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Committee on Human Services and Housing

HB 2198 HD 1, RELATING TO CAREGIVING

**Testimony of Noemi Pendleton
Director of Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to Department of Health**

Friday, February 8, 2008

2:00 p.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) supports this measure to
2 establish a task force to focus on the needs of and issues facing grandparents raising
3 grandchildren.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** Unkown.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** EOA recognizes that many public and private sector
6 departments and agencies are involved in providing services to the group known as "Grandparents
7 Raising Grandchildren." Some of these entities include the Department of Health, Department of
8 Education, Department of Human Services, Department of Public Safety, Queen Liliuokalani
9 Trust, Na Tutu Coalition, Legal Aid society, Judiciary, Department of Attorney General.
10 The task force will bring together all major stakeholders for information sharing and solution
11 seeking. The bill outlines the various tasks and problem areas to be investigated as well as the
12 report to be presented to the Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving.

13 Pursuant to Act 204, SLH 2007, the Executive Office on Aging had contracted with the
14 University of Hawaii Family and Consumer Sciences Department to conduct an assessment of the

1 issues facing, and the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren in Hawaii. According to the
2 report, which was authored by Dr. Lori Yancura, there are over 14,000 grandparents that are
3 primary caregivers for over 33,000 grandchildren in the state of Hawaii. These grandparents
4 raising grandchildren (GRG) are playing an important part in ensuring the well-being of Hawaii's
5 children. They are also saving the state approximately 17 million dollars per month by caring for
6 their grandchildren outside of the foster care system.

7 The services most needed by GRG are children's programs, financial assistance, respite,
8 and grandparent rights. Many of these services are already in place, but GRG don't know that
9 they are eligible for them and/or they don't know how to access them. There is a need for
10 coordination of services for GRG. The service needs of GRG vary by county and island. GRG
11 are more likely to use services that come from a trusted source, many said that they would use a
12 call-in or walk-in resource center.

13 EOA is pleased to be named as a member of the Task Force, and we will participate to our
14 full extent.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

000025

JUDtestimony

From: John Tomoso [John.Tomoso@co.maui.hi.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 07, 2008 9:04 AM
To: JUDtestimony
Subject: Testimony on H.B. 2198, H.D. 1 Relating to Caregiving

To the Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary, who have scheduled a public hearing on Friday, Feb. 8, 2008, @ 2 p.m. in Room 325.

Aloha kakou,

I am in support of H.B. 2198, H.D. 1, which establishes a task force to focus on the needs of and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren (GRG). In our Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program, we are in daily contact with GRG who face tremendous challenges in the raising of their mo'opuna, because of absent biological parents. These GRG are keeping na 'ohana together and deserve our systemic and program/ resource support. They have many unique issues and needs. I believe a task force can assist the aging network in its current "out of the box" thinking, given the mandates of the Older Americans Act, from which Title III-E takes its genesis. GRG are a growing presence and concern for the aging network. Hawai'i, being the multi-cultural and family-centered milieu that it is, is already contributing to the national aging network's knowledge of understanding and serving GRG. However, a task force will allow us to put this knowledge, and its accompanying deliverables, into an organized and comprehensive format, so as to contribute to the continuum of care that GRG are showing us does work. It is obvious to me that GRG are actually forcing us to look at new public policy in our state, given the federal mandates that our agency, and others like it, needs to comply with.

Me ka mahalo pono,

John A. H. Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW

Maui County Executive on Aging

(Maui County Office on Aging - An Area Agency on Aging) 808-270-7350

john.tomoso@mauicounty.gov

County of Maui.

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high-risk file types in attachments.

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Hawaii Aging Advocates Coalition

Founding Organizations

City & County of Honolulu
Elderly Affairs
Karen Miyaki
Craig Yamaguchi

City & County of Honolulu
Service Providers
Tony Wong

FACE
Stan Bain
Jim Howell

Hawaii Caregiver Coalition
Tony Lenzer

HARA
Al Hamai
Bruce McCullough

Hawaii County Office on Aging
Alan Parker
Lito Asuncion

Hawaii County Service Providers
Debra Nakaji

JACOSA
Lyn McNeff

Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs
Kealoha Takahashi

Kokua Council
Larry Geller

Maui County Office on Aging
John Tomoso

Maui County Service Providers
Kathy Louis

Maui Long Term Care Partnership
Rita Barreras

PABEA
Gary Simon
Eldon Wegner

Co-Conveners
Wes Lum
Hawaii Caregiver Coalition

Harry Mattson
Kokua Council

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary
Friday, February 8, 2008
Conference Room 325; 2:00pm

RE: H.B. No. 2198, H.D. 1 RELATING TO CAREGIVING.

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Wes Lum and I am testifying on behalf of the Hawaii Aging Advocates Coalition (HAAC). **HAAC supports this measure.**

This bill establishes a Task Force to focus on the needs of and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

This measure is a recommendation by the Joint Legislative Committee on Family Caregiving (Committee). During this past legislative interim, the Committee held a public hearing to hear testimony from the various state departments, the University of Hawaii, and the Area Agencies on Aging as to how they address the issues facing grandparents and other relatives caring for children. This bill is necessary to determine how these various government stakeholders can individually and collectively build a support system for grandparents and other relatives who are parenting for a second time.

HAAC supports this measure and asks for your favorable consideration. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

000327

HOUSE BILL 2198 HD1

IN SUPPORT

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY FOURTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, February 8, 2008
TIME: 2:00 pm
PLACE: Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

I am in support of this bill Relating to Caregivers.

Thank you for your support in passing this bill.

Julia P. Duarte
Member of Na Tutu Coalition
[REDACTED]

000378

February 4, 2008

The Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Subject: HB2198 HD1

Hearing: Friday, February 8, 2008, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

Purpose: The purpose of HB2198 is to establish a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

Position: We support HB2198.

To the Honorable Tommy Waters and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

I am in support of HB2198, which would establish a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

Thousands of our grandparents in Hawaii are parenting young children due to the absence of biological parents. The challenges they face are tremendous and include financial hardship, housing difficulties, legal and custody issues, grief and depression, and many other challenges. Our children who are in this position are not only in need of food and shelter and loving care, but are often children with many emotional issues due to the many losses they have suffered through. Grandparents who take in their grandchildren deserve our support and commitment as they are accepting a tremendous responsibility and workload in their older years. These grandparents are often struggling on their own with health problems or financial concerns, yet are taking on the role as parents to their grandchildren because there is no one else to do it. A task force would allow us to gather information on their needs and concerns and help to establish public policy that would make a positive impact on thousands of families. I am a teacher for Tutu and Me traveling Preschool. We work directly with families where the grandparent is raising the keiki. There is a great need to help these families. Please do all you can to help these Kupuna raise the future.

We thank you for lending your support to these and other initiatives which will offer assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren.

Thank you,

Melissa Gibson
Teach for Tutu and Me Traveling Preschool

000029

February 4, 2008

The Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Subject: HB2198 HD1

Hearing: Friday, February 8, 2008, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

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Position: We support HB2198.

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I am in support of HB2198, which would establish a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

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We thank you for lending your support to these and other initiatives which will offer assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren.

Thank you,

Gail Omoto

000090

TO: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Representative Tommy Waters, Chair
Representative Blake K. Oshiro, Vice-Chair

FROM: Sandy Rongitsch, Medical Social Worker
Wailuku, Maui

SUBJECT: **HB 2198, HD 1, RELATING TO CAREGIVING**

Hearing: Friday, February 8, 2008 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 325

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony. I support the establishment of a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

As a practicing social worker in the field of gerontology and child welfare for over 20 years, grandparents raising grandchildren has been, until recently, a hidden segment of Hawaii's older care giving population. The needs and barriers outlined in HB 2198, HD 1 have been too long overlooked. The creation of a task force representing a broad spectrum of service entities is an excellent beginning in identifying and addressing issues in a comprehensive way.

000031

February 4, 2008

The Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Subject: HB2198 HD1

Hearing: Friday, February 8, 2008, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

Purpose: The purpose of HB2198 is to establish a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

Position: We support HB2198.

To the Honorable Tommy Waters and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

I am in support of HB2198, which would establish a task force to focus on the needs and issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.

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We thank you for lending your support to these and other initiatives which will offer assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren.

Thank you,

JoAnn Wasson

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