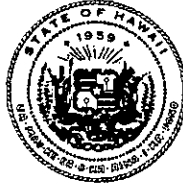


NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN  
INTERIM DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

March 2, 2011

TO: The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Interim Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 718, H.D. 1 - RELATING TO FOSTER YOUTH**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 2, 2011; 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of H.B. 718, H.D. 1 is to allow the Department of Human Services to develop and administer a program assisting former foster youth with housing options.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services supports the overall concept of this bill as it includes initiatives supportive of our goals and objectives but we are concerned about the cost implications generated by this proposal.

Given the State's current fiscal difficulties it would not be prudent for the Department to pursue establishing a housing program for former foster youth at this time. Based on preliminary projections, a program to provide housing assistance to approximately 50% of former foster youth currently between the ages of eighteen and twenty would cost in excess of \$5,000,000 per year.

The existing purchase of services (POS) contracts for independent living services and transition planning already include the requirement to provide youth with information and linkage to programs to obtain housing as well as a provision for transitional housing/rental support. The Department will work with providers to clarify the requirements regarding the provisions to counsel youth regarding housing options and to assist with obtaining documentation and completing forms.

Additional support for youth is provided by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 [Public Law 110-351] requirement to develop a transition plan with youth in care during the 90-day period prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday that will include specific options on housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**HB 718 HD1**  
**RELATING TO FOSTER YOUTH**  
House Committee on Finance

March 2, 2011

2:00 p.m.

Room 308

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB718 HD1, which would allow the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop and administer a program assisting former foster youth with housing options. Our interest in this measure is based on the concern that approximately 52 percent of the children placed in foster care in Hawai'i are of Native Hawaiian ancestry, and when they exit the foster care system their housing options are significantly limited.

Although HB718 HD1 no longer requires DHS to develop a program to assist former foster youth with housing options, allowing DHS to develop such a program still represents a step in the right direction. We encourage further dialogue between all stakeholders involved to address the critical need to provide former foster youth with housing options. Providing former foster youth with the transitional support and foundation to locate affordable housing options would empower them to become productive and self-sufficient adults.

Therefore, OHA urges the committee to PASS HB718 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 702 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Alan Shinn, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Adolescent Services Program, Kaiser  
Permanente Medical Care System

Aloha House

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii

Assistive Technology Resource Ctrs. of HI

Bay Clinic, Inc.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Blueprint for Change

Bobby Benson Center

Catholic Charities Hawaii

Central Oahu Youth Services Assn.

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

College Connections

Community Assistance Center

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Support Services of West Hawaii

Friends of the Missing Child Center of HI

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Behavioral Health

Hawaii Student Television

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition

Hina Mauka Teen Care

Hui Malama Learning Center

Kahi Mohala Behavioral Health

Kama'aina Kids, Inc.

KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth)  
Project

Kids Behavioral Health

Kids Hurt Too

Kokua Kalihl Valley

Kula No Na Poe Hawaii

Lanai Community Health Center

Life Foundation

Marimed Foundation

The Maui Farm, Inc.

Maui Youth and Family Services

Palama Settlement

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

Planned Parenthood of Hawaii

Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center  
Kona Unit

REAL

Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.

Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

The Children's Alliance of Hawaii

Waikiki Health Center

Women Helping Women

YouthVision

YWCA of Kauai

March 1, 2011

To: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Finance

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 718 HD 1 RELATING TO FOSTER YOUTH

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of more than 50 youth serving organizations, supports HB 718 HD 1 Relating to Foster Youth.

Thirty percent (30%) of youth who age out of foster care at age 18 become homeless before 21.

Some of these youth have not graduated from high school by the time they leave care. They lack the skills to obtain employment that pays enough to cover the high cost of Hawaii's housing. They need assistance in locating affordable housing, negotiating with landlords, and managing their budgets. Many landlords are reluctant to rent to young people without a credit history.

A program that assists youth ages 18-21 to find and retain housing would reduce homelessness in this vulnerable population and help youth to learn and practice key skills of adult independent living.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark  
Executive Director

# hawaii family forum

Email to: [FINTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:FINTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Hearing on: March 2, 2011 @2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room # 308

**DATE:** February 28, 2011

**TO:** **House Committee on Finance**  
Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair  
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Allen Cardines, Jr., Executive Director

**RE:** Support for HB 718 HD1 | Relating to Foster Youth

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure. I am Allen Cardines, representing the Hawaii Family Forum. Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii, representing a network of various Christian Churches and denominations. We support the intent of this bill but leave the technicalities and process of implementation to the experts.

Hawaii Family Forum has worked very closely with HOPE In the Name of Christ (INC) foster care and adoption agency which has a contract with the Department of Human Services to recruit, train, and support adoptive parents for Hawaii's 'difficult to place' foster children.

This bill addresses the children that have been abused, neglected and/or abandoned by their birth parents, the very people who are supposed to protect them. Their birth parents parental rights had to be terminated so they would have a chance at a safe and happy life and some of them have been in more foster homes than anyone cares to count for more years than any child should ever endure. Currently they live in temporary foster homes, waking up every day knowing that one day they will age out of the system and be left without benefits, including healthcare.

These children are usually older and have special needs and challenging behaviors because of the trauma they have been through in their short lives. Because of this, we agree that increasing support for those who are older than 21 is vital. Given the start these kids have had in life, many need a little extra time to get their lives together.

Please support these changes and eliminate this inequity by extending these benefits to foster kids.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

February 28, 2011

To: Chair Marcus O. Oshiro  
Vice Chair Marilyn B. Lee  
Members of Finance Committee  
From: Joni Sawada  
Subject: House Bill 718

Hello, my name is Joni Sawada. I am currently a junior at Kalaheo High School and am also a member of the Associated Students of Kalaheo. I am writing to you today concerning House Bill 718 relating to foster youth. I am in full support of this bill not only because it will help Hawaii to improve as a state, but also because it is the right thing to do.

The assistance that will be provided to these foster youth is a great idea. Having been foster children, they will not have had the experience that a typical 18 year old would, in buying homes and dealing with money. The help offered to them is not forced upon them. They can decide for themselves if they want the assistance or not. This gives them the freedom to chose for themselves so it is not like the state is holding these youth back or preventing them from becoming their full potential. Instead it is giving them the opportunities that may have been taken away from them as a result of being a foster child.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that you will support HB 718.