

---

---

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State should  
2 fund child abuse prevention and diversion services to remove the  
3 risk of child abuse within a family rather than remove a child  
4 from a family. The rate of child abuse and neglect cases  
5 continues to rise dramatically in both numbers and severity with  
6 an overwhelming majority of the families experiencing problems  
7 with substance abuse, mental health issues, domestic violence,  
8 and poverty.

9           In response to the need for child welfare reform, Senate  
10 Concurrent Resolution No. 89, 1994, created a child welfare  
11 services reform task force, known as the blueprint for change  
12 task force, to develop a blueprint for reform in child  
13 protective services. The task force found a need to provide  
14 coordinated and comprehensive community-based services to  
15 families at risk for child abuse and neglect.

16           As a result of the work of the blueprint for change task  
17 force, the legislature enacted Act 302, Session Laws of Hawaii



1 1996, to create "neighborhood places" or sites around the State  
 2 that enable professionals to work with families identified by  
 3 the child welfare system or by community members as families at  
 4 risk for child abuse and neglect. It is through the  
 5 neighborhood places that families can receive necessary services  
 6 before the risk level rises to the point of more costly  
 7 intervention efforts within the child welfare system.

8 The overall average cost of working with the blueprint for  
 9 change neighborhood place is approximately \$300 per family. The  
 10 average cost of a family entering the child welfare system is  
 11 estimated conservatively at over \$20,000 per family member.

12 In 1999, private agencies and the federal government  
 13 provided limited start-up funds to initiate a pilot project in  
 14 Kona. Since opening its doors, the Neighborhood Place of Kona  
 15 has served as a powerful example of the success of community  
 16 partnerships for child protection. The Neighborhood Place of  
 17 Kona has served over five hundred families, preventing and  
 18 diverting these families from the more costly child welfare  
 19 system.

20 The blueprint for change program ended its pilot project  
 21 and expanded the neighborhood place network to communities on



1 the Waianae coast, central Kalihi, Wailuku on Maui, and the Puna  
2 district on the Big Island.

3 The legislature further finds that without continued  
4 funding for the blueprint for change project, the neighborhood  
5 places program will not be able to continue to carry out  
6 important child welfare reform and assist at-risk families.

7 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for the  
8 blueprint for change project, and for additional neighborhood  
9 places in Waimanalo, Oahu, and Kauai.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$300,000, or so much  
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and the  
13 same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
14 2008-2009, for the blueprint for change project to continue to  
15 deliver diversion and child protective services to target  
16 families, and for additional neighborhood places in Waimanalo,  
17 Oahu, and Kauai.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
19 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.



# PROPOSED

**Report Title:**

Human Services; Blueprint for Change Project

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the blueprint for change project. (SD1)

