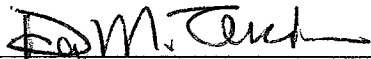




CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: 
Diane M. Terada, Division Administrator

DATE: Thursday, February 21, 2008 (9:30 a.m., Room 211)

RE: **Support of SB 2830, SD1 Relating to Caregiving**

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH), is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 60 years. The Agency has also been providing supportive home and community based services to elders since 1973 and currently serves approximately 5,000 older persons each year. **We strongly support SB 2830, SD1, Relating to Caregiving, particularly as it pertains to additional funding for Kupuna Care services.**

We would also like to point out that the **wait list** referred to in Part III ((Kupuna Care), Section 9, **is only one component of the overall community need for services for elders.**

What the Kupuna Care **wait list** does **not** reflect:

- Elders or their caregivers who call for services but decline to be assessed and placed on wait list. Usually due to immediate need for service.
- Elders or their caregivers who are not referred for services because social service and health agencies may not refer them due to known wait lists.
- Elders or their caregivers who are already receiving Kupuna Care services but may not be receiving a level of service that meets a reasonable level of safety and comfort.

While Kupuna Care (i.e. State funded) services for elders “is to assist, not totally support, Hawaii's older adults to live independently, safely, and healthily for as long as possible,” Catholic Charities Hawaii feels it is important that the Legislature understand that there is need for services for elders beyond the existing wait list.

Catholic Charities Hawaii has provided transportation and housekeeping services, both State-funded Kupuna Care Services, for a number of years. In addition, we have been partners with other aging network providers who also provide essential State-funded Kupuna Care Services such as home-delivered meals, case management, bathing service and more.



State-funded Kupuna Care currently funds a set of basic, essential services that help frail elders remain independent and avoid institutionalization or homelessness. In addition, these services support family caregivers who are providing support to frail elderly relatives who still want to maintain their independence but require supportive services, from family and the community, in order to do so.

Some of the challenges that Catholic Charities Hawaii faces in providing State-funded Kupuna Care Services include:

- **Kupuna Care funds are based on a unit cost that does not cover the total cost of providing service.** As a result, nonprofit providers are struggling to continue to provide Kupuna Care services because they are funding a larger balance of cost in order to provide these services.
- **Community Need for service is growing and the frailer population of elders now served by Kupuna Care service providers means a higher level of service is needed** to help these elders maintain their independence.
- **Continued wait list for Housekeeping Services** which means elders who may be at risk of eviction must wait for three or more months in order to receive services.
- **Flat or reduced Federal funding** for elderly services, which has a domino effect on Kupuna Care clients.

The Consequences of Not Providing More Funding for State Kupuna Care Services

- **Missed opportunities to keep elders out of costly institutions.** At a cost of approximately \$7,000 a month per person for nursing home care, it is much more cost effective, and humane, to keep elders as well as possible in the communities in which they want to remain. **Additional funding of \$750,000 for State Kupuna Care will provide additional services for hundreds of seniors. This same amount could only support about nine elders in nursing homes for a year.** The cost of institutional care eventually becomes a burden on taxpayers and government since State-funded Kupuna Care program targets those in greatest need.
- **Wait lists will grow.** The longer that elders must wait for service, the greater the risk that their will **lose their ability to live independently in a safe, dignified environment.**

Catholic Charities Hawaii asks for your support of SB 2830, SD1, Relating to Caregiving. Thank you.