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March 20, 2009

Testimony in support of HCR 135, Supporting a system of juvenile intake and assessment centers

Submitted by *Charlene Y. Iboshi*, First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

To: Chair Mizuno, and members of the House Committee on Human Services:

The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Hawaii submits this testimony in support of HCR 135, and we thank you both for introducing this measure and for having this hearing.

This resolution acknowledges the need, and validates the work done to date by the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney and our partners in County and State government as well as the private sector, to establish a single point of entry for intake, assessment, and case management of delinquent and at-risk youth. Such a center would benefit law enforcement, the courts and probation, youth-serving agencies, the general public, and above all, youth and their families

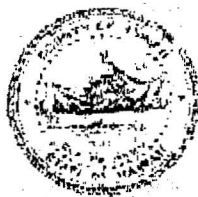
When the State's financial situation improves, we are hopeful that this concept can be fully funded as appropriate, but we certainly understand that such funding is not possible at the present time. Therefore, in the interim, this resolution will be of great benefit to us, as we try to find alternate means by which to move forward on this exciting concept.

We truly appreciate your endorsement of our efforts, and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Hawaii County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

March 20, 2009

Honorable John Mizuno
Chair, Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State House of Representatives

Dear Chair Mizuno and Committee Members:

Testimony in support of HCR 135. Supporting a system of juvenile intake and assessment centers

As Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Hawaii, I am very pleased to submit this testimony in support of HCR 135.

The idea of establishing one or more centers where youth in need of safety, supervision, and services can be helped in an integrated and cost-effective way, has been developing since at least 2003. In 2006, with the encouragement of this Legislature (HCR 250, HR 190), my office took on the task of "putting flesh on the bones," and in collaboration with the Judiciary, State Departments of Human Services, Education, and Health, County Police Department, and the Office of the Public Defender, prepared a plan that we believe is both meritorious and practical. However, unfortunately, we find ourselves, as does the rest of Hawaii, in a financial situation that leaves many worthy projects on the drawing board for lack of funding.

HCR 135, if adopted, would give us the recognition that our concepts are on the right track, and that would mean a great deal to us. It is also possible that with this legislative "seal of approval," we will be able to attract new partners, as well as explore funding opportunities that might not otherwise be available to us. It will not be easy, and we will likely be back in future years asking for monetary support, but in the meantime we will do what we can to make progress, since we believe that this concept deserves to move forward.

Thank you for any support you can give to HCR 135.

Very truly yours,

JAY T. KIMURA
Prosecuting Attorney

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