

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2215

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2008

RE: S.B. No. 2731
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Human Services and Public Housing, to which was referred S.B. No. 2731 entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to permit a child's grandparent to participate as a party at certain child protective hearings.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the Department of Human Services, the Executive Office on Aging, Catholic Charities Hawaii, EPIC Ohana Conferencing, Foster Family Programs of Hawaii, Kokua Ohana Foster Family Liaison, Na Tutu Coalition, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and twenty-six private individuals. Oral testimony in support was given by, Parents for Righteousness, Partners in Development, Tutu and Me Traveling Preschool, and six private citizens. Comments on the measure were submitted by the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that grandparents play a unique and significant role in the lives of their grandchildren, and that it would benefit a grandchild who entered foster care if a preference were exercised in the grandparent's favor to become the child's foster parent. Your Committee also notes that wide community support was generated for this measure. Your Committee also notes that, in addition to grandparents, caregiving of a child in need of foster care is sometimes provided by a child's relative caregiver who is not the child's grandparent.

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Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Allowing relative caregivers as well as grandparents to participate as a party at certain child protective hearings;
- (2) Including an amendment to section 357-25(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, to include as a guideline, attempts made to locate and identify extended family and/or friends, as one of the safe family home guidelines;
- (3) Requiring the Department of Human Services to certify to the court its attempts to locate and identify relative caregivers; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity 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. 2731, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2731, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Labor.

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.:* <i>SB 2731</i>	Committee Referral: <i>HSP</i>	Date: <i>1/31/08</i>		
<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)	✓			
HOOSER, Gary L.				✓
SAKAMOTO, Norman	✓			
HEMMINGS, Fred	✓			
TOTAL	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes