

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

379

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 15 2007

RE: S.B. No. 1163
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2007
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Human Services and Public Housing, to which was referred S.B. No. 1163 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FOSTER CHILDREN'S TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the State to provide independent living programs to foster children at age fourteen.

The Department of Human Services, submitted testimony in support of the intent of this measure. The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Hale Kipa, the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, and three individuals submitted testimony in support of this measure.

Your Committee finds that it is important to ensure that, beginning at age fourteen, foster youth are provided with appropriate opportunities to learn the basic life skills that they will need as they become adults. According to the testimony of the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, at age eighteen, many foster youth exit their foster homes with little more than a bag of their possessions and no particular destination. Many do not know how to obtain employment or housing, or how to access public or other benefits that may assist them in their transition out of care. As a result, many former foster youth become homeless, enter the criminal justice system, or are victims of drugs and violence.



Your Committee notes that the Department of Human Services requested that the Legislature increase the budget cap on federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds for child welfare services to provide foster youth with the appropriate life skills to make a successful transition to self-sufficiency, in lieu of a State general fund appropriation. This will provide additional support to the Department of Human Services' existing programs related to independent living services.

It is the Committee's intent to balance the need to provide older foster youth with appropriate opportunities to learn basic life skills with the understanding that the Department of Human Services cannot mandate these foster youth to attend the proffered programs. The Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Requiring that, beginning at age fourteen, the permanent plan of all foster youth who are in permanent custody or foster custody include an age appropriate independent living program instead of requiring the foster youth to participate in the program;
- (2) Appropriating or authorizing money from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds to the Department of Human Services for the independent living program; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive changes for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services and Public Housing that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1163, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1163, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

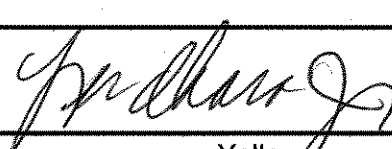
Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services and
Public Housing,


SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Chair



The Senate
 Twenty-Fourth Legislature
 State of Hawaii

Record of Votes
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
HSP

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB 1163	Committee Referral: HSP, WAM	Date: 2-8-07		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne (C)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les (VC)	✓			
SAKAMOTO, Norman				✓
HEMMINGS, Fred	✓			
TOTAL	3	0	0	1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes