

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2017

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 04 2010

RE: S.B. No. 2033

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2010
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2033 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR GENERAL ASSISTANCE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to make an appropriation out of the Emergency and Budget Reserve Fund for the General Assistance Program.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the National Association of Social Workers, Child and Family Service, Parents and Children Together, and three individuals.

Written testimony presented to the Committee may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

Your Committee finds that the Department of Human Services reduced the amount of general assistance from \$450 per month to \$300 per month, effective November 1, 2009, due to the State's declining revenues. A general assistance benefit of \$300 per month is woefully insufficient to live on. According to the Department of Human Services, the appropriation proposed by this measure is required to reinstate general assistance benefits to \$450 per month at the current caseload of 5,055 cases per month.

Your Committee also finds that funding from the Emergency Budget and Reserve Fund is appropriate since that fund is intended to be used to provide a temporary, supplemental source of funding

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for the State during times of emergency, economic downturn, and unforeseen reduction in revenues.

Your Committee notes the need for further discussion on whether the General Assistance Program should be restructured. In this regard, Senate Bill No. 1668 S.D. 2, introduced this session, may be used as a model to convert the General Assistance Program from a block grant to an entitlement program.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2033 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services,


SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Chair



