



February 21, 2013

The Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Oakland and Senators:

Re: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill No. 59
Relating To Foster Care Services
Hearing Scheduled For February 22, 2013, Room 211

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in favor of Senate Bill 59, which would increase the foster board payments that support children in foster care in Hawaii. As you know, foster board reimbursements have not been increased in 22 years. All of Hawaii's families have been under pressure as the cost of housing, utilities, food, transportation, and other expenses have escalated, and caring for a child costs more today than ever before. There has been no relief for foster families for more than two decades, and we know that foster families often must use their own money to provide the basics for foster children in their care.

People sign up to be foster parents because they love children and want to contribute to their communities, but Hawaii has now reached the point where many foster parents are forced to decide whether caring for foster children is in the best interest of their own families.

Any social worker or family court judge can tell you the tremendous impact that caring foster parents can have on the lives of the children in their care. If Hawaii is to continue to attract and retain qualified, loving foster families to care for these children, the state must address the problem of inadequate foster board payments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jared S. Ava, BSW

University of Hawaii at Manoa Graduate Student



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
 To: [WAM Testimony](#)
 Cc: lethadecaires@hotmail.com
 Subject: Submitted testimony for SB59 on Feb 22, 2013 09:00AM
 Date: Friday, February 22, 2013 8:00:56 AM

SB59

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for WAM on Feb 22, 2013 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Letha DeCaires	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I strongly support Senate Bill 59 Relating to Foster Care Services. It has been over 20+ years since there has been an increase to the foster board payment for families providing this loving service. During that time, the price of housing, food and utilities has risen significantly. The cost of pre-school and sports has increased. Everything has increased. I served as a foster mother for many many years until I was able to adopt my children, they are all now adults. 20 years ago I had to dip into my own resources to pay for what my children needed because board payment did not cover their needs then; I can only imagine how financially stressful it must be for resource families today who are loving on these children that did nothing to deserve the situation they find themselves living. I am a retired HPD police officer. When I was working as a detective, I started asking the suspects in the cases I was investigating, "How many placements did you have as a foster child?" Invariably, the answer was multiple. Provide stable and healthy resource families for children to learn, heal and grow, or keep building new prisons, because you will need them. I strongly ask that you consider passing this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Letha DeCaires

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