

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR



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February 5, 2009

**LATE**  
**Testimony**

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 732 - RELATING TO ASSET BUILDING**

Hearing: Thursday, February 5, 2009; 8:15 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** This bill proposes to establish a three-year pilot project within the Department of Human Services to conduct and expand asset building classes statewide to serve individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with a disability and appropriate funds.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services acknowledges that this measure has merit; however, given the current fiscal difficulties, it would not be prudent to pursue enactment at this time. The Department is also concerned that the bill has no provision to inventory and evaluate the existing services to determine if there is a need to establish new services for this target population.

The Department currently already spends millions in TANF funds and State dollars for support, evaluation and training of this target population. This bill's requirement to assign additional TANF funds to these programs may result in cutting existing programs that the Department funds through TANF to assist needy families.

The Department also respectfully requests that the \$28.2 million in TANF Federal funds restricted in the current State fiscal year 2009 budget be restored for the biennium so that we can continue to fund the programs, services and benefits that have, among other positive outcomes, strengthened families and contributed to the reduction, by half, of child re-abuse and neglect since 2005. This is neither the time to freeze Federal funds nor divert Federal funds from the investment we have made that is working so well.

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