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DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

April 18, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: HCR 137 HD1 – URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH OR CONTRACT WITH A VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDER TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING.

HEARING: April 20, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this resolution, offers comments, and defers to the Office of Youth Services (OYS).

PURPOSE: This resolution urges the Department of Human Services to establish or contract with a victim service provider to operate and maintain an emergency shelter for children who are survivors of sex trafficking.

The Department agrees that more resources are needed to support children and youth who are victims of sex trafficking or sexual exploitation and will continue to work with OYS and community providers to address the needs of children and youth survivors of sex trafficking. If the Legislature wants to expand shelter capacity, future appropriations will be needed to contract services, provide oversight, and facilitate data collection and sharing.

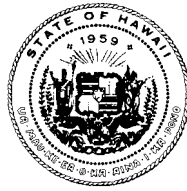
Currently, DHS Child Welfare Services (CWS) protocol ensures that identified trafficked children and youth are assessed and receive appropriate services and protections, regardless of parental abuse or neglect. The Department contracts a provider that delivers statewide victim-

centered, trauma-informed comprehensive services that are individualized and responsive to the needs, values, culture, and gender identity of youth victims of human trafficking. The provider also conducts training for DHS, resource caregivers, and the community that promotes public awareness of the sexual exploitation of children.

For youth in DHS foster custody, CWS currently uses its emergency shelters and current list of resource caregivers to place youth victims of sex trafficking. In addition, CWS also uses the Hale Kipa Hale Lanipolua Assessment Center (HLAC) at the Kawaihoa Youth & Family Wellness Center, which serves youth ages 12 through 17 who are victims and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Since its opening, CWS has placed 76 youth in foster care at HLAC.

DHS continues its ongoing work to ensure these youth victims are identified and receive appropriate services. Notably, to maintain the operations of this and future emergency shelters, funding will need to become a line item in the OYS base budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this resolution.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
1010 Richards Street, Suite 314
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 19, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Acting Executive Director

SUBJECT: HCR 137, HD1 – URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH OR CONTRACT WITH A VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDER TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING.

Hearing: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol Room 225 & Videoconference

OFFICE'S POSITION: The Office of Youth Services (OYS) supports the intent of this resolution and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to encourage the Department of Human Services to establish, operate and maintain an emergency shelter for minors who are survivors of sex trafficking.

In 2018, Act 208 established the Kawailoa Youth and Family Wellness Center at the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility site, which was to include a crisis shelter for victims of human trafficking. As a result, Hale Kipa opened the Hale Lanipolua Assessment Center (HLAC) to serve minor victims and survivors of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. Hale Lanipolua is licensed as an 8-bed Child Caring Institution 24-hour emergency shelter. This is the only emergency shelter for survivors of sex trafficking.

For clarification, while HLAC's funding sources have changed over the past several years, the Center has been in continuous operation since inception. The Center has never closed its doors. Hale Lanipolua was initially funded with federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

The Honorable Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

April 19, 2022

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grant funds through December 31, 2021. Upon expiration of these funds, the Department of Human Services provided some emergency funding, then the City and County of Honolulu CARES funding provided additional financial support to keep this program in operation. The CARES funding will end on June 30, 2022. This Center did not temporarily cease operations in 2021 as stated, but may be at risk of doing so if they are unable to secure funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters 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's Justice Center of Maui

Get Ready Hawai'i

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

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

April 17, 2022

To: Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Human Services

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 137 HD 1 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH OR CONTRACT WITH A VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDER TO MAINTAIN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HCR 137 HD 1.

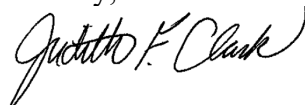
Providing emergency shelter, counseling and other related services to minors who are survivors of sex trafficking is a much-needed service.

The Hawaii Department of Human Services received at least 183 reports of suspected child sex trafficking between 2018 and 2020. Between February 2019 and June 2021, Hawaii's Child Welfare Services agency received 205 reports of children being trafficked. At least 67 of those cases were confirmed. The Suzannah Wesley Community Center, which is contracted by CWS to provide treatment to trafficking victims, reported treating 248 individuals referred to them between 2019 and 2020. The nonprofit National Human Trafficking Hotline reported that in 2020 it received 108 reports of human trafficking from people in Hawaii, including calls, texts, emails and online tips.

Hawaii's only existing emergency shelter for minor survivors of trafficking has unstable funding. State funding will preserve this essential resource.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura
Hawaii State Legislature

Marleen Rose Castro
Graduate Student in Social Work
University of Hawaii Manoa
Honolulu, HI 96822

April 18, 2022

Testimony on HCR 137 HD1 relative to urging the Department of Human Services to establish or contract with a victim service provider to operate and maintain an emergency shelter for children who are survivors of sex trafficking.

Aloha Honorable Chair Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr., and Committee on Human Services:

My name is Marleen Rose Castro. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii Manoa majoring in Social Work. I am writing in strong support of HCR 137 HD1 urging the Department of Human Services to establish or contract with a victim service provider to operate and maintain an emergency shelter for children who are survivors of sex trafficking.

Upon conducting some research regarding HCR 137 HD1 Hawaii's women and children are subjected to a widespread epidemic of violence and sex trafficking, according to House documents. Research shows nearly a quarter of sex trafficking victims were sex trafficked by a family member. According to the Urban Indian Health Institute, indigenous women and girls are victims of violence at considerably higher rates than any other population in the United States.

A sex trafficking victim treatment provider in Hawaii reported a three hundred percent increase in demand for services, including trauma informed care. There are currently only two shelters in Hawaii, but neither of them acts as an emergency shelter for child survivors of sex trafficking. Due to unexpected budget shortages, the state's only emergency shelter for child survivors of sex trafficking temporarily ceased operations in 2021.

I humbly ask that you consider HCR 137 HD1 and pass this into public law. People are forced to have sex without pay or freedom when they are victims of sex trafficking. It is rightfully described as sexual slavery. Harm reduction is an inappropriate response to a form of slavery. We should not reduce harm for slavery but end slavery.

I urge all members of the Hawaii State Legislature to support HCR 137 HD1.

Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Marleen Rose Castro
University of Hawaii Manoa
Honolulu, HI 96822

**Testimony on HCR 137/ HR 137:
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH OR
CONTRACT WITH A VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDER TO MAINTAIN AN
EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF SEX
TRAFFICKING.**

Aloha e Senators Kapela Aquino, Ganaden, Gades, D. Kobayashi, Lopresti, Marten, Perruso,

My name is Arthur W.J.M Paulino, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HCR 137 which is a resolution that urges the Department of Human Services to develop or contract with a victim service provider to manage and maintain an emergency shelter for children who have been victims of sex trafficking. Victim shelters are very important and crucial to have especially on the state of Hawaii where crimes of sexual assault, violence, and now sex trafficking has been becoming a big issue in the state of Hawaii. Every day many children are becoming victims to sexual and violent crimes as they become at risk to many other contributing factors such as houselessness and untreated mental health issues if they are not taken to a safe haven that will provide support and treatment for the trauma they endured. Also, there will be a high chance that the perpetrators of these victims will continuously be lurking for them and can continue to sexually, mentally, and physically abuse them if these victims are not kept in a safe and private environment.

Opening up victim shelters for those who are victims of sex trafficking will not just be a huge support towards the victims, but will also be educating the community about these violent crimes existing. It will strike awareness to enhance the safety for our children, and be on the lookout for predators who try to enable these violent crimes from existing, potentially harming and traumatizing our youth. Lastly, opening up these victim shelters will increase many opportunities where at least one child can be saved every day from the trauma that they constantly endure. Saying yes to HCR 137 means saying yes that our children who are kept in the shadows of human trafficking and sexual abuse will be protected and found. Saying yes to HCR 137 means creating

an end for sexual predators for returning to the victims creating more damage than they already done. Lastly, saying yes to HCR 137 means saying yes that as the community of Hawaii you will continue do your part in protecting our children from these unlawful acts of abuse and trauma. The respect of human dignity and the worth of a person is very important, and it all starts with respecting the dignity of our children.

Mahalo iā 'oe no ka hā'awi 'ana mai ia'u, hau'oli maika'i
Arthur W.J.M Paulino, LBSW, MSW
arthurwp@hawaii.edu

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara Jr., Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

April 20, 2022
3:00 PM

Testimony in SUPPORT of HCR137 HD1, URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH OR CONTRACT WITH A VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDER TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING.

Aloha Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Les Ihara Jr., and members of the committee on Human Services. My name is Alina Lujan Butler, and I am a graduate student in the Master of Social Work program from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am writing in support of HCR137 HD1, which seeks to establish or contract with a victim service provider to operate and maintain an emergency shelter for children who are survivors of sex trafficking.

As mentioned in HCR137 HD1, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have only exemplified the serious social issue that is the trafficking of children and youth. Despite much of the world being put on “hold” to quarantine or social distance, the exploitation of children did not take a pause, and in fact, may have led to even more instances of trafficking. The same marginalized communities who have been most greatly affected by the pandemic are also the ones that have and continue to be targeted by those wishing to exploit them. Although the closure of in-person schools was notably difficult on most youth, those that already lived in precarious or vulnerable situations suddenly were left with very few options. For many, school was a place of safety and/or peace and now that had been taken away. And due to many furloughs or workers losing their jobs, some children and youth may have felt the pressure to help their family and attempt to join the workforce. Education disruption combined with economic stress can likely be reasons why a family, parents, guardians, or others etc. may see their children as ways to financially alleviate their own situation. And for many children this has already become an unfortunate and tragic reality and in which we, as community members, must ask what can and should be done?

With the opening of a new emergency shelter, *specifically*, pertaining to children that are victims of trafficking, it is the hope that more children that find themselves exploited or abused can seek the shelter and security they need. It is also the hope that the medical, mental health, rehabilitation, housing, legal, therapeutic, and diagnostic services that are proposed to be available for child survivors at the emergency shelter help to provide responsive and trauma-informed care to each youth to encourage and assist them through a healing environment. I urge the committee to pass HCR137 HDI.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Alina Lujan Butler
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
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