



**SB1340 SD2**  
**RELATING TO FOSTER CARE**  
House Committee on Human Services

March 12, 2013

9:30 a.m.

Room 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB1340 SD2, which establishes the young adult voluntary foster care program to care for and supervise eligible foster youth until their twenty-first birthday. OHA also supports similar bills including SB1104 and HB873.

OHA supports this measure as it will significantly impact our beneficiaries who age out of the foster care system. According to a 2012 Department of Human Services (DHS) report, approximately 46 percent of the children placed in foster care in Hawai'i are of Native Hawaiian ancestry. When foster youth exit the system at the age of eighteen, they no longer have a safety net to ensure a successful transition to adulthood. Permitting former foster youth to stay in the system until the age of twenty one would provide these youth with a mechanism to develop a foundation for independent living, and give them equal footing amongst their peers.

Therefore, OHA urges this committee to **PASS** SB1340 SD2. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.