



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary**

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.  
Hawai‘i State Capitol, Via Videoconference

by

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Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge

Family Court of the First Circuit

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**Bill No. and Title:** Senate Bill No. 2740, Relating to Guardians Ad Litem.

**Purpose:** Allows the judiciary to compensate guardians ad litem for involuntary hospitalization and assisted community treatment petitions at a rate higher than existing statutory guidelines. Makes an appropriation.

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary strongly supports Senate Bill No. 2740. An appropriation of at least \$100,000 will greatly assist members of our community who are suffering from mental illness. It is important to highlight that “[I]t is not the legislature's intent that the requested funds supplant the judiciary's existing funding or budget requests.”

We are in full agreement that “guardians ad litem (GALs) have an important role in supporting persons who are being considered for involuntary hospitalization or assisted community treatment.” The additional funding proposed is particularly crucial given the recently enacted statutory changes **requiring** the court to appoint GALs in **all** assisted community treatment cases. HRS section 334-123.5. Following these statutory changes, the number of assisted community treatment cases filed in the First Circuit Family Court has increased noticeably, which is a testament to the Legislature’s wisdom in enacting those recent changes.



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The Judiciary therefore strongly supports this bill and the Legislature's recognition that GALs in involuntary hospitalization cases and assisted community treatment cases will help to bring needed services to those suffering from mental illness and further the safety of the community.

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