



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
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February 6, 2014

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair,
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Date: Friday, February 7, 2014
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309, State Capitol

From: Mila Kaahanui, Executive Director

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

POSITION: Support.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

HB 1737 makes an unspecified appropriation to the Office of Community Services (OCS) in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR).

II. COMMENTS ON HOUSE BILL 1737

The Office of Community Services (OCS), established by Act 305 of the 1985 Hawaii State Legislature and codified as Chapter 371K of the 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 population, including immigrants and refugees. OCS administers and delivers Federal and State funded programs through purchase of service contracts with non-profit agencies.

The intent of this measure, as we understand it, is to support the expansion of the newly created State-funded Immigrant Resource Centers, contracted by OCS with nonprofit service providers, to provide language-accessible direct, information and referral services to new immigrants. These centers are currently located in the following geographic areas:

Kalihi, Oahu
The Family Center at Kuhio Park Terrace
1485 Linapuni St., Suite 105

Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Ph: (808) 841-6177, Fax: (808) 841-1779

Ewa Beach, Oahu
Child and Family Service/Susannah Wesley Community Center
91-1841 Fort Weaver Rd.
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706
Ph: (808) 681-3500, Fax: (808) 681-6353

Hilo, Hawaii Island
Catholic Charities Hawaii
62 Kino'ole St.
Hilo, Hawaii 96720
Ph: (808) 961-7030, Fax: (808) 961-7039

Kapaa, Kauai
Child and Family Service
4-1112 Kuhio Hwy.
Kapaa, Hawaii 96746
Ph: (808) 821-2520, Fax: (808) 821-0625

Waimea, Kauai
Child and Family Service
9875 Waimea Road
Waimea, Hi 96796
Ph: (808) 338-0252, Fax: (808) 338-0403

OCS supports the intent of this bill, as long as it does not supplant the funding priorities set forth in the Governor's budget.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments and deeply appreciate the legislature's interest and commitment to serving Hawaii's fast-growing immigrant communities.

yamashita1-Kristine

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 8:37 PM
To: LABtestimony
Cc: raatior@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1737 on Feb 7, 2014 09:00AM

HB1737

Submitted on: 2/5/2014

Testimony for LAB on Feb 7, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vidalino Raatior	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As someone who works with Pacific Islander students at the University and the immigrants from the Pacific regions, I am in full support of any funding resources for the Immigrant Resource Centers in Hawaii. These centers such as the one operated by Catholic Charities in Hilo provide valuable places of learning for our students to engage in the lives of their people here. Any resources to add more locations or expand existing services can only be great for the Hawaii ohana to quickly give the immigrant population a faster track to becoming self-sustaining members of society.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Filipino American Citizens League

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

LATE

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737

Senate Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Feb. 7, 2014, 9 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 309

To: Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair and Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair;
and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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

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

Dear Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair; Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair; and
Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

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



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

LATE

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737

Senate Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Feb. 7, 2014, 9 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 309

To: Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair and Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair;
and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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

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

Dear Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair; Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair; and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

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. In so doing, more people will have a chance at 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

Senate Committee on Labor & Public Employment
Feb. 7, 2014, 9 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 309

To: Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair and Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair; and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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

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

Dear Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair; Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair; and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

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. The Office of Community Services has success stories that demonstrate how when given the opportunity, program participants from humble beginnings are set on the trajectory of work, productivity, persistence and a contributing member of 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

LATE

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1737

Senate Committee on Labor & Public Employment

Feb. 7, 2014, 9 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | House Conference Room 309

To: Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment

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

Dear Honorable Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair; Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair; and Honorable Members of the Committee on Labor & Public Employment:

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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

LATE

TO: Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor & Public Employment

FROM: Diane M. Terada, Division Administrator

DATE: Friday, February 7, 2014 (9:00 a.m., Room 309)

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

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) strongly supports HB 1737. 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. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.