



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 21, 2013

MEMORANDUM:

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 1430, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Thursday, February 21, 2013, 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services to establish and operate a Comprehensive Service Center for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind Individuals.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) formerly known as the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division of the Department of Human Services supports the intent of H.B. 1430, H.D. 1. We ask that if this appropriation is approved that it does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Biennium Budget.

The DVR has worked closely with the deaf community throughout the years to establish a Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-

Blind and is committed to assist in the funding of vocational rehabilitation activities within the center.

The DVR does not have sufficient funds to support non-vocational rehabilitation related activities under the proposed center. The DVR is unable to support any further funding beyond the Governor's proposed budget if such additional funding will affect current priorities within the Governor's proposed budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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February 21, 2013

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

House Bill 1430, HD1 – Relating to Human Services

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the intent of House Bill 1430, HD1 – Relating to Human Services. This bill appropriates \$449,700 for fiscal year 2013-2014 and \$353,700 for fiscal year 2014-2015 to the Department of Human Services to establish and operate a comprehensive service center for people who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind.

The Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is in the process of establishing a comprehensive service center for clients of DVR. The center will offer a variety of classes to promote individual growth, social awareness and productivity. Members of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind community who are not clients of DVR would not be able to participate in center services. An appropriation from the general fund will allow the center to offer services to non-DVR clients.

DCAB defers to the Department of Human Services and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board regarding the amount of a biennium appropriation necessary for a comprehensive service center for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

**REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT NISHIMOTO, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1430, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2013 AT 11:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, members of House Committee on FINANCE and friends,

My name is Francine Mae Aona Kenyon and am representing the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board (DHHAB) as the chair of Comprehensive Deaf Center (CDC)/Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) Ad Hoc Committee and Legislative Committee.

DHHAB was established in 1980 by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and is comprised of nine (9) deaf and hard of hearing members including four (4) from the neighboring islands who are either current/former VR consumers or doing the business for the Deaf community; parent of deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind child; two (2) special education teachers; and non-voting Vocational Rehabilitation staff and administrator. The purpose of the DHHAB is to oversee the effectiveness and efficiency of the services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

On behalf of DHHAB, we strongly testify in support of House Bill No. 1430, House Draft 1, Relating to Human Services, which appropriates monies to establish and operate a comprehensive service center because of our top priorities as follows: 1) communication access; 2) information and referral service/outreach and 3) development of a centralized, coordinated and comprehensive center for improved access to services.

Based on four (4) studies, our mission is to provide a centralized, coordinated, and comprehensive service center to enable people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind and their families to expand access to knowledge and communication through support, empowerment, education and enhancement of self-sufficiency.

Therefore, we seek for the additional funds from the state that would provide services at the CSC for non-DVR consumers or for non-employment related services for DVR consumers. The target population for the CSC are about 10% of 260,000 people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind, according to the 2012 Disability Statistics Compendium in the State of Hawaii.

In addition to supporting the CSC, please appropriate monies for an Interpreter Referral Services and Independent Living Skills for Deaf which are losing VR funding as of July 1, 2013.

Again, we firmly urge you to passing the House Bill No. 148, House Draft 1 to have the Comprehensive Service Center be established and operated with additional funding for two service providers to serve the entire Deaf community in the state.

Thank you very much for your support of this important bill on behalf of the Deaf community.

Sincerely,

Francine Mae Aona Kenyon

Francine Mae Aona Kenyon
Chair of CDC/CSC & Legislative Committee
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Advisory Board

Lisa Ann Tom

Lisa Ann Tom
Chair
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Advisory Board



Community Alliance *for* Mental Health

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To: The State of Hawai'i House of Representatives Committee on Finance
Re: HB 1430 HD1

To: The Honorable Representative Luke and the members of the committee.

Aloha,

The Community Alliance for Mental Health along with United Self Help strongly supports HB 1430 HD 1. We feel that this bill will allow for the necessary strengthening of services for our State's most vulnerable population.

Mahalo,
Scott Wall
Vice-President

TESTIMONY OF
RODERICK J. MACDONALD

SUBMITTED TO
THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

RELATING TO HB 1430, HD1
"A GRANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION
OF A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE CENTER"

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2013
11:00 AM, CONFERENCE ROOM 308
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL

My name is Rod Macdonald. I am originally from New England but have lived in Hawaii for over fifteen years now. I am blind and deaf, and have been for almost all of my life.

However, despite being deaf-blind I have a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy, a Master's degree in Educational Administration and a year toward a Doctorate in Higher Education Administration. I worked for the Federal Government for 27 years, retiring as a GS-13 Management Analyst in the Policy office. I have held several positions here in Hawaii, the last as an Adjunct Professor teaching a graduate course at the University of Hawaii.

These achievements did not come easily. With a significant disability one cannot "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" because if you try, you'll pull the straps off your boots or pull yourself down to ground level. You need opportunities - opportunities for education, opportunities for training, opportunities for employment - and opportunities to believe in yourself.

I have been very fortunate. I have received services from the area of blindness, the area of deafness, the area of deaf-blindness, and even from a program designed for the developmentally disabled. All helped, but the more specific the service, the more help it provided. I know: I have been there, done that.

Which brings us to our topic for today: Establishment and operation of a Comprehensive Service Center for Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Deaf-Blind people, something that has been on the agenda in Hawaii for at least fifteen years but is only now nearing fruition. This Center is needed to prepare us for college, for employment, and to enable us to be independent, self-sufficient and self-reliant members of the community.

While the Comprehensive Service Center is intended to provide basic training, I would also ask that you consider adding funding for Interpreter Referral and Independent Living services that were not a part of the CSC legislation when it was first introduced to the Legislature. These services are needed to assist the exact same population, with the exact same objectives of basic training, community integration and personal empowerment. These services need to be added here because the funding to provide them was lost elsewhere.

I have been very fortunate that I have benefitted from a good education, earned well over a million dollars during my working life, and had many satisfying and rewarding life experiences. Yet I could not provide this testimony were it not for the basic skills I learned along the way - communication skills, braille, using a computer and so on. I could not attend this Hearing were it not for the assistance of an interpreter.

In closing I would like to ask that you support, very strongly, the legislation before you, HB 1430, HD1. I ask that you give the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Deaf-Blind people of Hawaii some of the opportunities that were given to me.

thank you.

Hello, my name is Eileen Chiwa. I am deaf and a retired federal worker. I have worked for the federal government for 29 1/2 years, and during my employment with the federal government, I went to various workshops and training and at these required activities, I have always depended on interpreters. I am concerned when I heard that DVR funds for interpreter referral services and independent living services may not be available after June 30th of this year. I feel that these funds are extremely important for these services as well as the Comprehensive Services Center for the deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind. I have often depended on professional interpreter services to assist with communication when I go to doctors' appointments. I would like to share my experience of having surgeries. At first, I thought that I did not need an interpreter and I would try to read my doctor's lips. However, upon learning that the doctor would be wearing a mask on surgery day and I would not be able to read his lips, I panicked and decided to call his office a few days before surgery to request for an interpreter. I was so happy the doctor's office was able to contact the interpreter referral services and hired an interpreter. The surgery went well because of this interpreter. And last year, I had the other surgery, and the interpreter was with me during the entire time I was in the hospital: Interpreting when I have questions and the nurse(s) answered; interpreting the procedure of an anesthesiologist before surgery and when I woke up in the recovery room and was ready to leave the hospital. Thank goodness for this invaluable service!

I ask you all to please support HB 1430 as this will provide for the very important bridge to communication for deaf and hearing people. Without the funds for interpreter referral services as well as for the independent living skills services for the deaf, this would cause disaster for the deaf people and they would feel helpless.

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I urge you to pass HB 1430.

Sincerely,
Eileen Chiwa