

Honolulu, Hawaii
, 2022

APR 29

RE: H.B. No. 2424
H.D. 1
S.D. 2
C.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sirs:

Your Committee on Conference on the disagreeing vote of the House of Representatives to the amendments proposed by the Senate in H.B. No. 2424, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD WELFARE SERVICES,"

having met, and after full and free discussion, has agreed to recommend and does recommend to the respective Houses the final passage of this bill in an amended form.

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Expand the investigative powers of the Department of Human Services to include review and investigation of families receiving benefits from the State's adoption assistance program and against whom a post-adoption complaint has been made;
- (2) Require the Department of Human Services to report to the Legislature before the convening of the Regular Session of 2024 on the impact of expanding post-permanency services



to families receiving benefits from the adoption assistance program; and

- (3) Appropriate funds for the procurement of contracted services to provide additional support, resources, and monitoring of families receiving benefits from the State's adoption assistance program.

Your Committee on Conference has amended this measure by:

- (1) Reverting to the H.D. 1 version, which:
 - (A) Expands the investigative power of the Department of Human Services to include inspections of families who have adopted or received legal guardianship of a child for whom maintenance is provided pursuant to the Social Security Act or through the State's Adoption Assistance Program, including adoptive families where an adoption decree is pending or where an adoption decree has been issued but adoption has not yet taken place, or who are receiving financial assistance through the State's Permanency Assistance Program, and against whom a complaint has been lodged with the Department of Human Services at any time;
 - (B) Requires the Department of Human Services to analyze and report to the Legislature on the impact of expanding home visits to families receiving adoption assistance or legal guardianship assistance payments no later than twenty days prior to the Regular Session of 2027; and
 - (C) Appropriates funds for additional case worker and support staff positions and increased compensation for existing child welfare services case worker positions; and
- (2) Further amending this measure by:
 - (A) Clarifying that the Department of Human Services' review or investigation of families receiving benefits pursuant to the Social Security Act or through the State's Adoption Assistance Program, or are receiving financial assistance through the State's Permanency Assistance Program and against whom a complaint has been lodged shall be in



accordance with chapters 350 and 587A, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

- (B) Requiring the Department of Human Services to submit its report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2024, rather than 2027;
- (C) Establishing the Malama Ohana Working Group to seek, design, and recommend transformative changes to the State's existing child welfare system and requiring the Working Group to report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2024;
- (D) Authorizing the Department of Human Services to contract with an administrative facilitator to provide support to the Working Group, including preparation of the report; and
- (E) Inserting an appropriation amount of \$8,000,000 to increase the procurement of contracted services to provide additional support, resources, and monitoring of families receiving benefits from the State's Adoption Assistance Program and Permanency Assistance Program and earmarking \$3,350,000 of the appropriation for:
 - (i) Developing and maintaining necessary information technology systems, including two full-time positions;
 - (ii) Increasing compensation for existing Child Welfare Services Branch positions to fill vacancies and retain employees;
 - (iii) Contracting with a third party for enhanced permanency support services;
 - (iv) Establishing one full-time equivalent planner or project specialist position to administer and monitor additional service contracts and assist with service coordination, data collection, and analysis of the new program; and
 - (v) Supporting the Malama Ohana Working Group in its activities;



(F) Changing its effective date to upon approval; provided that the appropriation section shall take effect on July 1, 2022; and

(G) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee on Conference notes that although \$3,350,000 of the appropriation made by this measure has been earmarked for specific purposes, the intent of the Legislature is to use the remainder of the monies from this appropriation to support all those involved in the child welfare services system, not just those involved in adoption or guardianship settings. Your Committee on Conference believes that these additional funds could be used for recruitment and scholarships for child welfare Services social workers, programs for parents, and training for investigators and reporters to ensure that any reported case of child abuse or neglect is properly investigated and pursued.

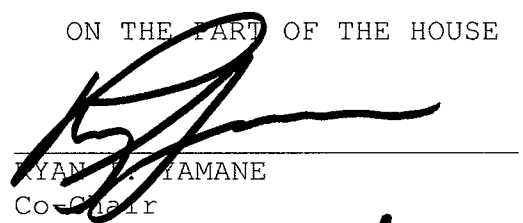
As affirmed by the record of votes of the managers of your Committee on Conference that is attached to this report, your Committee on Conference is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2424, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Final Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2424, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, C.D. 1.

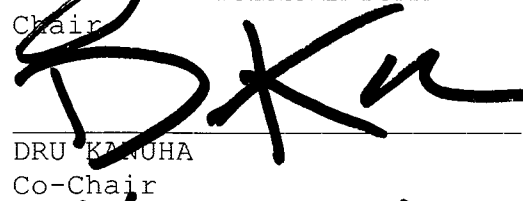
Respectfully submitted on behalf of the managers:

ON THE PART OF THE SENATE

ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE


JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA
Chair


RYAN J. YAMANE
Co-Chair


DRU K. ANUHA
Co-Chair


LISA MARTEN
Co-Chair


KARL RHOADS
Co-Chair



