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LATE

March 13, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services & Public Housing

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 3400 H.D. 2 - RELATING TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

Hearing: Thursday, March 13, 2008; 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this legislation is to require the Department of Human Services to amend its administrative rules to add legal guardians to the definition of a specified relative for purposes of determining eligibility for assistance programs.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill but must respectfully oppose it because it will replace or adversely impact the priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget. Adding this bill's proposed new financial assistance population will require an increase in State funds above the current Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds as these monies have all been committed.

The new mandatory population proposed by this bill would not be eligible for Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds as the Federal

program requires relationship through blood or marriage for eligibility. We are unable to provide a cost estimate on the amount of State funds needed as we have no information on the number of legal guardians wanting this type of assistance who are not currently eligible; therefore, we cannot support this bill as it is tantamount to signing a blank check.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.