

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1260

Honolulu, Hawaii

Month 27, 2009

RE: S.B. No. 905  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 2

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 905, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to more efficiently and effectively deliver services to immigrants and socio-economically disadvantaged persons by transferring the Office of Community Services (OCS) from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to the Department of Human Services (DHS) while maintaining employment core services and creation programs within DLIR.

DHS, OCS, Child & Family Service, Catholic Charities Hawaii, the Inter-Agency Council for Immigrant and Refugee Services, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region XII, Filipino American Citizens League, Oahu Filipino Community Council, United Filipino Council of Hawaii, Filipinos for Affirmative Action, Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center, and Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc., supported this bill with amendments. The Pacific Gateway Center provided comments.

OCS was initially created to consolidate a number of programs that dealt with economic and personal self-sufficiency under one

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office. At that time, OCS's primary focus was assisting individuals to attain and maintain employment, which fit well under the purview of DLIR. With changing times, however, OCS has also changed its core mission from narrowly-focused employment training programs to programs that are more supportive in nature and more holistic in approach. The very nature of this shift in focus makes the transfer of OCS from DLIR to DHS logical.

Your Committee respectfully acknowledges the concerns brought forth by your Committee on Labor & Public Employment, however, leaving employment core services and employment creation programs administratively under DLIR would fragment services and service delivery, which would negate the positive effects of consolidation and inhibit the holistic approach to self-sufficiency for which OCS is striving. Additionally, a transferring to DHS would provide OCS with additional referral capacity over a broad range of services that these disadvantaged populations typically experience, while allowing OCS to remain an independently-attached agency.

Your Committee feels that additional services specifically focusing on undocumented immigrants and refugees who are victims of domestic violence are well-placed under the purview of OCS given its holistic approach and the populations it serves. For these reasons, should this legislation move forward, your Committee suggests that DHS establish the proposed pilot project within OCS. Your Committee emphasizes that there is no request for an additional appropriation to fund this voluntary pilot project.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this bill by:

- (1) Removing language that stipulates that employment core services and employment creation programs for low-income individuals, immigrants, and refugees remain a function of DLIR; and
- (2) Including provisions that permit DHS to establish a pilot project to assist undocumented immigrants and refugees who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to:
  - (A) Obtain restraining orders and file petition applications under the federal Violence Against Women Act;



- (B) Receive employment training and placement;
- (C) Receive legal advice for family law issues; and
- (D) Access case management needs including language learning, transportation, and documentation.

Other technical, nonsubstantive amendments were made for clarity, consistency, and style.

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. 905, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 905, S.D. 2, H.D. 2.

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

  
JOHN M. MIZUNO, Chair



