

Honolulu, Hawaii
Feb 15, 2008

RE: H.B. No. 2707
H.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services & Housing, to which was referred H.B. No. 2707 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to establish a preference for grandparents for out-of-home placement of children involved in child protective proceedings.

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Maui County Executive on Aging, Parents for Righteousness, Tutu and Me, Partners In Development Foundation, Na Tutu, Catholic Charities Hawaii, and several concerned individuals testified in support of this bill. The Executive Office on Aging and Foster Family Programs of Hawaii supported the intent of this measure. The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii provided comments.

Your Committee has amended this bill by replacing its contents with provisions that:

- (1) Expand the scope of preference for out-of-home placement of children to include relatives;
- (2) Define "relative" to include lawe hanai parents or blood-related hanai parents, or hanai parents based on written or oral designation by the child or child's



blood relatives, who are willing and able to provide support to the child and the family; and

(3) Require DHS to:

- a. Identify all relatives within six months of assuming foster custody of the child; and
- b. Respond to inquiries from relatives with regard to their potential as foster placement.

Your Committee urges all stakeholders to propose a due process procedure, including "paper trail" documentation, that would adequately protect a relative's right to request to participate in the child protective service proceedings regarding the child.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services & Housing that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2707, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2707, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services &
Housing,



MAILE SHIMABUKURO, Chair



