



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
March 13, 2008

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
Twenty-Fourth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun Oakland and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: HB 2897 HD1 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR ASSET BUILDING

The position and views expressed in this testimony do not represent nor reflect the position and views of the Departments of Health and Human Services (DHS).

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS THE INTENT OF HB 2897 HD1**. The purpose of the bill is to direct DHS to establish a three-year pilot project, beginning with Fiscal Year 2008-2009, to conduct and expand asset-building classes statewide to serve individuals with disabilities and parents of children with a disability in developing skills.

The Council is not familiar with the assets building classes offered by DHS. However, we see this as a bridge for using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds and State funds to enhance capacity of individuals with disabilities and parents of children with a disability in developing skills for navigating the service delivery system, career development, increasing computer literacy, etc.

We defer to DHS for the use of TANF funds and the cost of establishing and implementing the three-year pilot project.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony supporting the intent of HB 2897 HD1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Waynette K.Y. Cabral".

Waynette K.Y. Cabral
Executive Administrator



HAWAII DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER

900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1040, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
 Phone/TTY: (808) 949-2922 Toll Free: 1-800-882-1057 Fax: (808) 949-2928
 E-mail: info@hawaiidisabilityrights.org Website: www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org

TESTIMONY TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH STATE LEGISLATURE, 2008 SESSION

To: Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

From: Gary L. Smith, President
 Hawaii Disability Rights Center

Re: House Bill 2897, HD 2
 Making An Appropriation for Asset Building

Hearing: March 13, 2008 1:15 PM
 Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Members of the Committee on Human Services and Public Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2897, HD 2.

I am Gary L. Smith, President of the Hawaii Disability Rights Center, formerly known as the Protection and Advocacy Agency of Hawaii (P&A). As you may know, we are the agency mandated by federal law and designated by Executive Order to protect and advocate for the human, civil and legal rights of Hawaii's estimated 180,000 people with disabilities.

We support this bill. Life for many individuals with disabilities has come a long way thanks to the advent of assistive technology. It has helped to integrate individuals into the workplace as well as other facets of life in the community. As technology advances, we can optimistically hope and assume that even greater strides will be made. An increased provision of assistive technology is one of the most direct, cost effective ways to expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, we feel that the use of TANF funds for the purposes set forth in the bill represent a wise investment. The rate of unemployment among individuals with disabilities is staggering. Use of these funds to assist them in accessing community resources and exploring career opportunities will pay huge dividends as it increases their opportunities to obtain gainful employment. We are pleased to support this bill and hope the legislature will provide the necessary funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

