

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 17 2021

RE: S.B. No. 543
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 543 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Create a human trafficking coordinator and program within the Department of the Attorney General;
- (2) Require the Department to report to the Legislature; and
- (3) Require the children's justice program to coordinate the investigation and care management of human trafficking cases.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Judiciary, Department of Human Services, Department of the Attorney General, Office of the Public Defender, Honolulu Police Department, Imua Alliance, Catholic Charities of Hawai'i, Parents and Children Together, Sex Abuse Treatment Center, Ho'ola Na Pua, and seven individuals.

Your Committee finds that the commercial sexual exploitation of children is a serious problem in Hawaii and throughout the United States. Your Committee heard testimony from the Judiciary,



which reported that youth in the foster care system are especially vulnerable to becoming involved in sex trafficking, and issues regarding the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the State are increasing in prevalence in cases before the Family Court on the juvenile, domestic violence, child abuse, and other calendars.

Further, your Committee finds that the Department of Human Services has received an increasing number of calls on its hotline for witnesses or victims of child sex trafficking. However, because child sex trafficking is covert, it is difficult to accurately measure the scope of the problem, and exploited youth may not identify themselves as victims. Accordingly, your Committee believes that to adequately serve children who have been sexually exploited, a statewide coordinator and program within the Department of the Attorney General are needed to develop and utilize comprehensive interagency case management strategies, protocols, and a multi-disciplinary response that is both victim-centered and offender-focused.

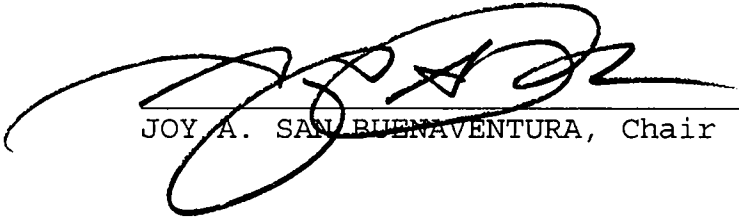
Your Committee also received the testimony of the Department of the Attorney General, which stated that this measure would not require an appropriation, and the Department has already designated a deputy attorney general to begin implementing a statewide human trafficking program.

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. 543, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 543, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committees on Ways and Means and Judiciary.



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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



