

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2839

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 16 2012

RE: H.B. No. 2547  
H.D. 1

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2012  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred H.B. No. 2547, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to make an emergency appropriation for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to address the budget shortfall in the general assistance program (HMS 204) of the Department of Human Services.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, and the Hawaii Disability Rights Center.

Your Committee finds that the general assistance program (HMS 204) is a block grant program that provides a monthly benefit to disabled individuals. The Department of Human Services must adjust general assistance payments to each recipient based on the total number of recipients, which means that as caseloads and general assistance recipients increase, payments per recipient decrease. For the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the payment level began at \$353 per month, but due to caseload increases was reduced to \$319 per month in October 2011.

Your Committee notes that according to the testimony of the Department of Human Services, based on the latest expenditure figures, the Department will have to further reduce the general

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assistance payment to \$275 per month beginning in April 2012 to remain within the authorized appropriation. Since these reductions and fluctuations provide little stability to households who already live below poverty levels, the Department has requested an emergency appropriation for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to maintain the \$319 monthly benefit.

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 H.B. No. 2547, H.D. 1, 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



The Senate  
Twenty-Sixth Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Human Services**  
**HMS**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>HB 2547, HDI</b>	Committee Referral: <b>HMS, WAM</b>	Date: <b>3-13-12</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne (C)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les (VC)	✓			
GREEN, M.D., Josh				✓
SLOM, Sam	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes