



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING
HONOLULU

TERRY LOCK
DIRECTOR

Testimony in **Support** of
H.B. 908 H.D. 2, Relating to the Hawaii Home Visiting Program
By Terry Lock, Director

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
March 25, 2013
9:20 a.m., Room 211

Chair Ige, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am Terry Lock, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL is in support of House Bill 908 House Draft 2.

H.B. 908 H.D. 2 would establish, within the Department of Health, the Hawaii Home Visiting Program to administer statewide hospital-based screening and home visiting services to identify families of newborns at risk for poor health and safety outcomes, including child abuse and neglect.

EOEL is charged with coordinating efforts on behalf of young children by creating partnerships and alignment of policies and programs to achieve improved outcomes in health, safety, and school readiness and success. Over the past year, EOEL has engaged partners across the state to define the desired outcomes for children and families, as well as the critical strategies to achieve those outcomes, which should be prioritized over the next three to five years. This work – the Hawaii Early Childhood Action Strategy – is described in *Taking Action for Hawaii's Children*, which can be found at earlylearning.hawaii.gov.

Families' access to home visitation services was a key recommendation in the strategies developed by over 100 participants across the state. Home visiting is a prevention strategy used by states and communities to improve the health and well-being of women, children, and families at risk for adverse developmental, health, and safety concerns. Investments in home visiting programs have been shown to reduce costs associated with foster care placements, hospitalizations, emergency room visits, unintended pregnancies, and other more costly outcomes and interventions.

Research has demonstrated the critical role that prevention of child abuse and neglect plays in early school success. Children who have been neglected or physically abused tend to perform poorly in school, as evidenced by low grades, low standardized test scores, and frequent retention in a grade; the negative effects are even greater for neglected than for abused children (Chalk, Gibbons, & Scarupa, 2002). They tend to have lower grades, lower standardized test scores, and lower rates of grade promotion (Augostinos, 1987; Eckenrode, et al., 1991; Guterman, 2001; Wolfe & Mosk, 1983).

We defer to the Department of Health on matters contained in this bill that are under their jurisdiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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March 25, 2013



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Testimony on HB 908 RELATING TO THE HAWAII HOME VISITING PROGRAM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Monday, March 25, 2013, 9:20 a.m.

Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Testimony submitted by: Kathryn Inouye, Board Chair, Child & Family Service

Aloha, Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee members. I am Kathy Inouye, Board Chair of Child & Family Service, Hawaii's oldest and largest human service nonprofit organization with services on every island and touching the lives of 40,000 Hawaii residents from keiki to kupuna each year. I am testifying in strong support of HB 908. **However, it is even more important that the Senate approve the Governor's budget request for \$3 million in general funds for each year of the biennium for home visitation services under the Department of Health now that the House Finance Committee has removed this funding from its draft of HB200.**

This bill establishes in statute the Hawaii Home Visiting Network which includes hospital-based screening using a standardized screening tool for parents of newborns to assess for risk of child abuse and refers families at high risk of child abuse to the Healthy Start Home Visitation program. The Department of Health is now also eligible for Federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) Home Visitation funds and these can only be used for evidence-based models. (Healthy Start is in the process of being accredited under Healthy Families America which is recognized by the Federal government as an evidence-based model.)

The Governor publicly touted Healthy Start during his gubernatorial campaign and was one of the original legislators to sponsor the Healthy Start pilot program (first in the nation) for which the Legislature appropriated funds. It is encouraging that we have an administration that believes in Healthy Start which matches the Legislature's consistent support of the program.

There is nothing more important that we can do as a state and for our children than preventing child abuse. At Child & Family Service, our mission is **strengthening families and fostering the healthy development of children**, so I think you can see why we strongly support HB 908.

I ask for your support of this bill to preserve home visitation programs to prevent child abuse. The importance of a program like Healthy Start (Healthy Families America) is that we intervene before there is ever a report of child abuse to Child Protective Services. **Child & Family Service's Healthy Start program has had very successful outcomes in the last five years with over 99% of families served having no report of child abuse. This program truly works and must be preserved.**

Mahalo,

Kathryn Inouye, Chair of the Board of Directors, Child & Family Service

Our Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

Testimony in Support of HB 908, HD2: Relating to the Hawaii Home Visiting Program

TO: Senator David Y. Ige, Chair, Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair,
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Trisha Kajimura, Social Policy Director, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: Monday, March 25, 2013 9:20 am, Conference Room 211

Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports HB 908, which establishes the Hawaii Home Visiting Program, a program that works with families to prevent child abuse and neglect through partnerships between provider agencies and the Department of Health.

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 60 years. CCH has programs serving families, elders, children, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable of the people in Hawaii.

Hawaii has a long history of providing early identification (screening/assessment) and home visiting services for families with children from birth to three years of age and was on the cutting edge nationally for providing these services when funding cuts starting in 2008 essentially dismantled the early identification and home visiting services network. These services have been available since then to a very limited degree in only two geographic sites. The establishment of the Hawaii Home Visiting Network would provide the opportunity for the families of all children born in Hawaii to be screened for risk of child abuse and neglect and referred for appropriate home visiting services.

Raising a family with limited resources, personal histories of trauma and/or other life challenges can be very difficult for parents. It can also put them at-risk for mistreatment of their children. Children at this age are extremely vulnerable because they are completely dependent on their caregivers and not yet under the care of teachers and educators who can observe signs of child abuse or neglect in their students. Preventing abuse before it happens is much more effective in stopping the cycle of abuse and dysfunction that will be perpetuated without intervention. Supporting parents to be nurturing and appropriate through this program will save the state the high cost of intervening in an abusive family. It will also help produce keiki who are happier, healthier, and facing more positive outcomes in development and learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808)527-4810 or trisha.kajimura@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



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Testimony on HB 908 RELATING TO THE HAWAII HOME VISITING PROGRAM

Senate Committee on Health

Monday, March 25, 2013, 9:20 a.m.

Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Testimony submitted by: Howard S. Garval, MSW, President & CEO, Child & Family Service

Aloha, Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee members. I am Howard S. Garval, President & CEO of Child & Family Service, Hawaii's oldest and largest human service nonprofit organization with services on every island and touching the lives of 40,000 Hawaii residents from keiki to kupuna each year. I am testifying in strong support of HB 908. **However, it is even more important that the Senate approve the Governor's budget request for \$3 million in general funds for each year of the biennium for home visitation services under the Department of Health now that the House Finance Committee has removed this funding from its draft of HB200. Also, we have heard that there was confusion among some House Finance Committee members between Enhanced Healthy Start and Healthy Start. Enhanced Healthy Start is for families who have already been reported for abuse and/or neglect and are involved with Child Welfare Services. This program is funded by DHS with TANF funds. Healthy Start is a child abuse prevention home visitation program before there is any report of child abuse and/or neglect. These are not duplicate programs! More importantly we must have programs like Healthy Start to actually prevent child abuse/neglect rather than have to intervene after the fact when abuse has already occurred.**

Before 2009, Hawaii was a leader in child abuse prevention when it still had a statewide Healthy Start Home Visiting program that screened parents of all newborns for risk of child abuse and referred those at high and moderate risk to the voluntary home visiting program. Unfortunately in 2009, this statewide program was decimated when funding was reduced from almost \$10 million in General Funds to \$1.5 million in TANF funds through a Memorandum of Agreement between DHS and DOH. DOH then identified census tracts with the highest rates of child abuse to preserve one Oahu program and one Neighbor Island program. Ewa/Waipahu was selected on Oahu and Child & Family Service was able to keep one small Healthy Start program going as a result, since we were already serving Leeward Oahu. The YWCA of East Hawaii was the provider in Puna/Hilo that was able to preserve a small program as well.

In the current biennium that began July 1, 2011, Healthy Start has been funded with Tobacco Settlement Funds at \$3 million per year for FY '12 and FY '13. Mahalo to the Governor and the Director of Health for finding a way to prevent the total elimination of this critically essential child abuse prevention program through the use of these Special Funds that actually had not been released by the previous administration and had not lapsed.

This bill establishes in statute the Hawaii Home Visiting Network which includes hospital-based screening using a standardized screening tool for parents of newborns to assess for risk of child abuse and refers families at high risk of child abuse to the Healthy Start Home Visitation program. The Department of Health is now also eligible for Federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) Home Visitation funds and these can only be used for evidence-based models. (Healthy Start is in the process of being accredited under Healthy Families America which is recognized by the Federal government as an evidence-based model.)

The Governor publicly touted Healthy Start during his gubernatorial campaign and was one of the original legislators to sponsor the first Healthy Start pilot program (first in the nation) for which the Legislature appropriated funds. It is encouraging that we have an administration that believes in Healthy Start which matches the Legislature's consistent support of the program.

There is nothing more important that we can do as a state and for our keiki than preventing child abuse. At Child & Family Service, our mission is **strengthening families and fostering the healthy development of children**, so I think you can see why we strongly support HB 908.

I ask for your support of this bill to preserve home visitation programs to prevent child abuse for the highest risk families. The importance of a program like Healthy Start (Healthy Families America) is that we intervene before there is ever a report of child abuse to Child Welfare Services. Child & Family Service's Healthy Start program has had very successful outcomes in the last five years with over 99% of families served having no report of child abuse. We believe this speaks to the effectiveness of home visitation services for high risk families. We can prevent child abuse, but we must protect these services from being totally eliminated as we were close to experiencing back in 2011.

Mahalo for providing the opportunity to submit testimony.

With warm Aloha,

Howard S. Garval, MSW, President & CEO, Child & Family Service

Our Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children

March 25, 2013

Senator David Ige, Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 908, Relating to the Hawaii Home Visiting Program

Dear Senators Ige, Kidani and Members of the Ways and Means Committee

I am Gail Breakey, Executive Director of the Hawaii Family Support Institute testifying in support of HB 9008, Relating to the Hawaii Home Visiting Program

This bill supports Healthy Start program sites in major areas of need in Hilo-Puna, Leeward Oahu, Kalihi and Kauai to prevent abuse and neglect among high risk families of newborns, as well as hospital based screening in these areas. Funding needed is \$3M, which was cut from the administration's budget. This funding is need to support existing programs and also for maintenance of effort requirements to draw down federal ACA funds for home visiting.

This is important because:

Most serious abuse and death occur among our youngest keiki:

- **Children under age 1 are largest age group for Hawaii abuse cases (2010)**
- **Half of confirmed child abuse cases are among children under age five.**
- **Hospitalization of infants for abuse has increased nationwide in past decade.**

Child abuse costs our state millions:

- **The CDC estimates the life-time costs for one abuse/neglect case at \$210,012; the Star Advertiser estimated the cost to Hawaii at \$378,021,600 for 2008.**
- Major studies show strong links between early trauma and emotional/ mental health problems, such as substance abuse, school failure, crime as well as chronic health problems such as obesity, diabetes, heart and lung problems and smoking.

Early child abuse has a long term negative impact because

- **70% of brain development is completed by age one.**
- Toxic stress e.g. abuse, neglect and domestic violence negatively impact developing brain architecture, creating long term post-traumatic stress.

Healthy Start conducts hospital based screening to engage families of newborns at high risk. This program provided support to at risk families of newborns across the state, with at least a 99% non-abuse rate for many years. In 2009, there was no confirmed abuse for over 99% of families served for at least 12 months, and there has been no confirmed abuse for 99.8% of children among the 505 families served in Leeward Oahu from 2009-

2013. Most of these cases were categorized as threatened harm or maltreatment of a sibling of the infant rather than maltreatment of the target infant.

While it is likely not feasible to completely restore the Healthy Start program to 2008 levels, it will be very important to restore state wide risk screening and sufficient intensive services designed to avert abuse and neglect for families at highest risk for maltreatment as a major priority. **Preventing abuse and neglect among infants and toddlers should be a cornerstone of our early childhood system.** Children who are well nurtured and experience healthy early emotional development will have the foundations for early learning and school readiness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

Sincerely,

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Gail Breakey, Executive Director
Hawaii Family Support Institute

Date: March 22, 2013

To: Honorable David Ige
Honorable Michelle Kidani

From: Lin Joseph
Director of Program Services
March of Dimes Hawaii Chapter

Re: In support of
HB908 SD2

Hearing: Committee on Ways and Means
March 25, 2013
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express strong support for HB908 SD2: *Hawaii Home Visiting Program*.

For 75 years, the March of Dimes has been a leader in maternal and child health. Our mission is to *improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality*.

The Hawaii Healthy Start home visiting program has a long history in Hawaii, beginning as a demonstration project in 1985 and expanding statewide by 2001. Hawaii Healthy Start was widely recognized nationally and has been replicated in the U.S. and Canada. With the budget cuts of 2009, Hawaii's home visiting program has been reduced to only two programs.

Home visiting can provide screening for maternal and child health, developmental delays and child maltreatment. Care givers can be supported in learning positive parenting skills, problem solving, and linking to community resources. Home visiting programs are designed to work with parents to improve developmental, educational and health outcomes for young children and their families, and to promote healthy behavior such as quitting smoking and maintaining a healthy diet. Benefits of home visiting include increased school readiness and lower health care costs.

Evaluations of home visiting programs have shown improvements in child development and maternal and child health, as well as decreased rates of child maltreatment and juvenile justice. Hawaii Healthy Start has been shown in many cases to prevent child abuse and neglect. Approximately 98 percent of families enrolled in Hawaii Healthy Start for at least 12 months had no confirmed reports of child abuse or neglect. Preventing child abuse and neglect can decrease costs associated with emergency care and hospitalizations, child welfare services and foster care. Funding the Hawaii Home Visiting Program will also meet the matching funds requirement for federal funding through the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB908 SD2.

March of Dimes Foundation

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