



Replacement
LATE TESTIMONY

DATE: March 1, 2011

TO: Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair

FROM: Jackie Berry, Executive Director

HEARING: Tuesday, March 1, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.

RE: **HB129, HD1 Relating to Perinatal Care**

Testimony in Strong Support

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chairperson Lee and Members of the Committee on Finance

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies (HMHB) is a statewide coalition of public and private agencies, and individuals committed to the improvement of maternal and infant health status in Hawaii through education, coordination and advocacy. **HMHB is testifying today in strong support of HB 129, HD1 Relating to Perinatal Care.**

The Path Clinic is the only comprehensive prenatal addiction clinic in Hawaii. The Path Clinic was initially funded as a pilot program by an act of the Hawaii Legislature with the goal of improving birth outcomes of pregnant women who used methamphetamines (estimated to be 4-8% of pregnant women in Hawaii).

Since its inception, the Path Clinic has far exceeded expectations. The population of women serve are known to have a 4-5 times greater risk for costly preterm and low birth weight deliveries. However, the preterm and low birth weight rates for the 180 women who have received Path services are comparable to the average rates for all women statewide. This is remarkable given the risk level of the population of women served: 98% lived below the poverty level; 57% had lost custody of a previous child; 34% had histories of incarceration; and 31% were homeless at some point during their pregnancy.

While not a substance abuse treatment program, over 90% of the women significantly reduced substance use with 81% becoming abstinent. 95% of women maintained custody of their infants at ten weeks and the repeat pregnancy rate was very low.

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The Path Clinic's harm reduction approach has achieved exceptional success in not only helping women and their babies, but also in saving the cost of expensive medical treatment both for the women and their babies. Preventing one low weight birth will save over \$200,000 in medical care – the cost of running the Path Clinic for an entire year.

In closing, we respectfully recommend that the committee amend the measure by:

- (1) Substituting the name "Perinatal Addiction Treatment of Hawaii" with "The Path Clinic" throughout the measure to accurately reflect the Clinic's name; and
- (2) Add the following language to Section 2 (see **bold**):

Section 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$200,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2011-2012 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013, **as a grant pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for The Path Clinic** for case management and other social services that it provides.

On behalf of the mothers and babies of Hawaii, we strongly urge you to support HB129, HD1. Mahalo for your consideration of this bill and our testimony.

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