



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113  
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February 10, 2011

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Jo Jordan, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Human Services  
Twenty-Sixth Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representatives Mizuno and Jordan and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: HB 728 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR ASSET BUILDING**

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS THE INTENT OF HB 728**. The purpose of the bill is to enhance asset building for individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities, and for Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish a three-year pilot project, beginning with Fiscal Year 2011-2012, to conduct and expand asset-building classes statewide to serve individuals with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities in developing skills.

The Council sees this bill as a bridge for using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds and State funds to enhance capacity of individuals with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities in developing skills for navigating the service delivery system, career development, increasing computer literacy, etc.

The Council appreciates the Legislature's initiative in enhancing asset building for individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities. However, we recognize the State's pending fiscal deficit and in light of its current financial climate and TANF situation, the Council suggests that the pilot project be deferred until the State's economy improves.

We defer to DHS for the appropriate use of TANF funds and the cost of establishing and implementing the three-year pilot project.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony supporting the intent of HB 728.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Liz Ann Salvador in black ink.

Liz Ann Salvador  
Chair

Handwritten signature of Waynette K. Y. Cabral in black ink.

Waynette K. Y. Cabral, MSW  
Executive Administrator

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair of the House Human Services Committee.  
The Honorable Jo Jordan, Vice Chair of the House Human Services Committee.

From: Laura Robertson, President and CEO  
Wanda Villareal, Director of Developmental Disabilities Services  
Edwina Minglana, Director of Employment Services  
Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc.

Date: February 8, 2011

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 728-- Relating to Asset Building

**Goodwill submits this testimony in strong support of House Bill 728.**

Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc. (Goodwill) is among the largest human service non-profit organizations in Hawaii. Goodwill has fifty (50) years of experience assisting people who have employment barriers find jobs and gain self-sufficiency. Our mission is to help people find and succeed in employment. Last year, Goodwill served over 13,000 people and placed 1,667 into jobs in our community; also serving approximately 3,800 individuals with disabilities.

Goodwill submits this testimony in support of H.B. 728. We believe strongly that a pilot project to expand asset building classes statewide to serve individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with a disability will significantly benefit these individuals and enable them to grow and prosper.

For the last five years, Goodwill has provided free tax preparation services to low-income individuals and families through our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Hawaii has one of the lowest averages of annual wages and highest living costs in the nation. Many economically vulnerable residents (elderly, low & moderate income, sheltered and disabled) live in asset poverty, receive food stamps, and have subprime credit scores. Programs like VITA which help individuals and families gain and sustain assets and increase financial literacy skills are a critical need statewide so that people can become more financially stable and maintain adequate housing for their families.

The economically vulnerable residents of our state must be provided sufficient education and tools needed to learn how to make sound financial decisions, participate in the mainstream financial system, and move up the economic ladder. An increased focus on helping individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with a disability save and build assets will help them achieve financial security and avoid homelessness.

We humbly ask for your support of H.B. 728.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.