

# LATE TESTIMONY

January 29, 2008

To: Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
FROM: Linda Santos, President & CEO, Foster Family Programs of Hawai'i  
RE: Senate Bill 2730

Hearing: January 31, Thursday, 1:30 p.m., Capitol Room 016

Purpose: Senate Bill 2730 – Establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Introduction: I am Linda Santos, President and CEO of Foster Family Programs of Hawaii, which provides quality care to the children of Hawai'i. We provide services to prevent foster care placement; support children and families involved in out of home placement; and assist young adults emancipating from the foster care system.

Agency Position: Foster Family Programs supports the intent of this bill, which gives preference to a child's grandparents, when a child under the jurisdiction of the Department of Human Services, is being placed in out-of-home care due to abuse/neglect.

Grandparents are already a part of the child's family system and can provide support and continuity to a traumatic out-of-home placement. Grandparent placement can ensure that children continue relationships with family members and siblings and provide safety, stability and familial support. Grandparents also support the child's identity, history and family traditions and customs. Most importantly, grandparents are the often the most willing family member to take grandchildren into their home.

There is much evidence based practice and research that supports the long term benefits of placement of children with relatives. This research shows that kinship care is less traumatic and disruptive than non-kin foster care and provides more stability and fewer placement changes for the child. Additionally, kinship care provides more continuity in family relationships, community ties, and can offer growth and development within the child's culture and community. Lastly, research concludes that children placed in out-of-home care over 12 months maintain a higher stability rate with kin than non-kin.

Furthermore, data from the 2000 U.S. Census shows an increasingly apparent role of grandparents as caregivers for their grandchildren in recent years. There are 4.5 million children nationally that lived in their grandparents' households. In Hawaii, 38,051 children, or 12.9 percent of all children, lived grandparent-driven households. It is in this regard that the agency supports preference for out-of-home placement of children needing protection under chapter 587, Hawaii Revised Statutes, being given to grandparents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

January 30, 2008

## LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Carol Morimoto, LSW  
1011 Prospect St. #806  
Honolulu, HI 96822

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

I am a licensed social worker in Hawai'i and have been working in the field for 15 years. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to see first-hand the positive impact that grandparents can have on the well-being of children. It has been proven through research that placing children with relatives can have lasting benefits to the child. Grandparents can provide not only a stable and loving home but they also bring their culture, life experiences, knowledge and family connections that are all integral components to a child's identity.

The passing of this bill will be beneficial to Hawai'i's children who are in need of out-of-home placement. I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 2730.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

January 30, 2008

## LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Cynthia Shimabukuro, LSW, ACSW  
46-441 D Kahuhipa Street  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

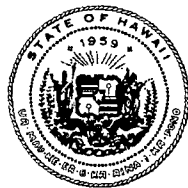
**POSITION:** I strongly support Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

As a community based social worker for the past 20 years in Hawai`i working with children and families I have witnessed the need for foster children to have family connections. I worked for several years with youth who were emancipating from foster care. Invariably, those with family ties seemed to do better as adults than those in which the ties were not maintained. The continuity of care, connectedness to culture and family values, as well as the strength of family ties can be brought to the foster care relationships by grandparents. I believe that by establishing a grandparent preference, we are moving forward in our drive to protect children yet, not do further harm to them by increasing the likelihood that children needing out of home care will be placed with appropriate family members in safe and loving homes and able to maintain their family connections.

I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 2730.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER. ESQ.  
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

**LATE**

January 31, 2008

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 - RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION

Hearing: January 31, 2008, Tuesday, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S. B. 2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) very strongly supports this bill. The proposed bill seeks to acknowledge grandparents, who are willing and able to care for a child, as a preferred placement for a child who is in need of out-of-home care pursuant to chapter 587, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The proposed change is consistent with national trend, Federal law and child welfare best practices to ensure that children in State's custody are provided with the opportunity to stay within their family, whenever safe and appropriate.

Specifying grandparents as a preferred placement does not mean that children who need out-of-home placement will

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY

automatically be placed with grandparents. The safety of the child is paramount and consideration of the child's safety is the most important part of the any placement decision.

Children under the placement responsibility of the Department can only be placed into homes that meet foster home licensing requirements. The Department has been increasing capacity to provide support services and training to foster parents through our contract with Hui Ho'omaluu. Grandparents would have access to all supportive services available for foster parents.

Grandparents are a very special and integral part of the natural support system for a family. Placing a child with grandparents has positive effects and improves stability for the child. It helps to ensure that, when safe, the child can stay within the family system and sustain family and sibling relationships that support the child's safety, permanence and well-being and connection with family culture and heritage. In addition to simply being family, grandparents often bring other strengths and resources, including additional life experience and maturity that benefit the child.

Perhaps the most compelling reason should be that grandparents **are** part of our children's family, our 'ohana - let them be so acknowledged. It **is** the right thing to do!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**TESTIMONY OFFERRING COMMENTS ON  
SB2730 - RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**

January 31, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii hereby provides testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing on SB2730 – Relating to Child Protection.

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii is the largest non-profit provider for direct civil legal services in the State. Further, since 1996, we have assisted over 2,000 children as guardian ad litem on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i and Lāna'i. We also represent parents on Kauai, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i and Lāna'i and have represented kinship caregivers, including grandparents, throughout the state.

This bill seeks to confer a preference to grandparents in the placement of children subject to the child welfare statute.

Over the last few years, there has been a fairly vocal debate between the Department of Human Services and the Hawaii Foster Parent Association around the issues of kinship care. DHS has been strong in their preference for such care with reported situations of the removal of a child from a non-relative foster placement to kinship caregivers one to two years after child welfare intervention. Previous bills from the Hawaii Foster Parent Association reflected concern by attempting to codify a preference for the current foster home for a foster child if kinship care was not found within a certain number of days. This debate has been heated, yet both DHS and the Hawaii Foster Parent Association in no doubt have had the best interest of the foster child in mind.

We do not believe that preferences should be provided in any situation. While we recognize the interest of grandparents in their grandchildren, there are also other family members and friends that may be better suited to be placements for a foster children. It also may be in the best interest of the child to be placed with a non-relative caregiver. The determination of the most appropriate placement for a foster child must remain flexible and for the department of human services or other authorized agency to determine with the input of the guardian ad litem.

It is also key, however that there be early identification of kinship and other interested persons for placement of a foster child. To this end, we recommend deleting of the current proposed language in the bill and replacing it with the following which would require early identification of kinship and other interested persons:

**Add a new definition to §587-2 of interested persons:**

“Interested Persons” means extended family members, friends and other interested persons other than the parents who are important in the child’s life and can provide support to the family. The department and authorized agencies shall identify all interested persons within six months of assuming foster custody of the child.

**Revision of §587-25 requiring the department of human services to provide detailed information as to their attempts to locate and identify extended family and/or friends available to the child’s family:**

§587-25 **Safe family home guidelines.** (a) The following guidelines shall be fully considered when determining whether the child's family is willing and able to provide the child with a safe family home:

- 10) Whether there is a support system of extended family and/or friends available to the child's family and what attempts have been made to locate and identify extended family and/or friends;

We recognize that these proposed amendments are quite extensive and we are open to revised languages based on the interest of the other interested agencies and organizations. However, we do believe that our recommendations can provide the starting point for a candid conversation between all those concerned with the best interest of children in the child welfare system.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Nalani Fujimori  
Deputy Director  
527-8014



**LATE**

**SB 2730 RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**  
Senate Committee on Human Services & Housing

Date: January 31, 2008

Time: 1:30p.m.

Room: 016

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Aloha, Chairperson Oakland and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing. My name is Oswald "Oz" Stender, Trustee At Large to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). OHA **strongly supports SB 2730** to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**Pipili no ka pilali I ke kumu kukui.**

*The Pilali gum sticks to the kukui tree.*

Said of one who remains close to a loved one all the time, as a child may cling to the grandparent he loves (ʻOlelo No`eau 2662).

There are over 14,000 kupuna raising their grandchildren in the state of Hawai`i. In a recent Department of Human Services report, there were almost 60% of Child Protective Service cases of which the children were of Native Hawaiian descent. The reasons of more grandparents raising their children include, "increase drug abuse among parents, teen pregnancy, divorce, the rapid rise of single-parent households, mental and physical illnesses, AIDS, crime, child abuse and neglect and incarceration" (Bryson and Casper 1998). Alarmingly, 90% of the Child Protective Service cases in which a child needs immediate intervention were drug related.

All families regardless of economic and social background face adversity. However, Native Hawaiian families face greater adversity due to additional stressors that may hinder a child's upbringing, emotional well-being and education, particularly in situations involving child protective services. Kupuna and children are the most vulnerable family members due to economic hardship and health risks. However, when a family faces crisis, the meaningful connection of family members can deter against the turbulent winds of challenges and obstacles. This can be true of the deep bond between a grandparent and grandchild.

The support of bill SB 2730 can help to strengthen this connection that will enhance a commitment towards one another, quality time spent together, along with coping with stress and building resiliency.

This connection also serves as a gateway for instilling life values such as cultural knowledge and practices, family mo`olelo (storytelling), cultural identity, and spirituality to be transmitted from one generation to the next.

OHA supports SB 2730 to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present testimony.



**SUPPORT**

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

January 31, 2008 1:30 PM

Senate Conference Room 016

**LATE**

SB 2730 -- Establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. By giving a preference doesn't mean a child will be placed automatically. A grandparent still must be able to meet foster home licensing requirements

Senators Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Les Ihara, Jr, Vice Chair

And Members of the Committee

Na Tutu supports 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 SB 2730

Yours truly

Carole Mulford, Member  
Na Tutu, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren  
47-350 Waihee Road, Kaneohe, HI 96744  
808-239-5521, [mahoe7779@hotmail.com](mailto:mahoe7779@hotmail.com)

LATE

FAVOR

OHA  
BILL

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

Testimony on SB 2730

HB 2707

Senators Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Les Ihara, Jr, Vice Chair  
And Members of the Committee

The Na Tutu supports the intent and purpose of this bill which establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children. This has always been a concern of grandparents in Hawaii.

We appreciate that the Hawaii State Legislature has played and continues to play a major role in grandparenting, by allowing them 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, SB 2730 and SB2731 which permits grandparents to participate at certain protective hearings.

Sincerely

Jacqueline T. Chong, Chair  
Na Tutu, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

TESTIMONY OF Anuhea Diamond, Kokua 'Ohana Foster Family Liaison  
Partners In Development Foundation – Kokua 'Ohana

**LATE**

**IN SUPPORT OF  
SB2730 – RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**

**Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing (HSP)  
Chair Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair**

Conference Room 016, 1:30 PM  
January 31, 2008

Aloha Chair Senator Chun-Oakland and esteemed members of the committee:

I am writing to you in full support of SB2730, which gives preference to a child's grandparent or grandparents in concern with the out-of-home placement of children under the jurisdiction of the department of human services.

As a Native Hawaiian and Kokua 'Ohana Foster Family Liaison, I am most familiar with the cultural as well as systematic challenges evident within Hawai'i's child welfare system as a part of the department of human services. The present bill, SB2730, recognizes both national and state statistics reporting growing numbers in grandparent-headed households, demonstrating the need for our kupuna or grandparents to be highly considered, provided they can provide the safe and nurturing home necessary to care for the child.

At Kokua 'Ohana, we aim to find a balance between our ~~CULTURAL AND STATE VALUE~~ of our foster children. SB2730 is that balance. As a Foster Family Liaison, I acknowledge that the legislature ~~put forth~~ this Act to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children, better suiting the goals of positive development, care within the home, safe custodianship, as well as the ultimate goal of reunification.

I sincerely thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB2730 and politely urge the passage of the Act. For further information, please contact me at [ediamond@pidfoundation.org](mailto:ediamond@pidfoundation.org).

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

CHIYOME L. FUKINO, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH



STATE OF HAWAII  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING  
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DIRECTOR

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**LATE**

**Committee on Human Services and Public Housing**

**SB2730, RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**

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

**Thursday, January 31, 2008**

**1:30 p.m.**

1 **Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging supports the intent of this bill as this  
2 gives consideration to a grandparent for out-of-home placement of children needing child  
3 protective services and defers to the Department of Human Services to determine if it is in the best  
4 interest of the child to be placed with the grandparent(s).

5 **Fiscal Implications:** Unknown

6 **Purpose and Justification:** EOA recognizes that many older adults in Hawaii are caring for their  
7 grandchildren. According to the report which was authored by Dr. Lori Yancura, there are over  
8 14,000 grandparents that are primary caregivers for over 33,000 grandchildren in the state of  
9 Hawaii. These grandparents raising grandchildren (GRG) are playing an important part in  
10 ensuring the well-being of Hawaii's children. Relatives play an essential role in helping to meet  
11 the needs of children who are unable to live with their parents.

12 Establishing a grandparent preference for out-of home placement children needing child  
13 protective services provides the following benefits: 1) Children can live with people they already  
14 know and trust; 2) children can maintain their personal and cultural identity; 3) families learn to

1 rely on their own resources and strengths; and 4) relatives participate as responsible and integral  
2 members of the child and family's support team. Grandparents raising grandchildren will be  
3 connected to a support system that can provide assistance such as financial help, planning, legal  
4 services, and adoption as these are part of the Child Protective Services (CPS) system. EOA  
5 supports the intent of this measure and defers to DHS to determine if it is in the best interest of the  
6 child to be placed with the grandparent(s).

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

Testimony of Teresa Shuptrine, a former foster parent with DHS and Foster Family Liaison for Partners In Development-Kokua `Ohana

IN SUPPORT OF  
SB 2730-RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing (HSP)  
Chair Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Conference Room 016, 1:30 p.m.  
January 31, 2008

Aloha Chair Chun-Oakland and members of the committee:

I support SB 2730 which establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Grandparents have always been an important part of the `ohana. If deemed appropriate children should be placed with their grandparents especially because they can provide a nurturing, safe, and stable home for the children.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify and respectfully urge the passage of SB 2730. For further information, please contact me at tshuptrine @ pidfoundation.org.

# LATE

In Support

## TESIMONY

To the Committee on Human Services and Public Housing, Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, and Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair, for Hearing on Thursday, January 31, 2008, in Conference Room 016, at the State Capitol.

From Patricia Urieff, MSW, ACSW, LSW, with twenty-four years of experience providing social work services to children and families.

### **SB 2730 RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION.**

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

#### **Regarding *What* Should Happen When Children Taken into DHS-CPS Custody.**

When Child Protective Services Investigations show child (ren) at risk of harm to the degree that the child must be removed, assessment for placement of the child must include the biological grandparents. There is a natural connection between biological grandparents and the child (ren).

#### **Regarding *How***

- Heavy responsibility lies with the DHS Worker and Supervisor to assess for safety, bonding, and capacity to provide fulltime care to each child. An important factor to determine is which grandparent does the child (ren) feel bonded to, with whom does the child have a strong relationship?
- The DSH-CPS assessment should be extended whenever the child(ren) had been left with a hanai grandparent for a period of time that resulted in the child (ren) feeling a strong bond to that caregiver.
- `Ohana Conferencing should include both biological and hanai grandparents for discussion about *Best Interest of Child (ren)*.

THE SENATE  
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE 2008  
STATE OF HAWAII

**LATE**

TO: THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING  
FROM: PAUL TOMIYASU, Deaf Individual  
DATE: 1/31/08

REGARDING: **SB BILL 2730**, **ESTABLISHES** CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES PREFERENCE  
OF GRANDPARENTS TO CARE FOR THEIR GRAND CHILD  
**SB BILL 2731**, **PERMITS** CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES PREFERENCE OF  
GRANDPARENTS TO CARE FOR THEIR GRAND CHILD

I am in favor of these measures with reservations that the Grand Parents are check out before they are allowed to care for the children. I know that the recent incident with the child that was dropped on the freeway was horrific, but I do believe that both parent and grandparent in this case may have been responsible too. Once the grandparents pass the Child Protection agency as being fit, then this bill is a good one.

Thank you,



Kalena Saltiban is a 17 yr old youth in foster care,  
through the work of DHS + EPIC, we have located  
& connected Kalena w/ her birth relatives who  
Testimony for: Committee on Human Services and Public Housing she had not  
Date: 1/31/08 seen for 10 years.  
Time: 1:30pm

Place: Capitol Building, Rm. 016

From: Kalena Saltiban, 17 yr old foster care youth

**ATI**

SB 2730 & SB 2731

I never testified before, but I am now because I'm a foster care youth and I feel so strongly about this bill. I think all grandparents should know what is happening with their grandchildren. They should get custody, so that we foster kids don't have to live with people we don't know.

For ten or eleven years I didn't see my grandparents. When I finally did get to see them, they were happy. They had been wondering what had happened to me! I was happy to see them too. For ten years I had thought one of my grandmas was dead. I was shocked and very happy to find out she was alive! We both cried when we finally got to hug each other.

Grandparents should have equal rights to foster parents. All grandparents should be notified and get custody when their grandchildren are taken into custody by CPS. I would have loved to have lived with my grandmother. Then I would have known my family all these years.

Testimony for: Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

Date: 1/31/08 Time: 1:30 pm Place: Capitol Building, Rm 016

From: Susan Ogami-Van Camp, EPIC Ohana Connections Program Manager.

*EPIC Ohana Conferencing*

I support the Senate Bills 2730 and 2731. I work at EPIC as the Ohana Connections Program Manager. As part of our program, we work with youth who are about to exit the foster care system due to reaching the age of majority. These youth do not have adoptive parents or legal guardians. They have longed to know their birth family and have often run from their foster homes to find their birth families. Or, they wait until they reach the age of majority to search for their birth families on their own.

I believe that it is important for grandparents and other relatives to participate in child protective hearings and to be given preference for out of home placements of children needing child protective services. Staying connected to birth family gives a person a profound sense of identity and belonging that those of us who have not experienced being disconnected will never fully understand.

I recently helped a young man who was in foster care from the age of <sup>*the one who was w/ Mrs Crowell*</sup> ~~2~~ <sup>*3*</sup> years until he reached the age of majority. He lived in ~~10~~ foster homes. He told us that he felt "empty and lonely" in foster care. Without knowing his family, he said he had "no self." ~~He~~ felt like a "blank". He said, "Without family, I didn't feel like I existed" and ~~that he~~ had "nothing to look forward to". He wanted "to find out who he was, why he was in foster care." He appreciated the State of Hawaii for providing money for clothes and food and for finding homes for him; yet he felt "weird and empty. He said he didn't feel loved, just protected."

This young man had lost touch with all of his family members. He wanted to know where <sup>*They were*</sup> ~~his family~~ so he could learn why he entered the system. We helped him find his family, and he told us, "Until I found them, I wanted to be alone. It was hard growing up not knowing them." He told us, "It's important to know your family and keep connections so you can turn to them in case you need support. It helps as you grow older so someone can look out for you in case a disaster happens."

When this youth met his family after so many years of not knowing where they were, he felt excited and also anxious. He didn't know how to behave with them, what they expected from him. In his words, he said "Finding them is easy. Bonding is harder. You have to know what to say, when to say it, and know what and when to do it."

From the relatives' side, they were angry when I spoke with them. They felt that they were not allowed to stay involved with their young family member. After connecting with him after so many years, it has not been easy for them too as they expected him to fit right in and know how the family interacts.

By hearing the words of someone who has experienced being deprived of this family connection, I hope that you will better understand the importance that being with birth family means to children and will pass this bill on behalf of all children in the foster care system.

**LATE**

# LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF Anuheia Diamond, Kokua 'Ohana Foster Family Liaison  
Partners In Development Foundation – Kokua 'Ohana

**IN SUPPORT OF  
SB2730 – RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**

**Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing (HSP)  
Chair Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair**

Conference Room 016, 1:30 PM  
January 31, 2008

Aloha Chair Senator Chun-Oakland and esteemed members of the committee:

I am writing to you in full support of SB2730, which gives preference to a child's grandparent or grandparents in concern with the out-of-home placement of children under the jurisdiction of the department of human services.

As a Native Hawaiian and Kokua 'Ohana Foster Family Liaison, I am most familiar with the cultural as well as systematic challenges evident within Hawai'i's child welfare system as a part of the department of human services. The present bill, SB2730, recognizes both national and state statistics reporting growing numbers in grandparent-headed households, demonstrating the need for our kupuna or grandparents to be highly considered, provided they can provide the safe and nurturing home necessary to care for the child.

At Kokua 'Ohana, we aim to find a balance between our culture our states' value for our foster children. SB2730 is that balance. As a Foster Family Liaison, I acknowledge that the legislature establish this Act to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children, better suiting the goals of positive development, care within the home, safe custodianship, as well as the ultimate goal of reunification.

I sincerely thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB2730 and politely urge the passage of the Act. For further information, please contact me at [ediamond@pidfoundation.org](mailto:ediamond@pidfoundation.org).

For: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs; hearing Thurs 31 Jan, 2:45pm, Rm 224, SB 3208 An Appropriation for HFBF

Aloha,

I am President of the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers (HICOF) and I submit this testimony on behalf of our co-op, its members and other organic farmers. We support this bill to provide funds for agricultural research under the management of the HFBF with the following comments:

1. We applaud both the commitment of the Legislature to support a continuing program for ag research and the management oversight provided by the Farm Bureau.

2. We believe the bill could be improved by eliminating some of the ambiguous wording. It is unclear if the intent of the bill is for research or for other activities also mentioned such as "development" and "marketing". Our preference is for "Research" only as HDoA provides funds for marketing and development.

3. We believe more organic research should be made available with these funds especially due to the increased demand and that it would be prudent to earmark at least 20% of these funds for "Organic Research".

4. We are concerned that not all agricultural associations have been considered eligible or are notified of the availability of these funds and suggest wording that HFBF improve the notification and outreach process of the program to all ag associations.

Thank you...Al Santoro, Pres, HICOF, 637-4555

**SUPPORT**

**LATE TESTIMONY**

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

January 31, 2008 1:30 PM

Senate Conference Room 016

SB 2730 -- Establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. By giving a preference doesn't mean a child will be placed automatically. A grandparent still must be able to meet foster home licensing requirements

Senators Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Les Ihara, Jr, Vice Chair

And Members of the Committee

Na Tutu supports 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 SB 2730

Yours truly

Carole Mulford, Member  
Na Tutu, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren  
47-350 Waihee Road, Kaneohe, HI 96744  
808-239-5521, [mahoe7779@hotmail.com](mailto:mahoe7779@hotmail.com)

January 31, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Aimee Kaalakea, LSW  
1717 Mott-Smith Dr. #507  
Honolulu, HI 96822

LATE

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

I am a Licensed Social Worker in Hawaii, and have worked both for the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services, and for private agencies. Over the past 10 years I have worked with foster children, foster families, and biological families in a variety of different settings. In my work with children displaced from their family home, I have seen how critical it is for these children to maintain family ties. When children are connected to their family and culture, they tend to develop a stronger sense of identity and self-worth. Children who were placed with relatives, including grandparents, may experience more stability, tend to do better in school, and experience greater success as adults. Children who enter foster care have experienced trauma, abuse, and neglect. If the system of care can minimize other changes and sources of distress, children will be better able to concentrate on being a child – developing a secure sense of self and their place in the world. Research shows that kinship placement provides more continuity in family relationships and community ties and is less traumatic and disruptive than non kin foster care.

By establishing a grandparent preference, we are moving forward in our drive to protect children and decrease the trauma they experience. The passage of this bill would only serve to give foster children an opportunity to experience increased stability and to develop a better sense of self and their place in this world. In consideration of the welfare of foster children, I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 2730. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

*And establish*

January 29, 2008

**LATL**

To: Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
FROM: Linda Santos, President & CEO, Foster Family Programs of Hawai'i  
RE: Senate Bill 2730

Hearing: January 31, Thursday, 1:30 p.m., Capitol Room 016

Purpose: Senate Bill 2730 – Establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Introduction: I am Linda Santos, President and CEO of Foster Family Programs of Hawaii, which provides quality care to the children of Hawai'i. We provide services to prevent foster care placement; support children and families involved in out of home placement; and assist young adults emancipating from the foster care system.

Agency Position: Foster Family Programs supports the intent of this bill, which gives preference to a child's grandparents, when a child under the jurisdiction of the Department of Human Services, is being placed in out-of-home care due to abuse/neglect.

Grandparents are already a part of the child's family system and can provide support and continuity to a traumatic out-of-home placement. Grandparent placement can ensure that children continue relationships with family members and siblings and provide safety, stability and familial support. Grandparents also support the child's identity, history and family traditions and customs. Most importantly, grandparents are the often the most willing family member to take grandchildren into their home.

There is much evidence based practice and research that supports the long term benefits of placement of children with relatives. This research shows that kinship care is less traumatic and disruptive than non-kin foster care and provides more stability and fewer placement changes for the child. Additionally, kinship care provides more continuity in family relationships, community ties, and can offer growth and development within the child's culture and community. Lastly, research concludes that children placed in out-of-home care over 12 months maintain a higher stability rate with kin than non-kin.

Furthermore, data from the 2000 U.S. Census shows an increasingly apparent role of grandparents as caregivers for their grandchildren in recent years. There are 4.5 million children nationally that lived in their grandparents' households. In Hawaii, 38,051 children, or 12.9 percent of all children, lived grandparent-driven households. It is in this regard that the agency supports preference for out-of-home placement of children needing protection under chapter 587, Hawaii Revised Statutes, being given to grandparents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**SB 2730 RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**  
Senate Committee on Human Services & Housing

Date: January 31, 2008      Time: 1:30p.m.  
Room: 016

---

Aloha, Chairperson Oakland and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing. My name is Oswald "Oz" Stender, Trustee At Large to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). OHA **strongly supports SB 2730** to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**Pipili no ka pilali I ke kumu kukui.**

*The Pilali gum sticks to the kukui tree.*

Said of one who remains close to a loved one all the time, as a child may cling to the grandparent he loves ('Olelo No'eau 2662).

There are over 14,000 kupuna raising their grandchildren in the state of Hawai'i. In a recent Department of Human Services report, there were almost 60% of Child Protective Service cases of which the children were of Native Hawaiian descent. The reasons of more grandparents raising their children include, "increase drug abuse among parents, teen pregnancy, divorce, the rapid rise of single-parent households, mental and physical illnesses, AIDS, crime, child abuse and neglect and incarceration" (Bryson and Casper 1998). Alarmingly, 90% of the Child Protective Service cases in which a child needs immediate intervention were drug related.

All families regardless of economic and social background face adversity. However, Native Hawaiian families face greater adversity due to additional stressors that may hinder a child's upbringing, emotional well-being and education, particularly in situations involving child protective services. Kupuna and children are the most vulnerable family members due to economic hardship and health risks. However, when a family faces crisis, the meaningful connection of family members can deter against the turbulent winds of challenges and obstacles. This can be true of the deep bond between a grandparent and grandchild.

The support of bill SB 2730 can help to strengthen this connection that will enhance a commitment towards one another, quality time spent together, along with coping with stress and building resiliency.



This connection also serves as a gateway for instilling life values such as cultural knowledge and practices, family mo'olelo (storytelling), cultural identity, and spirituality to be transmitted from one generation to the next.

OHA supports SB 2730 to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present testimony.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

LATE TESTIMONY

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

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

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:**

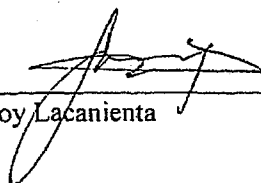
Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH), is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. CCH is also one of the partner agencies representing Hui Ho'omalu, which is a statewide collaboration composed of various community and faith-based agencies working 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 majority of the foster/resource families we serve are grandparents. This is also a reflection of our State, which has a higher percentage of grandparents raising 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 support(s) Senate Bill 2730 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

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Ellen Horiuchi,  
Foster (Grand) Parent

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I/Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

*Ellen Horiuchi*

January 30, 2008

**TO:** Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

**FROM:** Cynthia Aronica, Island Supervisor, CCH Statewide Resource Families  
Program

**SUBJECT:** S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

**Hearing:** Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. Grandparents are a valuable resource that can help preserve the family connections that are critical to maintaining a child's cultural identity and sense of self.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify



January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Mahina Viritua

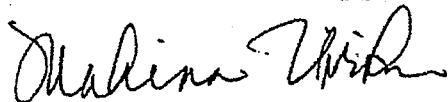
SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Pearl & Rodney Haili,  
Foster (Grand) Parents

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** /Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

*Rodney Haili*  
*Pearl Haili*

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Althea & Wallis Johnston,  
Foster (Grand) Parents

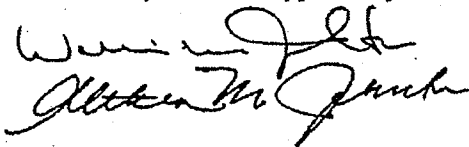
SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I/Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

Handwritten signatures of Althea and Wallis Johnston in black ink.

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Jonathan Mendoza

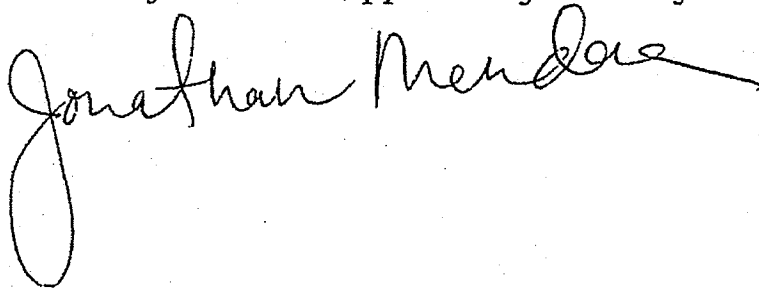
SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Mendoza". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" at the beginning.



January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Denise Orey

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

*Denise Orey, MSW, LSW*

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Shawn A. Humphers

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

*Shawn A. Humphers*

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Debra Prince

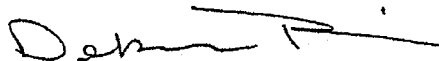
SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I/Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify



January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Sarah Begley  
Assessment Specialist  
Statewide Resource Families Program  
Catholic Charities Hawaii

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I/Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

*Sarah K Begley*

January 29, 2008

**TO:** Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

**FROM:** Daniel J. Snyder,  
Grandparent, Special Licensed Foster Parent

**SUBJECT:** S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

**Hearing:** Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I/Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

  
Daniel J. Snyder

January 29, 2008

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Sandra L. Howeth, Maui Island Supervisor  
Statewide Resource Families/Catholic Charities Hawaii

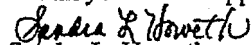
SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** /Our agency strongly support(s) Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

  
Sandra L. Howeth

January 31, 2008

## LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Aimee Kaalakea, LSW  
1717 Mott-Smith Dr. #507  
Honolulu, HI 96822

SUBJECT: S.B. 2730 Relating to Child Protection

Hearing: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of S.B.2730 is to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**POSITION:** I strongly support Senate Bill 2730 to give preference to grandparents for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

I am a Licensed Social Worker in Hawaii, and have worked both for the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services, and for private agencies. Over the past 10 years I have worked with foster children, foster families, and biological families in a variety of different settings. In my work with children displaced from their family home, I have seen how critical it is for these children to maintain family ties. When children are connected to their family and culture, they tend to develop a stronger sense of identity and self-worth. Children who were placed with relatives, including grandparents, may experience more stability, tend to do better in school, and experience greater success as adults. Children who enter foster care have experienced trauma, abuse, and neglect. If the system of care can minimize other changes and sources distress, children will be better able to concentrate on being a child – developing a secure sense of self and their place in the world. Research shows that kinship placement provides more continuity in family relationships and community ties and is less traumatic and disruptive than non kin foster care.

By establishing a grandparent preference, we are moving forward in our drive to protect children and decrease the trauma they experience. The passage of this bill would only serve to give foster children an opportunity to experience increased stability and to develop a better sense of self and their place in this world. In consideration of the welfare of foster children, I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 2730. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Testimony for: Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

Date: 1/31/08

Time: 1:30 pm

Place: Capitol Building, Rm 016

From: Susan Ogami-Van Camp, EPIC Ohana Connections Program Manager.

I support the Senate Bills 2730 and 2731. I work at EPIC as the Ohana Connections Program Manager. As part of our program, we work with youth who are about to exit the foster care system due to reaching the age of majority. These youth do not have adoptive parents or legal guardians. They have longed to know their birth family and have often run from their foster homes to find their birth families. Or, they wait until they reach the age of majority to search for their birth families on their own.

I believe that it is important for grandparents and other relatives to participate in child protective hearings and to be given preference for out of home placements of children needing child protective services. Staying connected to birth family gives a person a profound sense of identify and belonging that those of us who have not experienced being disconnected will never fully understand.

I recently helped a young man who was in foster care from the age of 2 years until he reached the age of majority. He lived in 10 foster homes. He told us that he felt "empty and lonely" in foster care. Without knowing his family, he said he had "no self. He felt like a "blank". He said, "Without family, I didn't feel like I existed." He said he had "nothing to look forward to". He wanted "to find out who he was, why he was in foster care." He appreciated the State for providing money for clothes and food and for finding homes for him. But, he felt "weird, empty. He said he didn't feel loved, just protected."

This young man had lost touch with all of his family members. He wanted to know where his family so he could learn why he entered the system. We helped him find his family, and he told us, "Until I found them, I wanted to be alone. It was hard growing up not knowing them. He told us, "It's important to know your family and keep connections so you can turn to them in case you need support. It helps as you grow older so someone can look out for you in case a disaster happens.

When this youth met his family after so many years of not knowing where they were, he felt excited and also anxious. He didn't know how to behave with them, what they expected from him. In his words, he said "Finding them is easy. Bonding is harder. You have to know what to say, when to say, what to say, know what and when to do it.

From the relatives' side, they were angry when I spoke with them. They felt that they weren't allowed to stay involved with their young family member. After connecting with him after so many years, it has not been easy for them too as they expected him to fit right in and know how the family interacts.



I believe that it is important for grandparents and other relatives to participate in child protective hearings and to be given preference for out of home placements of children needing child protective services.

By hearing the words of someone who has experienced being deprived of this family connection, I hope that you will better understand and pass this bill.

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



NOEMI PENDLETON  
DIRECTOR

CHIYOME L. FUKINO, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Telephone  
(808) 586-0100

Fax  
(808) 586-0185

STATE OF HAWAII  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING  
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT  
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

**Committee on Human Services and Public Housing**

**SB2730, RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**

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

**Thursday, January 31, 2008**

**1:30 p.m.**

1 **Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging supports the intent of this bill as this  
2 gives consideration to a grandparent for out-of-home placement of children needing child  
3 protective services and defers to the Department of Human Services to determine if it is in the best  
4 interest of the child to be placed with the grandparent(s).

5 **Fiscal Implications:** Unknown

6 **Purpose and Justification:** EOA recognizes that many older adults in Hawaii are caring for their  
7 grandchildren. According to the report which was authored by Dr. Lori Yancura, there are over  
8 14,000 grandparents that are primary caregivers for over 33,000 grandchildren in the state of  
9 Hawaii. These grandparents raising grandchildren (GRG) are playing an important part in  
10 ensuring the well-being of Hawaii's children. Relatives play an essential role in helping to meet  
11 the needs of children who are unable to live with their parents.

12 Establishing a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement children needing child  
13 protective services provides the following benefits: 1) Children can live with people they already

1 know and trust; 2) children can maintain their personal and cultural identity; 3) families learn to  
2 rely on their own resources and strengths; and 4) relatives participate as responsible and integral  
3 members of the child and family's support team. Grandparents raising grandchildren will be  
4 connected to a support system that can provide assistance such as financial help, planning, legal  
5 services, and adoption as these are part of the Child Protective Services (CPS) system. EOA  
6 supports the intent of this measure and defers to DHS to determine if it is in the best interest of the  
7 child to be placed with the grandparent(s).

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

# LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony of Teresa Shuptrine, a former foster parent with DHS and Foster Family Liaison for Partners In Development-Kokua `Ohana

IN SUPPORT OF  
SB 2730-RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing (HSP)  
Chair Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Conference Room 016, 1:30 p.m.  
January 31, 2008

Aloha Chair Chun-Oakland and members of the committee:

I support SB 2730 which establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

Grandparents have always been an important part of the `ohana. If deemed appropriate children should be placed with their grandparents especially because they can provide a nurturing, safe, and stable home for the children.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify and respectfully urge the passage of SB 2730. For further information, please contact me at [tshuptrine @ pidfoundation.org](mailto:tshuptrine@pidfoundation.org).

# LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony of Corrina Moefu, a Grandmother and a Foster Family  
Liaison for Partners In Development-Kokua `Ohana

IN SUPPORT OF  
SB 2730-RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing (HSP)  
Chair Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Conference Room 016, 1:30 p.m.  
January 31, 2008

Aloha Chair Chun-Oakland and members of the committee:

On behalf of my mo`opuna (grandchildren) we support SB 2730 which establishes a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

We believe in the purpose of this Act to establish a grandparent or grandparent's preference for out-of-home placement of children needing protection under chapter 587, Hawaii Revised States.

We acknowledge that the legislature recognizes that many grandparents are willing and able to provide a nurturing and safe home for their mo`opuna (grandchildren). From Hawaii island to Niihau, from the housing projects to the sands of Lanikai, no matter which part of the State, all the grandparents I know and have talked story with, wants only the "very best" for their mo`opuna. With this Act, they shall be given **preference** to care for their mo`opuna (grandchildren) providing they have a safe home. If they need any assistance with the general license process, they can call on PIDF-Kokua `Ohana to assist them. "E Laulima Kakou No Na Keiki" (Let's work together for the children). Grandparents are willing and able to do what needs to be done for our mo`opuna, our `ohana, our communities and our state.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify and respectfully urge the passage of SB 2730. For further information, please contact me at [cmoefu@pidfoundation.org](mailto:cmoefu@pidfoundation.org).



**SB 2730 RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION**  
Senate Committee on Human Services & Housing

Date: January 31, 2008 Time: 1:30p.m.  
Room: 016

---

Aloha, Chairperson Oakland and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing. My name is Oswald "Oz" Stender, Trustee At Large to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). OHA **strongly supports SB 2730** to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services.

**Pipili no ka pilali I ke kumu kukui.**

*The Pilali gum sticks to the kukui tree.*

Said of one who remains close to a loved one all the time, as a child may cling to the grandparent he loves ('Olelo No'eau 2662).

There are over 14,000 kupuna raising their grandchildren in the state of Hawai'i. In a recent Department of Human Services report, there were almost 60% of Child Protective Service cases of which the children were of Native Hawaiian descent. The reasons of more grandparents raising their children include, "increase drug abuse among parents, teen pregnancy, divorce, the rapid rise of single-parent households, mental and physical illnesses, AIDS, crime, child abuse and neglect and incarceration" (Bryson and Casper 1998). Alarmingly, 90% of the Child Protective Service cases in which a child needs immediate intervention were drug related.

All families regardless of economic and social background face adversity. However, Native Hawaiian families face greater adversity due to additional stressors that may hinder a child's upbringing, emotional well-being and education, particularly in situations involving child protective services. Kupuna and children are the most vulnerable family members due to economic hardship and health risks. However, when a family faces crisis, the meaningful connection of family members can deter against the turbulent winds of challenges and obstacles. This can be true of the deep bond between a grandparent and grandchild.

The support of bill SB 2730 can help to strengthen this connection that will enhance a commitment towards one another, quality time spent together, along with coping with stress and building resiliency.

This connection also serves as a gateway for instilling life values such as cultural knowledge and practices, family mo'olelo (storytelling), cultural identity, and spirituality to be transmitted from one generation to the next.

OHA supports SB 2730 to establish a grandparent preference for out-of-home placement of children needing child protective services. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present testimony.

**TO: SENATE COMMITTEE on HUMAN SERVICES  
And PUBLIC HOUSING**

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair Committee of  
Human Services and Public Housing  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair, Committee of Human  
Services and Public Housing

**FROM:** Eudice R. Schick  
PABEA (Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs)

**SUBJECT: SB 2730 and SB 2731 Relating to Grandparents  
caring for Grandchildren**

**HEARING:** 1:30 P.M. Thursday, January 31, 2008, Room 016

**POSITION:** Support of Senate Bills 2730 and 2731

I am offering testimony on behalf of PABEA, the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs, which is an appointed board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA but of the Board.

There is no one better to take care of a grandchild than a grandparent when the parent(s) are not able to care of them. As a grandmother of nine grandchildren I would certainly want to be the one that the Child Protective Agency would turn to first, should the need arise. The bond between grandchildren and grandparents is a very special part of a child's life. At a time when a child needs it the most, if a grandparent(s) is able to step in and take over the responsibility of raising a grandchild the child will be in a warm, loving, nurturing, and familiar environment. This will certainly give the child a much better chance to grow into a responsible adult. Grandparents are OHANA. What better place could there be for a child in need?



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BT

**I urge you to support Senate Bills 2730 and 2731 and to recommend passage of both Bills. Thank you for your consideration.**

**Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Human Services and Public Housing (HSP) Committee**

**Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan  
Private Citizen, Grandparent  
Member of the Na Kupuna Council O Waianae**

**January 31, 2008    Time: 1:30pm    Rm: 016**

**FULL SUPPORT OF SB2730:    CHILD PROTECTION ACT; OHANA  
PREFERENCE; GRANDPARENTS  
FULL SUPPORT OF SB2731:    CHILD PROTECTIVE ACT; NOTICE OF  
HEARINGS**

Aloha Chair Chun Oakland and members of the committee:

My name is Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan, a member of this community, a mother and a proud grandmother. I'm here testifying in Full Support of SB:2730 and SB: 2731, both relating to child protection act and providing inclusion of grandparents as preference for placement of our grandchildren as well as providing notices of hearings for court intervention regarding the situation of our Ohana.

**It has been my experience as a community member that over the past decade the department of human services, child welfare services has taken steps in changing current practices of how and when our children are removed from their homes and how and when placement is considered. Over the period an emphasis has been made to locate "Kin", this is define as to the relationship with the child or children being considered in harms way. This bill will actually allow the process of Kinship placement a priority and consider by hierarch the grandparents' right to take responsibility for the child. Without this measure in place, "Kinship" placement is only put a process that can be considered.**

Our community has many needs and challenges. The bill identifies the concerns and solutions in addressing the barriers to assuring we have a healthier community and thereby reducing the need for continued government interventions. As a grandparent I would definitely appreciate the ability for preference in placement of my grandchild and have notices of actions that involve them.

Thank you for allowing me this time to submit my testimony and request your favor to support these measures. For more information I can be contacted at 586-7091.

Mahalo,

**TO: SENATE COMMITTEE on HUMAN SERVICES  
And PUBLIC HOUSING**

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair Committee of  
Human Services and Public Housing

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair, Committee of Human  
Services and Public Housing

**FROM:** Eudice R. Schick  
PABEA (Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs)

**SUBJECT: SB 2730 and SB 2731 Relating to Grandparents  
caring for Grandchildren**

**HEARING:** 1:30 P.M. Thursday, January 31, 2008, Room 016

**POSITION:** Support of Senate Bills 2730 and 2731

I am offering testimony on behalf of PABEA, the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs, which is an appointed board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA but of the Board.

There is no one better to take care of a grandchild than a grandparent when the parent(s) are not able to care of them. As a grandmother of nine grandchildren I would certainly want to be the one that the Child Protective Agency would turn to first, should the need arise. The bond between grandchildren and grandparents is a very special part of a child's life. At a time when a child needs it the most, if a grandparent(s) is able to step in and take over the responsibility of raising a grandchild the child will be in a warm, loving, nurturing, and familiar environment. This will certainly give the child a much better chance to grow into a responsible adult. Grandparents are OHANA. What better place could there be for a child in need?

**Pg.2**

I urge you to support Senate Bills 2730 and 2731 and to recommend passage of both Bills. Thank you for your consideration.

1/31/08

# LATE TESTIMONY

January 31, 2008

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2730 (RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION.

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

To the distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony. I am unfortunately unable to testify in person, so my testimony stands on my written testimony alone. My apologies for the late submission.

Kako`o `Oiwī is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization that supports Native Hawaiian cultural practices. We have projects and beneficiaries throughout the state. We are strong and vocal advocates for Native Hawaiian traditional rights.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to pass SB 2730. Many Hawaiians were raised in whole or part by our grandparents. Our kupuna have always been a foundational component of our family system. I, myself, and my two brothers were all raised by our grandparents. Not that my parents were in anyway unfit, they simply worked to provide for our family, and our grandparents were the most suitable individuals to care for us while our parents were away at work. I believe my brothers and I, like many young Hawaiians, thrived from being cared for by our grandparents.

I understand that many of the children ir fortunate as my brothers and I were. Th wholly different reasons. Therefore, w placement with grandparents. In times will improve the family life for childr heal. This benefits us all.

2730

of this bill would not be as of their grandparents for nsure preferential r grandparents. This bill kely for the entire family to

Therefore, we strongly urge you to support this bill.

Me ka ha`aha`a,  
Trisha Kehaulani Watson

Trisha Kehaulani Watson, JD, PhD (ABD), Executive Director  
Kako`o `Oiwī, A Native Hawaiian Non-Profit Organization  
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For more news about our community, including information on grants, scholarships, events and jobs, join our newsletter at <http://groups.google.com/group/Kakoo-Oiwi>

*"War is a cowardly escape from the problems of peace." Thomas Mann*