



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 24, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Will Espero, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 1776, H.D. 1 - RELATING TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 24, 2009; 2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 1776, H.D. 1 is to require the Director of Public Safety to transmit monthly reports to the Department of Human Services (DHS) listing all newly admitted inmates during the previous month to a correctional facility. This measure further requires DHS to identify inmates who receive public assistance to enforce the prohibition of inmates from receiving public assistance.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this measure as long as its implementation does not impact nor replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget.

DHS defers to the Department of Public Safety regarding the intent and implementation of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

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Date: March 19, 2009

To: Sen. S. Chun-Oakland, Chair Committee on Human Services
Sen. L. Ihara Jr., Vice Chair Committee on Human Services
Sen. W. Espero, Chair Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs
Sen. R. Bunda, Vice Chair Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs

Cc: Rep. Karen Awana, District Representative
Rep. Maile Shimabukuro, District Representative
Sen. Colleen Hanabusa, District Senator

Hearing: March 24, 2009 2:30pm Rm: 016

Measure: HB1776HD1: RELATING TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Aloha and good afternoon Chairs, Vice Chairs and Committee members:

As I've previously submitted testimony on this measure, I would like to ask for your **FULL SUPPORT to HB 1776**. This assuring there is accountability and communication between two vital departments when an individual is incarcerated for any reason. This is a "NO BRAINER" measure and disturbing that we need to introduce legislation to assure our departments and divisions' of government are in complete communication for the betterment of this state.

It is clear that many of these individuals who are admitted to a "prison" institution have dependents that may be receiving some form of public assistance to meet their basic needs. The benefits continue on an automatic system until someone has made a report of a change. This most often isn't done in a timely manner and therefore the benefits get paid out causing an overpayment of some sort and most importantly the benefits are getting to the people it was mostly meant for, i.e. minor children or dependents of the payee.

It is also clear that these types of measure need to be passed because the current system we have does not allow for the transferring of information automatically and yet we are in a system that should be "wrapped around" the needs of the general public.

Again I encourage you all to do the **RIGHT** thing and support the passage of this measure. Should you have additional questions or need more information feel free to call me at 783-9302.

Mahalo,
Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan