



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
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March 9, 2018

TO: The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1926 HD1 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Monday, March 12, 2018 at 2:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill as it aligns with the department's administration proposal SB 2793 SD2, which require DHS to use an integrated and multigenerational approach to deliver human services to reduce the incidences of intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill requires the Department of Human Services to use an integrated and multigenerational approach to delivering human services to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits.

DHS has a large stake in ending poverty in Hawaii. DHS provides benefits and services to one in four Hawaii residents, or nearly 360,000 individuals, and provides medical insurance coverage for nearly one-half of Hawaii's children. DHS has the largest operating budget of any state department, approximately \$3.3 billion, to provide benefits and services relating to homelessness, education, employment, health care, child care, food security, protective services, and vocational rehabilitation.

DHS is part of the national movement to improve the delivery of human services lead by the National Governors Association, the American Public Human Services Association, and Ascend of the Aspen Institute, the Urban Institute, and others. DHS is

adopting a service integration and multigenerational approach, is redesigning its business processes, and continues to improve its technology systems.

DHS is also engaged in its first departmental strategic plan to improve overall program outcomes and establish outcome measures of services for children, parents, and families geared to reduce adverse risks and increase protective factors that promote educational attainment and wage progression that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Through service integration and addressing the needs of multiple generations in a family concurrently, efforts and resources will be better targeted to support the well-being of individuals and families. Investment is also being directed to improving the human services workforce by supporting professional development to improve the work environment, encourage retention, and renew employees' dedication to helping Hawaii's vulnerable residents reach their human and economic potential.

Ultimately, the goals of transformation are to improve well-being of individuals, families, and the community, reduce intergenerational poverty, reduce dependence on public benefits, and reduce the human and fiscal costs of poverty. This administration bill will underpin the department's transformation from a siloed service delivery model to an integrated and multi-generational model.

Multiple studies identify the consequences of growing up in poverty: "individuals who grow up in poor families are more likely to be poor in early adulthood;" and "the chances of being poor in early adulthood increases sharply the longer the time spent in poverty in early childhood." See, Robert L. Wagmiller, Jr., and Robert M. Adelman, "Childhood and Intergenerational Poverty: The Long-Term Consequences of Growing up Poor."

The groundbreaking 1988 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study showed clear linkage of the number of ACEs a child experienced to negative health outcomes in adulthood.

Further, a 2015 Swedish study, similarly confirmed the findings of the ACE study using Swedish population data, and concluded that "creating equal opportunities for educational attainment may help to reduce the long-term effect of a disadvantaged childhood and postpone functional health problems." See N. Agahi, B. Shaw, S. Fors,

"Social and economic conditions in childhood and the progression of functional health problems from midlife into old age," J Epidemiol Community Health 2014; 0:1–7.  
doi:10.1136/jech-2013-20369.

Preliminary analysis of data from Hawaii's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) show that a percentage of Hawaii's SNAP recipients experience intergenerational poverty. For those born from 1987-1996 (currently, 21-30 years old), over 35,000 received SNAP benefits in childhood and as adults, or 21 percent of (166,081) the total number of those born from 1987-1996 who received SNAP benefits during their lifetime. For those born, during the period 1977-1986 (currently, 31-40 years old), more than 33,000 received SNAP benefits in childhood and as adults, or 23.5 percent of (140,930) the total number of those born during the period 1977-1986 who ever received SNAP.

Of particular concern is that individuals in the above age groups represent parents of young children. To change the trajectory of these families and individuals, DHS must transform its practices and provide services more effectively in a way that will support the child's, parent's and other individual's social capital, educational and economic potential to become self-sufficient, and reduce their dependence on public benefits.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services  
Monday, March 12, 2018; 2:45 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016**

**RE: SUPPORTING HOUSE BILL NO. 1926, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 1926, House Draft 1, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would clarify the mission of the Department of Human Services to emphasize an integrated and multigenerational approach to improve economic security and reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits. For discussion purposes, the bill would take effect on July 1, 3000.

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of health.

In 1854, Abraham Lincoln wrote that the "*object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot so well do, for themselves, in their separate and individual capacities.*" Lincoln believed, in other words, that government is how we organize our responsibilities to each other.

The path envisioned by Lincoln, where government naturally assumes a smaller role -- not by refusing to meet its responsibilities, but because in meeting those responsibilities fully, the need for government diminishes, would appear to be at the heart of the proposed bill.

Taking responsible steps to reduce poverty is not merely a moral imperative but an economic one. And government should act now. This bill ensures that the State of Hawaii firmly moves toward that end.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 1926, House Draft 1**  
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President Lincoln couldn't have envisioned the complex problems we face now. But when he wrote that government "*embraces all which, in its nature, and without wrong, requires combined action, as public roads and highways, public schools, charities, pauperism, orphanage, estates of the deceased, and the machinery of government itself,*" he had a good handle on what it meant to use government as a tool to provide the stability and opportunity needed to attack poverty.

Accordingly, we **SUPPORT** this measure and urge your favorable consideration.

In advance, thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

On behalf of the nearly 600 registered members of the Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) Hawaii, I would like to express **strong support** for HB1926 HD1.

In 2016 the State Department of Human Services (DHS) adopted a multigenerational approach to transform the way services are provided to individuals and families. By providing programs and services that maintain a high level of service integration, quality, and intensity across multiple generations, the department intends to reduce intergenerational poverty in the State, and the human and financial costs associated with poverty. This bill would codify that stance, providing additional language to Section 26-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, so that DHS must “administer programs through an integrated and multigenerational approach designed to improve the social well-being, economic security, and productivity of the people of the State[-], and to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence upon public benefits.”

We now know that individuals who grow up in poor families are much more likely to be poor in early adulthood. The chances of being poor in early adulthood increase sharply as the time spent living in poverty during childhood increases. Multiple studies link adverse social and economic conditions in childhood to health problems in adulthood. The human and financial costs associated with poverty are extreme and require immediate, and complete, attention.

With the largest operating budget of any state department—approximately \$3.3 billion (including 79 percent of all federal funding given to the state's executive branch)—DHS provides benefits and services to 1 in 4 Hawaii residents; nearly 360,000 individuals. The State's medicaid program provides medical insurance coverage for nearly 1 in 2 of Hawaii's children. Among its many services, DHS provides care and protection to children and adults who are in vulnerable populations, vocational rehabilitation and financial assistance to the disabled, the supplemental nutrition assistance program, or SNAP, financial assistance, job training and placement, housing and services for the homeless,

medicaid services for the State's medically needy population, and prevention, treatment and housing services for young people in the juvenile justice system.

There's a lot of potential, therefore, for an agency of this size with this level of resources to do some serious good following a data-driven, best-practices approach that takes into account integration and the multigenerational nature of poverty. Transitioning the department's service delivery to this approach is going to refocus DHS efforts to provide available resources and support to reduce the time a child and family spends in poverty, stabilize basic needs and environment, improve economic security and ultimately reduce intergenerational poverty in Hawaii. But it won't happen over night. It could take years before the effects really begin to manifest among Hawaii's poor. Codifying this approach will help provide some assurance that this approach will be perpetuated into the future and beyond the scope of one or even multiple administrations.

Mahalo,

Will Caron  
Social Justice Action Committee Chair

**HB-1926-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/11/2018 2:38:34 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/12/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:



**HB-1926-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2018 1:04:11 AM

Testimony for HMS on 3/12/2018 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kai Derrickson	Testifying for Young Progressives Demanding Action “ Hawaii	Support	Yes

Comments:

To The Senate Committee on Human Services:

In the state of Hawaii, the only current way for a minor to become emancipated is through marriage. Many minors in the state of Hawaii are living separately from their parents. These minors may have been thrown out the house or may have chosen to leave due to ongoing abuse, neglect, or severe family problems such as alcoholic or drug-addicted parents. The current law in Hawaii punishes self-supporting youth who seek to leave their homes for these reasons and forces them to return to an unstable home environment. Many are unable to access much-needed services due to the need for parental consent. This makes it difficult for these minors accessing services for youth to authorize their own health care or apply for public benefits. Emancipation for certain young persons who are able to support themselves, in cases of abandonment or severe family conflict, could help them function in society. Allowing these self-supporting minors to become emancipated would allow them the freedom to make their own educational, health-care, and housing-related decisions that are essential for their current and future well-being. HB1859 HD2 is a step in the right direction. I urge the Committee of Human Services to pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Kainani Derrickson

Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawaii

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