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Committee on Finance

HB 2198 HD 2, RELATING TO CAREGIVING

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

Monday, February 25, 2008

11:15 a.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:** Unknown.

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.

Hawaii Aging Advocates Coalition

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Monday, February 25, 2008
Conference Room 308; 11:15am; Agenda #2

**Standing
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
vice Providers
Jora Nakaji

JACOSA
Lyn McNeff

Kauai Agency on
Elderly Affairs
Kealoha Takahashi

Koahala 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

Maui County
Council
Gary Mattson

RE: H.B. No. 2198, H.D. 2 RELATING TO CAREGIVING.

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, 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.

February 22, 2008

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance (FIN)

SUBJECT: WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
H.B. 2198, HD2 RELATING TO CAREGIVING

Hearing: Friday, February 25^h, 2008
11:15 a.m.
Conference Room 308, Hawai'i State Capitol

Dear Chairman Oshiro,

Partners in Development Foundation, strongly supports the intent of HB 2198, HD2. We work extensively with elderly caregivers through our Tutu and Me traveling preschool, our Family Education programs, our preschool programs for the homeless, and also with elderly mentors in our mentoring programs on Hawai'i island. We see how important the Tutu are to our 'ohana and believe it is important for our community to understand and support their needs.

While this present draft of the Bill has been amended to generally allow other organizational participants, Partners In Development Foundation would gladly serve to support a task force focused on helping our kupuna in their work with the children of Hawai'i.

We also believe that the time for discussion has passed and it is time for action. Therefore, we request that Section 3 of the Bill be amended to reflect that "This Act shall take effect upon its approval".

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this Bill with the above suggested amendment.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Jan E. Hanohano Dill
President
Partners in Development Foundation
2040 Bachelot Street
Honolulu, HI 96817

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Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair
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Dear Chairman Oshiro,

I strongly support the intent of HB 2198, HD2. I am employed by Partners In Development Foundation (PIDF), but am providing personal testimony as a private citizen in support of this measure.

In my capacity as Communications Director of PIDF, I have been involved with programs that work extensively with elderly caregivers, intergenerational preschools, Family Education, the homeless, and intergenerational mentoring programs. PIDF is a service organization that reaches into areas of need within the native-Hawaiian community.

It does not take much to understand the role of the grandparent in today's society, especially in Hawai'i where most of our various cultures, value and honor their place in the family. Passage of this Bill will demonstrate the Legislature's recognition of those from whom we came. And, upon whom many of us depend upon daily. How many of you as you work the long hours necessary as a Legislator, have left your children with their grandparents, even as this hearing takes place?

Pass this measure, with one change. Amend Section 3 so that said Act can take effect "upon approval".

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this Bill with the above suggested amendment.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Billy Richards
Kailua HI

February 22, 2008

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