

SB 1668

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SB1668 - RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES
TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT

March 3, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii hereby provides testimony in support of SB1668 - RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii provides free legal services to the low-income population of the State of Hawaii. We provided civil legal assistance to those in need through nine offices located in Lihue, Waianae, Honolulu, Kaneohe, Kaunakakai, Lanai City, Wailuku, Kona and Hilo. Over the years we have provided leadership around public benefits issues and on an annual basis update our public benefits manual and provide a two-day training on public benefits.

As written, this bill would create a single disability benefits program for the aged, blind, temporarily incapacitated and disabled. This single disability benefits program would ensure that all those on disability assistance would continue to receive the same level of assistance regardless of type of disability. It would combine the two current programs Assistance to the Aged Blind and Permanently and Totally Disabled and General Assistance just as their current budget code is. By doing so there would be no disparities between the assistance provided nor difficulties with the transferring of funds between programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

M. Nalani Fujimori
Interim Executive Director