

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2433

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 2018

RE: S.B. No. 2790
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2018
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 2790 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to amend the Child Protective Act, chapter 587A, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by repealing the existing section 587A-3, HRS, guiding principles for children in foster care, and incorporating that language into a new section, rights of children in foster care, which aligns with federal law and provides increased support and guidance for children in foster care.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of Human Services, Department of the Attorney General, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Department of Education, EPIC Ohana, Hale Kipa, Hawaii Children's Action Network, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, Hawaii Youth Services Network, Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, and twenty-six individuals.

Your Committee finds that, in 2015, 2,386 children were in foster care in the State. Your Committee further finds that increased support and guidance for the care of the children and youth in foster care can facilitate their continued development,

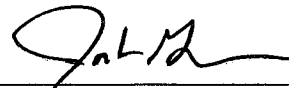


well-being, and permanency options. According to the Department of Human Services, the new section proposed by this measure is based on section 587A-3, HRS, and aligns with Public Law 113-183, which requires the rights of a child age fourteen and older regarding education, health, visitation, and court participation to be documented in the child's case plan and requires a signed acknowledgment of the provision of these rights. The new section proposed by this measure also includes additional rights, such as culturally responsive services, requests for an attorney, and transportation to attend the school of origin. Your Committee finds that with increased support and guidance, children and youth in foster care have additional positive outcomes which include decreases in homelessness, dependency on public welfare, drug dependency, and incarceration. The rights of foster care children are a priority, and this measure provides these individuals additional protections and rights to lead successful lives.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2790, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2790, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services,



JOSH GREEN, Chair



