foster, encourage, and otherwise support  
11 programs that promote fatherhood;
- 12 (8) Promote, foster, encourage, and otherwise support  
13 programs that counter poverty and low income by  
14 increasing the capacity of fathers to overcome  
15 personal challenges and become productive,  
16 independent, and financially responsible contributors  
17 to their family; and
- 18 (9) Do any and all things necessary to carry out its  
19 duties and the purposes of this chapter.

20 § -5 **Meetings.** The meetings of the commission shall be  
21 subject to the requirements of chapter 92.

1           §   -6   **Exemption from administrative supervision of boards**  
 2   **and commissions.** Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the  
 3   commission shall be exempt from section 26-35 with the exception  
 4   of section 26-35(2), (3), (7), and (8).


5           §   -7   **Administration of funds.** The commission shall  
 6   administer funds appropriated or allocated for its work and  
 7   shall be authorized to accept, disburse, and allocate funds that  
 8   may become available from other governmental and private  
 9   sources; provided that all such funds shall be disbursed or  
 10   allocated in compliance with any specific designation stated by  
 11   the donor and, in the absence of any specific designation, the  
 12   funds shall be disbursed or allocated on projects related to any  
 13   of the purposes of this chapter.""

14           SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
 15   and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

16           SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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SB2108

**Report Title:**

Commission on Fatherhood

**Description:**

Replaces the director of the office of children and youth with the chief justice or his designee as a member of the commission.

