

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 2007

RE: S.B. No. 1442  
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. 1442 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION BOARD ALLOWANCE FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Increase the time limit for application for a higher education board allowance to provide former foster youth who are between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-six years of age on July 1, 2007, and already attending an institution of higher education, an opportunity to apply for a higher education board allowance within a year; and
- (2) Increases the maximum age for the benefit from twenty-one years of age to twenty-six years of age with a maximum benefit period of sixty months.

The Department of Human Services; Child Welfare Services; the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition; the Hawaii Youth Services Network; Legal Aid Society of Hawaii; EPIC, Inc.; Hawaii Family Forum; and two individuals submitted testimony in support of this measure. Kapi'olani Child Protection Center submitted comments.

Your Committee finds that this measure will improve the educational prospects of former foster youth. As noted by the



Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, at present there is a narrow window of opportunity for former foster youth to apply for a higher education allowance, which requires the former foster youth to have begun attending an accredited institution of higher learning within one school year after high school. However, upon turning eighteen years of age, many former foster youth leave with a desire for freedom and without realizing what benefits may be available to them. Increasing the time limit and the maximum age for the benefit will enable those former foster youth who did not attend an accredited institution of higher learning within one school year after high school to apply for the benefit and have a chance to become a better educated adult.

It is your Committee's intent to help former foster youth to successfully transition to independent adult status. Your Committee has amended this measure by 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. 1442, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1442, 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



