

HB718,HD1

Measure Title: RELATING TO FOSTER YOUTH.

Report Title: Former Foster Youth; Housing

Description: Allows the Department of Human Services to develop and administer a program assisting former foster youth with housing options. Effective July 1, 2050. (HB718 HD1) (\$)

Companion:

Package: Keiki

Current Referral: HMS, WAM

Introducer(s): JORDAN, MIZUNO

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN
DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 17 2011

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

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

Hearing: Thursday, March 17, 2011; 1:45 p.m.
Conference Room 016, 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 Foster Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act [Public Law 110-351] requirement to develop a transition plan with youth in care during the 90-day period prior to their 18th birthday that will include specific options on housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

hawaii family forum

Email to: HMSTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Hearing on: March 17, 2011 @1:45 p.m.
Conference Room # 016

DATE: March 14, 2011

TO: **Senate Committee on Human Services**
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr. Vice Chair

FROM: Allen Cardines, Jr., Executive Director

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support for 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 and housing.

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 housing benefits to foster kids.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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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 Kalihi 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 14, 2011

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

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

Raelene A. Tenno

March 15, 2011

Testimony on the following measure: **HB718 HD1**, Relating to Foster Youth

Date: March 17, 2011

Location: State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Dear Chair Chun Oakland and Vice Chair Ihara and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

While I strongly support this bill, I encourage the committee to insert into (5) (b):

“In developing and implementing the housing assistance program the department **assigned case worker** shall consult and coordinate with other relevant state agencies, including the Hawaii public housing authority and the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation.”

All state agencies including the Hawaii public housing authority and the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation and or Section 8 agencies shall promptly respond to the departments request for assistance relevant to assisting the former foster youth placement into housing.

By inserting “assigned case worker” this is so that the department has an identified body to initiate and coordinate the actions needed to assist the former foster youths. It defines it in statute rather than leaving it up to the department to point fingers as to the responsible departmental person or entity to coordinate the relevant actions related to this bill.

My reasons for requesting that the committee consider the last bolded and underlined sentence above is due to my past experience. In January of 2010, I had a townhouse located next to Leeward Community College that became vacant. It is a perfect location for anyone that attends Leeward Community College plus the unit has 2 bedroom and 2 full baths thus allowing privacy between the “roommates”. I called Section 8 and I was referred to Hina Mauka. In the meantime, I had anticipated that Section 8 would be able to get the ball rolling on the inspections that need to be done to qualify the unit as acceptable under Section 8 standards. I had no doubt that it would pass since we had renovated the unit completely in 2009. Nothing happened for 2 months.

The unit is now occupied but not by the intended Foster Youth.

Additionally, I strongly urge the committee to change the effective date from July 1, 2050 to immediate as the need is now.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to testify at this hearing.

*P.O. Box 283195, Hawaii 96828
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HB 718 HD1
RELATING TO FOSTER YOUTH
Senate Committee on Human Services

March 17, 2011

1:45 p.m.

Room 016

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB718 HD1, which would allow the Department of Human Services 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 Hawaii are of Native Hawaiian ancestry, and when they exit the foster care system their housing options are significantly limited. Although HB718 HD1 does not require the Department of Human Services to administer a program to assist former foster youth with housing options, it is a step in the right direction and encourages further discussion about this important matter. 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.

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