

February 4, 2008

LATE TESTIMONY

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

Subject: HB2707, Relating to Child Protection
And
HB2708, Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Tuesday, February 5, 2008, 9:00a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

Purpose: The purpose of **HB2707** is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Position: We strongly support **HB2707** to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services

Purpose: The purpose of **HB2708** is to permit a child's grandparent to participate as a party at certain child protective hearings.

Position: We strongly support **HB2798** to permit a child's grandparents to participate as a party at certain child protective hearings.

To the Honorable Maile S. L. Shimabukuro,

The Tutu and Me traveling preschool program of the Partners in Development Foundation would like to express our strong support of HB2707 and HB2708.

We believe that there is rarely any other individual who could care for a young child with as much love, understanding and compassion as one's own grandparent. Grandparents are so often the only physical and emotional safe haven for children whose parents are unable for whatever reason, to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their child. We thank you for lending your support to these and other initiatives which will ensure capable, loving grandparents a rightful place in their grandchildren's lives.

There have been a number of situations that we have encountered concerning grandparents who are the caregivers of their mo'opuna. Our kupuna have been kept out of the loop of information and understanding when it comes to the legal status of their caring for their mo'opuna in regards to grandparents rights, be it legal or otherwise. We need to respectfully educate our kupuna in order for them to be able to make a smooth transition in understanding legal issues. We know their deep love for their mo'opuna and the desire to keep the 'ohana alive and well in the next generation.

Mahalo Me Ke Aloha,

Ah Lan Diamond – Oahu Site Manager Tutu and Me Traveling Preschool
Ph: 524-7699 Cell: 722-6009

Committee on Human Services and Housing

February 5, 2008 9:00 AM

House Conference Room 329

LATE TESTIMONY

HB 2707 RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION.

Establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Rep. Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Members:

Rep. Karen Leinani Awana	Rep. Josh Green, M.D.
Rep. Della Au Belatti	Rep. John Mizuno
Rep. Joe Bertram, III	Rep. James Kunane Tokioka
Rep. Rida T.R. Cabanilla	Rep. Gene Ward, Ph.D.

As a member of Na Tutu, I support the intent and purpose of this bill that establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children. I question the need of the grandparents having to get foster home licensing

We are thankful to the Hawaii State Legislature for the role in allowing grandparents the ability to sign consent laws to enroll a child in school, (Act 99, Session Laws of Hawaii, 2003) and medical care (Act 208, Session Laws of Hawaii, 2005.)

I support HB2707

Yours truly

Carole Mulford, Member
Na Tutu, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
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CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

February 4, 2008

TO: Rep. Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Chair
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Joy Lacanienta, Program Director II
Catholic Charities Hawai'i

SUBJECT: H.B. 2707 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Tuesday, February 5, 2008
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 2707 is to permit a child's grandparent to participate as a party at certain child protective hearings.

POSITION:

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH), is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. CCH is also one of the partner agencies representing Hui Ho'omalua, which is a statewide collaboration composed of various community and faith-based agencies working together in partnership to address the needs of Hawaii's children in foster care.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i works closely with the Department of Human Services - Child Welfare Services focusing on Child Specific foster/resource families including Special Licensed Relatives (SLR). A great number of foster/resource families we serve are grandparents. This is also a reflection of our State, which has a higher percentage of grandparents raising their grand children compared to the national average.

Kinship connection has been proven to be an important factor for foster children to thrive in their home environment. Allowing grandparents to be the first priority for out-of-home placement is a culturally sensitive and sound idea that can only bring a stronger support system for Hawaii's foster children.

Again, Catholic Charities Hawai'i strongly supports H.B. 2707 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify


Joy Lacanienta