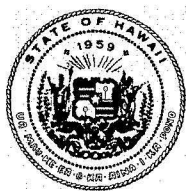


LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

January 24, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 2027, RELATING TO CHILDREN**
Hearing: Thursday, January 24, 2008; 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 2027 is to require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish a pilot project to develop or contract to develop and operate facilities statewide to provide services and support for at-risk children (up to thirteen years-of-age) from low-income families.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports providing services to at-risk low-income youth and funds many positive youth development programs with Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds.

The Department has concerns with this bill in reference to the educational services to be provided to homeless and at-risk children from low-income families

described in line 8 on page 1, lines 17 and 18 on page 1, and lines 3 through 5 on page 2.

Currently, educational services to children 5-13 years of age, including homeless and at-risk children from low-income families, are provided by the Department of Education (DOE). It is not clear if the services to be provided by this project are intended to supplant or replace such DOE services that are already being provided during the traditional school hours that would duplicate already available public education services.

If the services to be provided are to offer non-academic services, including some remedial services, during non-traditional school hours, a provision to evaluate and inventory the existing non-school hour services is needed to determine if there is a need to establish new services through this bill for various school age categories in different local geographic communities.

The DOE and the Department of Human Services (DHS) are already funding the A+ program in almost all public elementary schools (K-5, and in some cases also 6th grade), including Charter Schools, during the non-academic after-school hours of the elementary school day. The General Fund expenditure on A+ is approximately \$6 million per year. DOE also spends an equivalent amount on A+ services.

In addition, DHS is funding many positive youth development programs, via the Office of Youth Services (OYS) and the Department of Defense (DOD) using TANF funds, that are providing services during the non-school hours in various communities statewide to children attending middle or intermediate schools. The Department is also funding the Uniting Peer Learning Integrating New Knowledge (UPLINK) Program, a non-school hour program, in 13 DOE middle/intermediate schools and working on funding two more on the Big Island and one on Kauai. DHS

is also funding Native Hawaiian Charter Schools. The TANF expenditures on these positive youth development programs total approximately \$20 million per year.

There are also services funded by the various Counties and OYS to provide services and support for at-risk children (up to thirteen years-of-age) from low-income families.

As stated previously, there is approximately \$6 million per year spent on A+ services and approximately \$20 million per year spent on positive youth development programs that provide services to the children in the State, which also include homeless and at-risk children from low-income families. It is not clear in this bill if the proposed general fund appropriations will be replacing these existing Federal funds that are currently being expended.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.



Malama O Kamali'i Makamae

TO: Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: D. Keala Naluai, President

MALAMA O KAMALI'I MAKAMAE

PO Box 4982 Kaneohe, HI 96744

Date: Thursday, January 24, 2008 @ 8:30 am. in Room 329

SUPPORT: HOUSE BILL 2027, "Relating to Children. At-Risk Children Pilot Project (\$)"

Malama O Kamali'i Makamae (*Protect and Honor Our Precious Children*) is a nonprofit organization to help the children of Hawaiian ancestry and of low-income households by developing and operating state-of-the-art care facilities for these children in imminent danger of their physical, emotional, social, and educational well-being. This is the missing link in behalf of preserving our young disadvantaged and Native Hawaiian Na Kamali'i.

I am D. Keala Naluai, daughter of George Naleilehua Naluai and Lucy Sheldon Naluai. As the Founder and President of this organization, this project's inception was inspired by my parents' exemplary manner in which they raised their 11 of 12 children (one stillborn child), demonstrating unconditional compassion in the true sense of "Hanai 'Ohana" style, a tradition unique to the Native Hawaiian culture—by helping many other people throughout their lives of very humble means, as they selflessly shared their home & food with relatives, friends and State's foster children in need for as long as needed—making the difference.

I strongly support and testify for legislative favor to fully supporting this House Bill 2027. There are too many "wait-listed" children needing emergency placement care in a safe environment, while their parents, relatives, and/or guardians require taking care of their own problems (i.e. alcohol, drugs, tobacco addictions, abusiveness, unemployment, homelessness, mental/emotional, economic and social instability, etc.). The State's child protective services and foster care system are inundated with the bombardment of case-overload. We do not want any more Peter Kema, Kehaulani Indreginal, Alexis of Puna and Talia Williams scenarios despoiling our Kamali'i. Yet, we've heard of more reported cases in the media of infant deaths and extreme harm to young children through drug, alcohol and physical abuse within the past two year of domestic violence and abuse [*getting caught in the cross-fire*].

Pitifully, in 2008, we must add Cyrus Bent, who had been in a drug related environment, in the foster care system and found neglected the day before he was murdered, unable to speak to defend and protect himself. Sadly, Cyrus Bent became another of Hawaii's silenced heroes, who had not reached his second birthday. Consider the devastating traumas this incident has caused and the outpouring of grief and compassion by our island residents, even those who never knew Cyrus existed, till now.

Priority will be given to Na Kamali'i whose lives are endangered, orphaned, abandoned, fostered, homeless, physically abused and so forth. There is no doubt that these are categorical indicators to emotional and mental scarring, which adversely affects their growth & development, behavioral & learning abilities. These care facilities will provide a wellness refuge for them to begin to feel safe and begin a healthy healing journey. The objectives of the care facilities are to promote improvement in the physical and emotional well-being of each child; increase their self-esteem and academic/cultural learning; instill an awareness of and development of the talents and skills of each child; achieve positive well-balanced and happy Na Kamali'i who will know they are loved and grow to be successful, self-reliant and productive members in their communities and in society.

The findings from the final report of the Joint House-Senate Task Force on Ice and Drug Abatement (JHSTFIDA) 2004 missed this important link, while recommending, mandating and appropriating various help services & programs for funding to the youth and adults in combating their debilitating addictions. However, the Task Force did acknowledge in their report entitled, "Protecting Children Exposed to Ice in the Home," which were:

- (a) The inadequacy of resources to respond to the needs of the families and children;
- (b) The lack of coordination between governments to address the substance issues;
- (c) The lack of discussion to implement a plan to resolve the escalating number of child abuse cases resulting from ice abuse in the home; and
- (d) The effects of ice abuse that cost Hawaii's taxpayers between seventy million and eighty four million dollars annually.

The JHSTFIDA, also, stated that they recognized the need "to develop a drug endangered child protection program."

The Department of Human Services (DHS) 2005 Report showed that Native and part Hawaiians have the highest rate of general and financial assistance as well as the highest rate for child abuse and neglect and children in child protective custody.

The need is NOW and the time is FAR SPENT in developing care facilities for these children's desperate reach for our hands to help them survive, whereby they may thrive.

“We have the tremendous responsibility to change the course of the lives of our children.” We face the challenges in our society of the breakdown of the family, substance/alcohol abuse, promiscuity and violence at a younger age, socio-economical decline, etc. “Children store in their sub-consciousness memory [bank] ALL that they see and hear, which can play a major part in their behavior and character as they get older.” Statistics have shown that “children spend approximately 1680 minutes per week watching TV, while parents spend only 38.5 minutes per week in meaningful conversation with their children.” We must help “to develop excellence of character, to bring out the goodness from within these children.” They need our help to change their environmental living and learning experiences for the better.

Along with the existing programs in place to help our teenagers and adults in substance abuse treatments that have been continually funded, please remember – as you consider this HB 2027 and the positive impact it will have in all our communities – yours and mine, through our community-driven initiatives to helping our people to heal as a whole, meaning being able to service all—from our newborns to our elderly. Unfortunately, our young children are short on the end of emergency care services and safe places to go, when their health and well-being are too often at-risk or in imminent danger.

Honorable House of Representatives of the Committee on Human Services and Housing, we have the tremendous task and responsibility to change the course of our communities and the lives of our young children.

Please remember and consider all the little ones in your own families and communities, who need our help to be alive, safe, healthy and happy. They include those who are abandoned, abused, neglected, homeless and orphaned, who are without any doubt in my mind out there somewhere, crying themselves to sleep at night—scared, hungry, hurt, tired, injured, cold and wet, while praying for a safe place to go with a pure child-like faith and hope that someone will someday come to rescue them... before it's too late!

As you and I walk around our neighborhoods, with all that we see with our eyes and hear with our ears and feel with our hearts, it would be unforgiving if any of us would turn away from those many children's tender and faint hearts, who silently through their fears, are pleading to us the poignant words of the song “The Prayer,” “. . . lead us to a place, guide us with your grace, to a place where we'll be safe.”

I respectfully, propose that through your passing of this House Bill 2027, you will be helping us answer their tiny little prayers by rescuing them and taking them to our place where they'll be safe in our communities. Thank you very much for your time and this opportunity to testify.

Appendix

ORAL TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2027

TO: House Committee on Human Services and Housing (HSH)

For: January 24, 2008 HSH Committee Meeting @ 8:30 am.

From: D. Keala Naluai, President, Malama O Kamali'i Makamae dba Kids Care Hawaii

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 2027, RELATING TO CHILDREN FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT (\$)

Dear Honorable Representatives Maile Shimabukuro and Karl Rhodes and Committee Members:

As a citizen and community supporter, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for being given this opportunity to meet with you regarding the need for a children's emergency care, hanai 'ohana and learning center, supported by the passage of the 2004 Legislative Resolution Senate Concurrent Resolution 189 and the 2007 Legislative House Concurrent Resolution 149 passed by this House Committee on Human Services and Housing.

We are enthusiastic about a project to help alleviate the shortfall in our Hawaii State Child Welfare & Protective Service, Social Services, Foster Care Program and over crowded hospital nurseries. Though it is too late for some of our precious children having fallen at the hands of abject adults in Hawaii, we hope we will not be too late in helping to keep many more na kamali'i safe and alive.

Many who have heard about and support such a project - have commented - "that's what we need here in the community for the kids," "this sounds very pono," "it's the missing link for our children," "this is something the Ali'i would be pleased with," "it's about time we had something like this," "the kids need this more today than an extra ball field," "there is such a need for this in Hawaii," "we need this," "if you had brought forth this project ten years ago, we wouldn't have the problems we have today," and so on.

There is a dire need to have the State Child Advocacy Agencies from

the Health and Human Services Divisions work with and allow community-based driven organizations to help rescue the children in a timelier manner in saving lives of our younger generation, especially our Native Hawaiian children.

We tribute our fervent efforts to the legacies of these now "Silent Heroes": Peter Boy Kema, Kehaulani Andreginal, Alexis of Puna, Talia Williams and many more, whose young, innocent and precious lives are no more to have joy. Our lack as a society and public

Appendix - Oral Testimony of D. Keala Naluai
House Bill 2027
Committee on Human Services and Housing
Page 2

servants in protecting and defending our little ones must be made exceptional for "Kids' Sake."

As one who survived such atrocities to adulthood, silent tears still trail her heart, Hope Fields so beautifully wrote a tribute to 5 years old Talia Williams, who died a couple of years ago at the reckless and vicious abusive hands of her father and step-mother, without ever meeting her:

"May you know just how many hearts were broken at the news of what you endured. You are now in an eternal place of joy, laughter, and peace. You will never again experience pain, tears, frustration, fear, or beatings. You are safe, precious Talia. You are eternally safe; however, you will be missed by so many that knew you, as well as those who did not know you. Rest peacefully, precious Talia."
~Hope Fields~

It is regrettable that we have had to make a few more of these tributes, such as high profile tragedies of three infant deaths and also a young girl abandoned by her mother, severely maltreated by the care-giver and left for dead, and now baby Cyrus Bent's life needlessly and horrifically silenced. It is our deepest hope that we will not have to make such tributes to another precious child in Hawaii. We ask you for your active support and efforts in helping us, as a community to make this safe refuge a reality for the little children, who are out there "dreaming and praying" to come to one of these "safe" places before it's too late for themselves.

We look forward to working with you, key officials, agencies,

community non profit organizations and Hawaii businesses to move forward expeditiously to "keep kids safe!"

Please, let us hear these tiny voices of Hawaii children's powerful plea to a loving God, as the lyrics of the song "The Prayer" voices: "Let this be our prayer, when shadows fill our day, guide us with your grace. Give us faith so we'll be safe." "Let this be our prayer, when we lose our way, lead us to a place, guide us with your grace to a place where we'll be safe."

Together, let us do so expeditiously, is my fervent prayer in the name of my Lord and my God, amen. Thank you very much for this opportunity and privilege to testify before this committee.

To: Representative Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
Committee on Human Services & Housing

From: Phyllis Ida, M.Ed., Special Education Teacher
45-284 Pahikaua Street
Kaneohe, HI 96744, 235-6577

Date: Thursday, January 24, 2008 at 8:30 am.

RE: Support of **HOUSE BILL 2027**, "*RELATING TO CHILDREN; AT-RISK CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT*"

I am writing this testimony as a private citizen though it is important to know that I am a special education teacher with more than 30 years of service to the children of Hawaii in which 5 years were in a private preschool and 26 years in the Department of Education.

Currently, I work with many families, teachers and children. I am a strong advocate for ensuring that each special needs child is provided an appropriate program that meets their individual needs. In this process, I have been witness to the after effects of child abuse that have caused some long term disabilities.

Therefore, I am in support of **HB 2027** for the following reasons:

- Child Protective Services and the foster care system have an overload of cases and are only able to provide support for more serious cases. Many are overlooked and end up in disaster.
- The rise in the use of drugs in the community has posed more problems in this area without the providing for the increase of services and programs for drug rehabilitation and support for families.
- Research has shown that appropriate support that includes education and counseling would help to reduce the amount of stress in families that could lead to abusive behavior.
- I have seen too many families in crisis with no place to go or without the supports that they need.

Malama O Kamali'I Makamae is a nonprofit organization that is being developed to support children in imminent danger of their physical, emotional, social, and educational well-being. This program will provide care home facilities for children and their families as they deal with the stresses in life and help to strengthen the family and avoid future problems.

Again, I am in support of HB 2027. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TO: Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhodes, Vice-chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

From: Renee Coester,
2360 Auhuhu street,
Pearl City, Hi 96782.

HEARING: January 24, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Support for House Bill 2027 (Relating To Children, At-Risk Children Pilot Project)

I am in favor of bill 2027. As a retired warden of a Public Safety Correctional Facility, I can assure you, that through the many years of experience, nothing is more important as the early development of children. Children who grow up in environments of abuse, and neglect get a distorted view of what is the norm and acceptable in life. Just to have a chance to experience caring and loving direction will stay with a child as it grows up. The impact of a safe place, where one can be a child in true sense, will help in absorbing and internalizing the values learnt. A safe place in the form of a Children's project, will give a child a place to be free from the burdens of life placed upon it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jerry Bangerter, RA
710 Old Mokapu Road
Kailua, HI 96734
808- 237-5333

Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhodes, Vice-chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

January 24, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Support: HOUSE BILL 2027; RELATING TO CHILDREN – AT-RISK
CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT

One of the respondents to my BLOG aptly noted that “it is good to see a solicitation for help for American kids”.

So often, when kids are involved, we are asked to help the ones in developing countries. Certainly a country like America can help out needy children throughout the world, but sometimes we need to focus on our own children.

Our neglected children here in America and Hawaii need help too! It is really great to have an organization dedicated to helping American kids, and in particular, our native borne Hawaiian Children. Our culture has developed in such a way that our children have become disenfranchised in so very many ways. They are left bereft of love, and understanding as well as the material necessities of life. They need our help and our love.

Malama O Kamali`i Makamae is particularly well suited to provide this help, and it is most important that our elected Officials provide the resources they need to help them with their deserving work.

TO: Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice-chair
Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Mrs. Vonda Kalama
47-379 Keohapa Pl.
Kaneohe, HI 96744
phone: 239-5450
(retired bookkeeper)

DATE/TIME: Thursday, January 24, 2008, 8:30 am.

SUBJECT: SUPPORT for: HOUSE BILL 2027; RELATING TO CHILDREN –
AT-RISK CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT

Honorable Shimabukuro and Honorable Rhoads:

I am writing in support of HOUSE BILL 2027 "RELATING TO CHILDREN;
AT-RISK CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT," which outlines a much-needed
Program to develop caring facilities for endangered youngsters from low-income
households. I have looked into the background ideas for such a program and
find it to be commendable and entirely possible as outlined. I am also willing to
contribute my time and talents such as they are to make this program work.

I urge your support of this important legislation.

Mahalo, for the opportunity to testify.

TO: Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice-chair
Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Emma K. Lowe, BA Psychology
55-550 Naniloa Loop #6055
Laie, HI 96762
808-386-8460

HEARING: Thursday, January 24, 2008, 8:30 AM.

Supporting House Bill 2027, Relating To Children; At-Risk Children Pilot Project (\$)

I am in favor and support of this BILL. There are many children who need a safe environment, while their parents or guardians take care of their own problems. Malama O Kamali'i (MOKM) offers to provide a safe haven for these children. There are too many incidents in Hawai'i's recent history to ignore the fact that children in these situations need to receive care and support by people outside of the Child Protective Services (CPS). Although CPS is a great system for those children whose parents are beyond help, MOKM offers a safe alternative to the emotional stress children are subjected to when they are moved from home to home, when facing permanent placement (i.e. adoption), or when their parents have to fight the system to regain custody.

As a graduate in psychology, I have learned the awful repercussions that children face when their world is torn apart. MOKM offers a stable environment for these children while their parents are taking care of their issues. A stable environment is absolutely necessary to help these children feel safe, secure, and retain and build their self-esteem. Without the opportunity to thrive and develop, these children face the same problems that their parents or guardians are faced with, as children behave in ways that have been modeled for them. If allowed to intervene, MOKM can help to break the cycle of abuse, both of children and of substances.

"We must help 'to develop excellence of character, to bring out the goodness from within these children.' They need our help to change their environmental living and learning experiences for the better." I agree with this statement made by D Keala Naluai, President of Malama O Kamali'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Representative. Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Representative, Karl Rhodes, Vice Chair

Committee on Human Services & Housing

Momi Wolfgramm

48-162 Waiahole Valley Road, Kaneohe, HI 96744

Thursday, January 24, 2008, 8:30 am.

SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 2027: AT-RISK CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT

I support this measure.

From: Ms. JoAnn Lau, LMT
773 Kii St.
Honolulu, HI 96825
808.395-4131

To: Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhodes, Vice-chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

Hearing: Date & Time - January 24, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Support of: *House Bill 2027; Relating To Children – At-Risk Children Pilot Project*

I am in support of your bill and feel that it would benefit the children of Hawaii. It is a stressful time that we are part of and we cannot let these innocent children be neglected.

Please support Keala Naluai in her efforts to start Kamaliimakamae project.

Thank you,
JoAnn Lau

Representative Maile Shimabukuro, Chair
Representative Karl Rhodes, Vice-chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

George and Victoria Awa,
of Tuscon, Arizona

Hearing: Human Services and Housing
Date and Time: January 24, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Support of: HOUSE BILL 2027; RELATING TO CHILDREN – AT-RISK
CHILDREN PILOT PROJECT

Mahalo nui loa! Keala/Dot and family... You are truly doing a great mission in saving the little ones.

We know that you will be successful as long as the families of these little ones support the children. We, too, support what you are doing. We also testify that the HOMES ARE THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE. The government, schools, and churches are just supplements to the HOMES. Strengthen the homes and you will have the support you will need.