

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 900

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 03 2017

RE: S.B. No. 499
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2017
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred S.B. No. 499 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE ZERO TO THREE COURT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to support the Hawaii Zero to Three Court by providing additional funding for staff positions and various services.

Your Committee received written comments in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of Human Services, American Academy of Pediatrics Hawaii Chapter, Hawaii's Early Childhood Action Strategy, Hawaii Family Support Institute, Hawaii Pacific Health, Family Programs Hawaii, Family Strengthening Center at Family Programs Hawaii, Hawaii Children's Action Network, Zero to Three, Parents and Children Together, and four individuals.

Your Committee finds that the Hawaii Zero to Three Court provides valuable structure and support for families and children in the court system that are involved with Child Welfare Services. The court and its resource networks help these families to establish safe, nurturing homes. The voluntary nature of this court program -- which emphasizes motivating families to participate, attain stability, and eventually shed their reliance on the courts or welfare system -- is what makes it unique in the child welfare system. The program's success is based on the



limited number of families it serves at any given time, frequency of court hearings, availability of specialized services, and trust that is nurtured between the families, their case managers, and service providers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriations to unspecified amounts; and
- (2) Changing the effective date from July 1, 2017, to February 28, 2050,

to facilitate further discussion on the measure.

Your Committee notes that this measure originally appropriated a total of \$278,430 in general funds in each of fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, as follows: \$80,930 for a program manager position; \$77,000 for a case manager position; \$7,000 for transportation costs for parents to visit children; \$35,000 for housing assistance; \$3,500 for a parent incentive program; \$21,000 for an evaluation of the program; \$18,000 for training and professional development; and \$36,000 for service contracts for visitation and parent coaching.

Your Committee respectfully requests that subsequent Committees to which this measure is referred consider whether this measure, or the Judiciary or Executive budgets, would be the more appropriate funding vehicle or vehicles for the Hawaii Zero to Three Court. Given the budgetary constraints of the State, your Committee finds that the various government entities serving children and families that participate in this court program must collaborate and share resources. They should not operate or provide services in isolation or without coordination.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 499, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 499, S.D. 1.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,



JILL N. TOKUDA, Chair



