

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 2735**, MINOR CONSENT TO ENTER A HOMELESS
SHELTER WHEN MINORS DO NOT HAVE PARENTS.

I am in favor of this measure. If both my parents passed away, I have no choice but to find help and if I knew that my child could get help immediately without all the red tape then I am all for it. This is a better environment than the street.

Thank you,



BY FAX: 586-6659

Committee: Committee on Public Safety and Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, January 31, 2008, 1:30 p.m.
Place: Room 016
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of S.B. 2735, Relating to Minors

Dear Chair Chun Oakland and Members of the Committee on Human Services and Public Housing:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii ("ACLU of Hawaii") writes in support of S.B. 2735, which seeks to allow minors to consent to entering into emergency shelters or other homeless facilities when minors do not have a parent or guardian to consent on their behalf.

This bill recognizes that many youth needing emergency shelter simply cannot obtain parental consent and should not be required to have it. Children are entitled to similar rights and social benefits as other citizens and should not be denied necessary services and forced onto the streets. By removing potential civil or criminal liability for shelters that are otherwise able to satisfy the emergency needs of runaway or abandoned youth, this bill will provide much needed support to shelters, and, most importantly, to the children who will finally be able to access the help that they need.

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 40 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laurie A. Temple
Staff Attorney
ACLU of Hawai'i

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