

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 2 2006

RE: S.B. No. 2161
S.D. 2

Honorable Robert Bunda
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 2161, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FOSTER CHILDREN,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a foster children's bill of rights.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the Department of Human Services, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Hawaii Disability Rights Center, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, and twenty-nine individuals.

Your Committee finds that this measure ensures that foster children's rights are protected and enforced and informs foster children of their rights while in the State's custody.

Your Committee has amended this measure to:

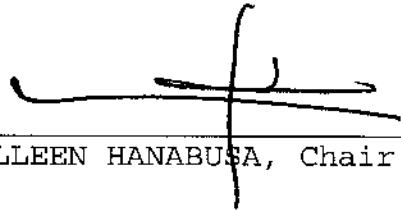
- (1) Incorporate an amendment proposed by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs recognizing the right of foster children to culturally appropriate care and placement of foster children of Hawaiian ancestry with foster parents of Hawaiian ancestry; and
- (2) Incorporate the following amendments from the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition to:



- (a) Insert language inadvertently excluded when this measure was merged with S.B. 2221 to provide that children be treated with respect, be free from unreasonable searches, be free to make and receive confidential phone calls, and be allowed to work and develop job skills an age-appropriate level;
- (b) Add language allowing the foster child to exercise parental and decision-making authority over his or her own child and for reasonable accommodations for his or her child; and
- (c) Add language allowing the foster child to contact the Department of Human Services confidentially and free from harassment and retaliation.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2161, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2161, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary and
Hawaiian Affairs,



COLLEEN HANABUSA, Chair



