



For: Monday, Jan 28
2:45 pm
Senate HSP/TIA

National Association of Social Workers

Hawaii Chapter

January 25, 2008

Late

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Kalani English, Chair
And members of the Senate Human Services and Public Housing Committee
And members of the Senate Transportation and International Affairs Committee

FROM: Debbie Shimizu, LSW
National Association of Social Workers, Hawaii

RE: SB 2564 Relating to Parking for Disabled Persons- **SUPPORT**

Chair Chun Oakland, Chair English and members of the Senate Human Services and Public Housing Committee and the Senate Transportation and International Affairs Committee, I am Debbie Shimizu, Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers, Hawaii (NASW). I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of SB 2564 to allow nursing facilities to receive disabled parking placards or license plates.

Currently, our state statute (HRS 291-51) allows only individuals with a disability to apply for and receive disabled parking placards or license plates. However, when nursing facilities transport their elderly patients to doctor's appointments, they are not able to park in parking stalls designated for the disabled. They must drop off their patients on the sidewalk and then find regular parking. This creates a vulnerable situation for the elderly who are left on the sidewalk waiting for the nursing facility staff person to take them to their doctor's office.

The proposed bill would allow the nursing facility to apply for and receive placards or license plates that would allow them to park their vehicles in the parking stalls designated for persons with disabilities. This would be much safer for the elderly patient and the person transporting them from the nursing facility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB 2564.