

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 96809-0339

April 1, 2008

MEMORANDUM

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

Honorable Will Espero, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.C.R. 105 / S. R. 59 – CALLING ON THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO ESTABLISH A PROTOCOL AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FIRST RESPONDERS IN CHILD PROTECTIVE AWARENESS SKILLS.

Hearing: Tuesday, April 1, 2008, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to request the Department of Human Services to convene a task force to establish protocols and training programs for first responders, including the county police departments, the sheriffs and other law enforcement agencies, the fire department, and emergency medical personnel, to use when coming into contact with children who may be victims of or who are at risk for child abuse.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this resolution to enhance the current protocols and training for first responders to reports of children who have been harmed or are at risk of abuse or neglect.

We respectfully request that the proposal to convene a separate task force for the development and implementation of protocols and training for first responders be incorporated into the task force required by the revised H. B 2596, H.D. 2, S.D. 1. The task force will examine situations that have resulted in a child fatality or serious injury to develop a plan to prevent children from being injured or exposed to unreasonable risk of injury or neglect, which will necessitate an assessment of our first responder system and the development of resources, protocols and training to ensure a coordinated and consistent response to reports of abuse or neglect.

We would also suggest that the timeframe for completion of the task force is insufficient for such a significant and potentially far-reaching issue. We would recommend a two-year task force with a progress report due prior to the convening of the 2009 Legislative session.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this concurrent resolution.