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STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
**OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 420  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.hawaii.gov/labor](http://www.hawaii.gov/labor)  
Phone: (808) 586-8675 / Fax: (808) 586-8685  
Email: [dliir.ocs@hawaii.gov](mailto:dliir.ocs@hawaii.gov)

February 24, 2014

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair,  
The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair,  
The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2014  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 308, State Capitol

From: Mila Kaahanui, Executive Director

**Re: H.B. 1737 , HD1: Appropriation for the Office of Community Services.**

POSITION: Strongly Support.

## **I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

H.B. 1737, HD1, proposes to provide an appropriation of \$700,000 to the Office of Community Services (OCS) to support the expansion of the newly-created State-funded Immigrant Resource Centers, contracted by the Office with nonprofit service providers, for language-accessible direct information and referral services to new immigrants. In addition, the measure requires OCS to consider and report to the Legislature on the following: a) the current process for solicitation and administration of the grants-in-aid programs; the feasibility of handling the processing of all of the grants-in-aid requests; and recommendations to streamline the grants-in-aid process.

## **II. COMMENTS ON HOUSE BILL 1737, HD1**

The Office of Community Services (OCS), established in 1985 by Act 305 and codified as Chapter 371K, Hawaii Revised Statutes, serves as the lead agency in State government to facilitate and enhance the development, delivery, and coordination of effective programs for the

economically disadvantaged populations, including immigrants and refugees. OCS administers and delivers Federal and State funded programs through purchase of service contracts with non-profits.

OCS has long recognized the long view that investing in immigrants has a positive effect on Hawaii's economy and society. The ability of immigrants to achieve successful social integration and economic self-sufficiency is enhanced by providing them with language-accessible entry points or "portals" to a wide range of information on acculturation training, job training, job placement, health and social services to strengthen their families. The Immigrant Resource Centers, established in strategically located areas, provide wrap-around services, including outreach, intake, information and referral to a comprehensive array of services. The Centers are currently located in the following geographic areas: Hilo, Hawaii; Kapaa, Kauai; Kalihi and Ewa Beach, Oahu. The proposed appropriation would provide additional funds for the expansion of services to other underserved areas such as: West Hawaii, West Kauai, and Waipahu.

OCS supports the measure, as amended, provided it does not supplant the Administration's budget package for FY 2015. Accordingly, OCS accepts with full intention to comply with the requirement to consider and report on the current administration of the Grants-in-Aid (GIA) program, the feasibility of handling and processing of all GIAs, and recommendations to streamline the GIA process.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Representative Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair

FROM: Diane M. Terada, Division Administrator

DATE: Tuesday, February 25, 2014 (2:00 p.m., Room 308)

RE: **IN SUPPORT of HB 1737, HD1, Making an Appropriation for the Office of Community Services**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) strongly supports HB 1737, HD1. **We ask that additional funding of \$700,000 be provided through this measure and designated to the current Immigrant Resource Center providers:**

- **\$200,000 Hawaii (Catholic Charities Hawaii)**
- **\$100,000 Kauai (Child & Family Service)**
- **\$400,000 Oahu (\$200,000 each for Susannah Wesley Community Center and Parents and Children Together)**

CCH is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing services to immigrants and refugees for more than 30 years and has witnessed the struggles that our newly arrived neighbors go through to understand and navigate our system of government so that they can access the resources that they need to successfully transition to life in Hawai'i.

In August, 2013, CCH opened an Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) in Hilo, Hawaii to serve as the "first stop" for immigrants, migrants, and low-income persons to improve access to needed services, resources, and benefits with the goal to increase economic self-sufficiency and eliminate barriers to social adjustment. The program has primarily assisted migrants from the Compact of Free Association (Chuuk, Palau, Marshall Islands). In addition immigrants from the Philippines, Mexico, Thailand, Costa Rica, Portugal, Iran and Russia have also been served.

Currently, the IRC on the island of Hawaii is able to provide only limited support for immigrants and migrants in Kona/West Hawaii. Additional funds through this bill would enable CCH to more comprehensively address the needs of immigrants and migrants throughout the island of Hawaii.

Here's an example of how the Hawaii IRC is helping immigrant/migrant families:

*A Micronesian family of four (father, mother, adult daughter, and one young grandchild) came to the IRC to get assistance initially for an immigration issue. An IRC staff who is a Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) Partially Accredited Representative, was able to assist them to obtain their I-94s and Social Security Cards. Their English is very limited but the*



*IRC's Chuukese-speaking staff was able to speak to them in their native language to identify their needs during the Intake and Assessment process. Based on identified needs, here is how the IRC was able to assist this immigrant family:*

- *The father who was unemployed, was referred to Goodwill for Employment Core Services. The IRC staff have kept in touch with the counselor there to ensure that he receives help to secure employment. is continuing.*
- *The IRC helped the father apply for medical insurance.*
- *The mother who is disabled from a stroke is unable to work. The IRC staff helped her complete an application for financial assistance from the Welfare office and IRC staff went with her to serve as interpreter.*
- *The family's oldest child, a single parent with a young child, has lived in Hawaii for some time and lost her job recently. However, she was not given a final check upon departure. Our IRC staff contacted her former employer and spoke to the manager who directed our staff to call their main office on another island. Our staff talked with the HR Coordinator and a final paycheck was send to the daughter.*
- *The same daughter needed help preparing a resume. IRC staff taught her how to use the computer in the IRC resource library and provided guidance in preparing her resume. She was then directed to Goodwill for Employment Core Services to assist with job search.*
- *The parents and daughter are coming to the IRC resource library daily to use Rosetta Stone to improve their English skills. They have also signed up for the free English class at UHH. These classes are being provided as a collaboration of CCH and UHH's Department of English, TESOL program. IRC clients can attend these free non-credit classes without a high school diploma and despite limited or no English skills.*
- *This family is at a high risk of being homeless. IRC staff helped them apply for Section 8, low income apartments and State housing.*

The above migrant family, and many other immigrant and migrant families are now on their way to stabilizing their lives and taking concrete steps toward self-sufficiency.

If I can provide any further information, please feel free to contact me at 808-527-4702 or via email at [diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org). Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1737, HD1.



# Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President  
P. O. Box 270126 \* Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737 HD 1

Measure Title: Making an appropriation for the Office of Community Service

### House Committee on Finance

Feb. 25, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Hawai'i State Legislature, House Conference Room 308

To: Rep. Syliva Luke, Chair  
Vice-Chairs: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto  
House Finance Committee Members: Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Rep. Kaniela Ing, Rep. Jo Jordan, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Rep. Gregg Takayama, Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Rep. Beth Fukumoto, Rep. Gene Ward

From: Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President, Filipino American Citizens League

My name is Charlene Cuaresma. As vice president of the Filipino American Citizens League, I submit strong support for this bill. The League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

The League sends you our appreciation for hearing this bill. We support this bill because it supports the Office of Community Service to provide capacity building programs for the most vulnerable groups in Hawai'i to get on their feet with job training, immigration resource centers, and more. The intent is that over time, participants of these programs are able to give back to the state of Hawai'i more than they receive.

Thank you for FACL's opportunity to speak up, in hopes of pointing our civil society in the direction of strengthening people's ability to participate and contribute more fully and responsibly in the daily tasks of acquiring food, shelter, clothing, transportation, health, education and more for themselves, their families, and others. The vitality of Hawai'i's communities and economy depends on our ability to be inclusive for the benefit of all.

Sincerely,

Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President  
Filipino American Citizens League



## **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737 HD 1**

Measure Title: Making an appropriation for the Office of Community Service

House Committee on Finance

Feb. 25, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Hawai'i State Legislature, House Conference Room 308

To: Rep. Syliva Luke, Chair

Vice-Chairs: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto

House Finance Committee Members: Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Rep. Kaniela Ing, Rep. Jo Jordan, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Rep. Gregg Takayama, Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Rep. Beth Fukumoto, Rep. Gene Ward

From: Helena Manzano, Vice President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

My name is Helena Manzano, vice president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity. The Coalition strongly supports this bill. Since its inception in 1990, the Coalition has represented more than 50 Filipino community leaders, whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower Filipinos to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors through education, advocacy, and social action.

As a social worker by training, I see the critical need addressed by the Office of Community Service to provide job training and immigrant services that will help stave off the damaging consequences of poverty for many people whose lives are marginalized. This worthy program will go a long way to fortify our work force and sustain our working poor families.

The Coalition extends our gratitude to you for hearing this important bill and for allowing us to provide our steadfast support to you to support this measure.

Respectfully,

Helena Manzano, MSW  
Vice President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity



## *Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.*

*... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.*

*NAMI, P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701*

*E-mail: bramosrazon@aol.com*

### **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737 HD 1**

Measure Title: Making an appropriation for the Office of Community Service

House Committee on Finance

Feb. 25, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Hawai'i State Legislature, House Conference Room 308

To: Rep. Syliva Luke, Chair  
Vice-Chairs: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto  
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From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, Co-Founder and President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors Inc.

My name is Beatrice Ramos-Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), I am proud to submit our strong support for this bill. NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people through education, mentoring, advocacy and service.

NAMI strongly supports this bill, because this measure offers a proactive solution to Hawai'i's labor woes. Job training and immigrant services are integral programs for Hawai'i's people, who may be in difficult transition periods of their life. The Office of Community Service plays a strategic role in the Dept. of Labor to ensure services that will provide critical pathways to a healthy and resilient work force in the public and private sectors.

Thank you for hearing this bill, and for your consideration to support its passage and full funding. In so doing, more people, given the opportunity of OCS services, will have a chance at stabilizing their financial status and doing their part to be good stewards of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA,  
President  
Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.





## **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737 HD 1**

Measure Title: Making an appropriation for the Office of Community Service

### House Committee on Finance

Feb. 25, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Hawai'i State Legislature, House Conference Room 308

To: Rep. Syliva Luke, Chair  
Vice-Chairs: Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto  
House Finance Committee Members: Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Rep. Kaniela Ing, Rep. Jo Jordan, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Rep. Gregg Takayama, Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Rep. Beth Fukumoto, Rep. Gene Ward

From: Rouel Velasco, Chair, National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12

My name is Rouel Velasco, Chair, NaFFAA Region 12, which strongly supports this bill. NaFFAA Region 12 represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. We are an affiliate of the National NaFFAA. Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups recognize NaFFAA as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

NaFFAA strongly supports this bill, which is in keeping with our mission to strive for economic empowerment that will benefit all, including our global Filipino communities. Success stories of the Office of Community Services demonstrate how program participants from humble beginnings are set on the trajectory of work, productivity, persistence and making a positive contribution to their family and community.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to submit our strong support.

Sincerely,  
Rouel Velasco, Chair, NaFFAA Region XII





February 24, 2014

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Dominic K. Inocelda

Youth Service Center  
Program Administrator  
Carol S. Imanaka

TO: Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Members of the House Finance Committee

FROM: Ronald M Higashi, Executive Director  
Susannah Wesley Community Center

Subject: Testimony in support of HB 1737 HD1

Chair Luke and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Ronald Higashi. I am the executive director of Susannah Wesley Community Center (SWCC) located in the Kalihi community on the island of Oahu. I write in support of HB 1737 HD1, Sections 1 and 3 which seeks to appropriate additional funds to expand the State Immigrant Service Centers.

SWCC has a rich tradition of providing services to our community and particularly to the Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Immigrant populations. We have provided bi-lingual services for almost half a century.

Currently we operation a Immigrant Resource Center at our 1117 Kaili Street site in Kalihi, and in partnership with Child and Family Services, an Immigrant Resource Center in Ewa/Waipahu, and a mini-site with Pacific Gateway Center in Chinatown.

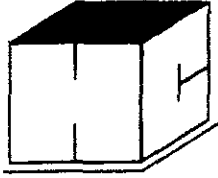
All sites are partially funding. None of able to be totally operational five days a week due the lack of funding. The possibility of additional funding would enable all sites to reach more people that need the services of an Immigrant Resource Center.

Please do not hesitate to contact me you have any questions.

1117 Kaili Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-3432 • (808) 847-1635 • FAX (808) 847-0787

[www.susannahwesley.org](http://www.susannahwesley.org)

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## CAREGIVERS ASSOCIATION

**LATE**

The Caregivers Association strongly supports HB 1693 requiring the state to pay interest on late payments to all caregivers. The people who are tasked to pay the caregivers timely should do their jobs more efficiently. Only recently some caregivers faced mortgage foreclosures because they have not gotten paid by the state for more than three months.

The Caregivers Association also supports HB 1695.

The Office of community Services needs more funds to implement its services more efficiently and effectively. We strongly support HB 1737

HB 2131 benefits both sides. We support this bill

Submitted by:  
Constante A. Domingo  
President, Caregivers Association



PARENTS AND  
CHILDREN TOGETHER  
A FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY

**LATE**

**TO:** Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
House Finance Committee

Representative Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
House Finance Committee

**FROM:** Haaheo Mansfield  
Senior Vice President of Programs  
Parents And Children Together

**RE:** **In strong support of HB 1737 HD 1**

**DATE:** February 24, 2014

My name is Haaheo Mansfield. I am employed at Parents And Children Together and serve as the Senior Vice President of Programs for the agency. Parents And Children Together currently receives funding from the Office of Community Services to provide services to immigrants through the Immigrant Resource Center (IRC). Our current target community all of Honolulu proper. PACT supports the initiative from the Office of Community Services to expand the IRC services to include Waipahu. I **strongly** urge you to support HB 1737 HD 1.

As you know, the flow of immigrant migration to Hawaii has remained steady since pre-Territory years. Families from Pacific Rim and Pacific nations come to Hawaii for health care, education and the dream of opportunities not available to them in their home countries. Hawaii has struggled to meet the challenges of new groups as they arrive and brave attempts have been made by churches and others in the private sector to facilitate speedy acculturation. However, these efforts have not been able to meet the evolving needs of immigrants.

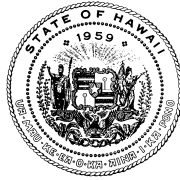
As one of America's major Pacific points of entry, Hawaii must allocate more financial resources to supporting positive acculturation for immigrant groups up front or face the even higher costs related to treatment services at the back end of their stay here. Without a structured and proactive acculturation process, immigrant families often find themselves shunned by the larger community because they lack the social skills necessary to navigate the written and unwritten rules of life in Hawaii.

Expansion of the Immigrant Resource Center on each respective island will help reduce the negative impact of migration and increase the likelihood of positive and successful acculturation for immigrants, thus costing taxpayers less in the long run. Our belief is that Hawaii can thrive with an informed and acculturated citizenry. The Immigrant Resource Center can help make that a reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of HB 1737 HD 1**.



NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



GARY L. GILL  
ACTING DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, SUITE 322  
HONOLULU, HI 96813

SERAFIN P. COLMENARES, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

From: Serafin Colmenares Jr.  
Executive Director, Office of Language Access

Date: February 25, 2014, 2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 308

Re: Testimony on H.B. 1737 HD1  
Making an Appropriation for the Office of Community Services

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The Office of Language Access (“OLA”) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1737 HD1 Making an Appropriation for the Office of Community Services. My name is Serafin Colmenares, Jr. and I am the Executive Director of OLA.

The bill provides appropriations to expand the Immigrant Resource Centers (IRC), a project of the Office of Community Services (OCS) which are currently located in four locations: at the Catholic Charities Hawaii Office in Hilo, the Child and Family Service Center in Ewa Beach, the Kuhio Park Terrace Family Center in Kalihi, and the Child and Family Service Center in Kapaa on Kauai. The purpose of the immigrant resource centers is to restore state-funded, comprehensive services for Hawaii’s immigrant communities marginalized by poverty and lack of language access to needed resources.

About 7,000 immigrants arrive in Hawaii every year, and many of them are limited English proficient (LEP). Currently, there are more than 150,000 people in the state who are LEP. The OLA was established by law to ensure that Hawaii’s LEP population is able to have equal access to government-funded services, programs and activities. The expansion of the IRCs statewide will do much to help ensure that LEP individuals are able to have that access.

We strongly urge that your committee pass this measure.

OLA appreciates this committee’s commitment to immigrant services.

91-1841 Fort Weaver Road  
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706  
Phone 808.681.3500  
Fax 808.681.5280  
Email cfs@cfs-hawaii.org  
www.childandfamilyservice.org

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Maui United Way

Kauai United Way



**LATE**



February 25, 2014

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair,  
The Honorable Scott Y. Nichimoto, Vice Chair,  
The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Time: 2:00 pm

Place; Conference Room 308, State Capitol

From: Cara Sadira, Program Director

Re: H.B. 1737, HD1: Appropriation for the Office of Community Services

POSITION: Strongly Support.

## I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

H.B. 1737, HD1 proposes to provide an appropriation of 4700,000 to the Office of Community Services (OCS) to support the expansion of the newly-created State-funded Immigrant Resource Centers, contracted by the Office with nonprofit service providers, for language-accessible direct information and referral services to new immigrants. In addition, the measure requires OCS to consider and report to the Legislature on the following: a) the current process for solicitation and administration of the grants-in-aid programs; the feasibility of handling the processing of all of the grants-in-aid requests; and recommendations to streamline the grants-in-aid process.

## II. Comments on House Bill 1731, HDI

Child & Family Service has been providing Immigrant Resource services through the Family Centers, Nana's House and Hale Ho'omalua, since August of 2013. There is a great need on Kauai for these services. In the first few months of opening our door, we were flooded with a demand for services, and quickly maximized service capacity. In the 6 months that we have been providing services, we have worked with 33 out of our 35 families we intended to serve in the first year. Additionally, as our services are full with a wait-list, we have enrolled 7 immigrant families in case management at Hale Ho'omalua. All 40 families listed above have received individual support plans in which they define their strengths and challenges, and work towards resolution of the barriers to economic self-sufficiency.

The families that we serve have received acculturation training, and assistance with securing jobs and understanding job orientation and training. We have provided in-

terpretation and translation services, and assistance with filling out job applications. We have had employers ask us to return to assist with more of their employees, and have received multiple requests for training for businesses and organizations. We have served as a liaison between the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service, assisting families by assisting them with forms and documentation for USCIS, as well as assisting them with legal aid services. We have assisted families to access necessary medical care, such that they are prepared to lead economically stable and productive lives on the island. We have provided training, or served as a liaison to 15 businesses and organizations in the 6 short months of operation. We have learned that there is a need for understanding our populations in family court, homeless shelters, job training programs, etc.

Additionally, we have met with representatives from the Department of Health and the Civil Defense and understand that there is a great need to assist the families in emergency preparedness, and also for school emergencies for immigrant children. Currently, our civil defense system on Kauai is not broadcasted in multiple languages, nor are emergency protocols for schools broadcast in multiple languages. Systems need to be enhanced to protect the vulnerable families. We are finding that the immigrant and COFA migrant families who now live on Kauai as our neighbors are benefitting greatly from the services, yet the demand for services is much greater than our current program is able to provide.

CFS supports the expansion of funds to the Office of Community Services in the amount of \$700,000. Please contact me should you wish to discuss further.

Thank you very much,

*Cara Sadira*

Cara Sadira, Program Director

*Immigrant Resource Center*

Child & Family Service

(808) 240-2817

[csadira@cfs-hawaii.org](mailto:csadira@cfs-hawaii.org)