

SB 1340

Measure Title: RELATING TO FOSTER CARE.

Report Title: Foster Care; Age Restriction

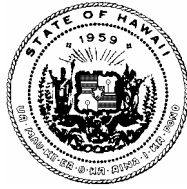
Description: Allows former foster care youths who are attending an institution of higher education as a full-time student, to stay in the foster care system until the age of 23.

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: HMS, WAM

Introducer(s): HEE



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

February 1, 2013

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 1340 – RELATING TO FOSTER CARE.**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 5, 2013; 1:15 PM
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 1340 is to allow former foster youth, who are attending an institution of higher education as a full-time student, to stay in the foster care system until the age of 23.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services appreciates the intent of this bill but does not believe it is necessary. Former foster youth who are attending institutions of higher learning are already receiving financial and health benefits from the State and the federal government.

Currently, when a foster youth exits foster care and is enrolled in an institution of higher learning, the youth is eligible to receive State funded \$529 room/board allowance (Higher Education Payment) until the youth reaches age 27. This payment may be used by the youth for housing, food or other basic necessities.

Also, former foster youth who are enrolled in higher education are eligible for federally-funded Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) which provide up to \$5,000

per year per youth until age 23. This money may be used to cover essential costs of going to school, including housing, food, transportation, child care, books, and computers.

The Department currently offers Independent Living Services to foster youths, ages 12 – 18, to include transitional plan and case managers, through CWS and purchase of service contracts. These Independent Living Services, including Youth Circles, are also available to former foster youth until they reach age 27. There are also scholarships and grants that former foster youth are eligible for to assist in defraying costs of attending institutions of higher education. For medical coverage, former foster youth will be covered fully by the QUEST program up to age 26, pending approval by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Approval is expected within the next several months.

The Department opposes the amending of Section 346-16 to re-define “former foster youth” with age specification. The Department believes that any child who aged out while in foster care is considered a “former foster youth” regardless of age, and it is unnecessary to extend the age limit to age 23.

The Department opposes the amending of 587A-4 to redefine “child” with age specification to include age 23. The Department does not believe that reports of child abuse/neglect in 587A should include reports about children who are legally adults (18-23). Also, the Department with its current staffing will not be able to manage the intakes or caseload of children up to age 23.

The Department of Human Services respectfully requests that the Legislature consider H.B. 873, an Administration bill, that proposes to add a new part to chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to establish a new program called the young adult voluntary foster care program. The young adult voluntary foster care

program will support former foster youth in achieving permanency in the transition to adulthood and in becoming independent and self-sufficient by extending voluntary foster care to age twenty-one.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Cc: ldurr@ymail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1340 on Feb 5, 2013 13:15PM
Date: Friday, February 01, 2013 1:44:54 PM

SB1340

Submitted on: 2/1/2013

Testimony for HMS on Feb 5, 2013 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Lois C. Durr | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: It is URGENT that we provide support for our young people; I support this bill. I also encourage an additional "transitional" program for all Foster Care children who "age out" of the system. The State of Illinois has such a program.

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.

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