



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 18, 2015

Memorandum

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

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 498 HD 1 - RELATING TO MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE
ADULT PROTECTIVE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES BRANCH**

**Hearing: Thursday, March 19, 2015; 1:45 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

PURPOSE: The purpose of the measure is to appropriate moneys for FY 2016 and FY 2017 from the state general fund for positions within the adult protective and community services branch.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the overall concept of this bill as it includes initiatives supportive of our goals and objectives, but we are concerned that passage of this measure may replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

For the committee's consideration, general fund appropriations consistent with the measure may be matched with existing federal funds per position. Ten (10) of the proposed APCS positions would be a 50/50 state/federal funds match. Only one (1) position would be 75% general funds and 25% federal funds match; that position is the Permanent Program Specialist III position for Maui County, to support the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs.

If the Committee is inclined to make an appropriation for the proposed positions, DHS notes that the current house draft only appropriates general funds to the DHS and does not specify the matching federal funds available to DHS. For purposes of this bill, the committee may want to consider a technical amendment to include language such as:

SECTION 7. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the department of human services shall be authorized to extend the federal ceiling to fund the positions allocated in this Act and to increase the federal money made available for the purposes of this Act.

The Senate version SD968 SD 1 already includes this section.

The DHS provides further comment on the measure. In 2009, the staffing of the Adult and Protective Community Services Branch (APCSB) of the DHS was reduced by 25% due to Hawaii's economic crisis. That same year, APCSB's statutory mandate for the Adult Protective Services (APS) Program as enumerated in Chapter 346, Part X, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), was expanded from providing services to "dependent adults" to include all "vulnerable adults." This expansion in the population that APCSB is required to serve resulted in a 51% increase in APS investigations. Consequently, APCSB was put in a precarious position to try to serve more clients with less staff.

House Concurrent Resolution (H.C.R.) 118 H.D.1, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2013, requested that the DHS provide a report to the Legislature detailing efforts to improve and restructure the APS Program to provide a comprehensive delivery of services to vulnerable adults who are or in danger of being abused, neglected, or financially exploited. APCSB contracted with the University of Hawaii's Center on Aging (UH-COA) to conduct a study to evaluate the APS Program and provide recommendations for the restructuring of APCSB from a policy, operational, structural/programmatic, and systems perspective. A summary of findings

from this study is included in the DHS' December 2014 report to the Legislature. Using the UH-COA's recommendations, the APCSB identified the following priority areas:

1. Policies and Procedures: Development of detailed policies and procedures that provide specific instructions for performing day-to-day activities (e.g., APS investigations, documentation); development of case quality assurance policies and procedures; and development of a core training curriculum for APS staff and regularly scheduled re-orientation and refresher trainings on daily operations. DHS will need two (2) assistant program administrator positions for the APCSB Program Development Office to accomplish these tasks.
2. Infrastructure and Organization:
 - a. Development of a statewide centralized intake system to ensure timely and consistent review and appropriate and accurate dispositions of reports. The expansion of the Oahu Adult Intake Unit with three (3) additional child/adult protective services (C/APS) specialist positions is required to enable this unit to accept and make appropriate decisions regarding vulnerable adult abuse and neglect from every county statewide.
 - b. Two (2) additional C/APS specialist positions are required to augment the nine (9) C/APS specialist positions already assigned to the APCSB Oahu Section to conduct APS investigations. Approximately 62% (633) of the 1,014 cases investigated statewide in FY 2014 occurred on Oahu. Each investigation may involve multiple types of abuse as well as multiple alleged perpetrators of abuse. The volume and complexity of the APS investigations require an increase in the staffing pattern for the Oahu Section which has not

had an increase in the number of C/APS specialist positions since the downsizing of staff in 2009.

- c. One (1) general professional position is required for the Oahu Section to provide additional forensic analysis of financial exploitation cases. The Oahu Section currently has only one (1) Auditor position to assist the C/APS specialists in financial reviews. In FY 2014, the Oahu Section investigated 176 cases of alleged financial exploitation which is approximately 58% of the total financial exploitation cases investigated statewide.
- d. Two (2) registered nurse positions are required by the APCS B Kauai Section and West Hawaii Section which do not have staff qualified to observe and assess the medical conditions of the reported victims of abuse and neglect. The most prevalent types of reported abuse are caregiver neglect (35%) and self-neglect (28%), both of which involve medical conditions that may not be properly addressed or monitored, leading to potentially life-threatening wounds or rapidly declining health requiring immediate medical intervention. Kauai and West Hawaii are the only APCS B sections that do not have registered nurse positions to assist the C/APS specialists in their APS investigations.

Another function of APCS B is to administer the statewide senior volunteer programs that receive federal funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) has been providing seniors age 55 and older with the opportunity to serve as role models, mentors and tutors for children with exceptional and special needs in school settings for the past 37 years. The Senior Companion Program (SCP) has been providing

seniors age 55 and older with opportunities to provide companionship and support to home-bound seniors, allowing these individuals to continue living independently in their own homes for the past 35 years. While both programs are federally mandated to provide services statewide, Maui County (Maui, Molokai, Lanai) has been underserved and requires a full-time Program Specialist position located on the island of Maui to provide program support to both FGP and SCP. A physical presence in Maui County is required to facilitate the recruitment of senior volunteers for both programs, and the recruitment and support of volunteer stations to coordinate assignments to school settings for FGP and home-bound seniors for SCP.

At present, Maui County represents less than 1% of the total program volunteer base for FGP and SCP. FGP has one (1) active Foster Grandparents on Maui and one (1) on Molokai, despite having 143 Foster Grandparents for all other counties combined. Maui has approximately 2,148 special needs children in thirty-one (31) school settings who could benefit from FGP services. SCP has 6 active Senior Companions on Maui despite having 90 Senior Companions for all other counties. Maui, Molokai and Lanai each have their own unique population and diverse community needs. The establishment of a Program Specialist position for Maui County is essential to fulfill the federal grant requirements of serving communities in every county statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.