



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

February 5, 2008

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.B. 3056 - RELATING TO WELL CHILD FOLLOW-UP VISITS

Hearing: Tuesday, February 5, 2007 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: To establish a pilot project to provide a "well child" follow-up visit for families who have been reported and investigated by Child Welfare Services, but not confirmed for abuse or neglect.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department strongly supports this Administration bill because it will help to ensure the continued safety and well-being of children.

The proposed pilot project will allow the Department to contract for or conduct a "well child" visit with families who have been reported to and investigated by Child Welfare Services, but not confirmed for child abuse or neglect, pursuant to section 587-21, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

The proposed pilot project will allow the Department to review closed cases in an effort to determine if providing a face-to-face visit with the child and family within a year after a case is closed

will decrease the possibility of later cases of substantial abuse or neglect involving the same child and family.

Additional funding will be required. Preliminarily, we are planning on contracting the well child visits. Based on approximately 4,000 cases investigated, not confirmed, and closed per year and "well child" visits for all children under 18, this would require approximately 2,500 visits per year.

The Department will conduct or contract for "well child" visits subject to the general fund appropriation authorized for this project.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

OPPOSE SB 3056 / HB 3134

Dear Senators ,

I am a concerned citizen and taxpayer. Please oppose Senate Bill 3056 and HB 3134. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars to conduct follow-up visits of families who have already been investigated and have not abused or neglected their children. Current regulations already require Child Protective Services to follow up if there is any evidence a child may be threatened or harmed in the future. Instead of following up on innocent families, a law should be passed to penalize individuals who make false and malicious reports of child abuse against innocent families.

Since families are already cleared of neglect or abuse, this would be considered "double jeopardy" and would be further subject families to further scrutiny up to a year after the initial result. The actual bill states that it applies to families "who have not been confirmed for child abuse or neglect." This bill presupposes guilt just because there was a report, with no evidence to support the actuality of any evidence to the contrary. Also, I believe our social workers are already tapped just trying to maintain care for the serious and proven issues of cases of neglect and abuse where there is evidence and needed intervention. It is a waste of our precious tax dollars and an injustice to innocent families.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Heide San Nicolas