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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
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January 27, 2020

TO: The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2502 – RELATING TO CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

Hearing: February 3, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill.

PURPOSE: This bill adds members of the clergy, commercial computer technicians, and commercial film and photographic print or image processors to the categories of persons who are required to report child abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services or to police. Provides a "safe harbor" through December 31, 2020, for reporting by clergy of known or suspected child abuse that was previously unreported and that did not arise during a penitential communication.

The intent of the child abuse and neglect mandated reporting law is to protect children – both reported child victims and other potential child victims by requiring community members who are professionals that have regular interaction with children and families to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect.

Hawaii's child abuse and neglect mandated reporting law, section 350, Hawaii Revised Statutes, (HRS) et seq., does not currently include clergy, commercial computer technicians, and commercial film and photographic print or image processors as mandated reporters. DHS agrees that extending the mandate to report to these professions who may have knowledge of suspected

cases of abuse or neglect, or exploited children is important to identify, investigate, and intervene as soon as possible.

If the measure passes, additional appropriation is required to develop and provide training to these new categories of mandated reporters.

DHS takes no position on the "safe harbor" provisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of

West Hawaii

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care

Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest and

Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

February 2, 2020

To: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair
And members of the Committee on Hyman Services

Testimony in Support of SB 2502 Relating to Child Abuse Reporting

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 2502 Relating to Child Abuse Reporting.

All children deserve to be protected from abuse and neglect and it should be the duty of all adults to report known or suspected child abuse.

Members of the clergy are often viewed by children as trusted adults to whom they can disclose their experiences with abuse or neglect. It is important that those disclosures be shared with the authorities.

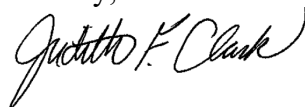
There is evidence that members of the clergy themselves may be the perpetrators of child abuse. In some cases, their superiors and colleagues have been aware of the abuse but have failed to take appropriate steps to intervene or report it. This should not be tolerated.

Computer technicians and photographic print or image processors may, through their work, become aware of pornographic and other images of children that indicate abuse or neglect.

Requiring members of the clergy, computer technicians, and print or image processors to be mandated reporters of abuse or neglect of a minor will increase the safety of our children.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

SB-2502

Submitted on: 1/31/2020 2:08:32 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/3/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this measure. It's about time institutions including the church be held accountable for abuse that they turn a blind eye to.

Ann S. Freed