

The Senate
Office of Joy A. San Buenaventura

February 23, 2023

Catherine Betts
Director
Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 339
Honolulu, HI 96809-0339

Dear Ms. Betts:

Re: Governor's Message No. 512 Nomination of Catherine Betts to the position of Director of Department of Human Services

This letter is in response to Governor's Message No. 512, regarding your nomination to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services. To assist the Senate with its constitutionally mandated responsibility to confirm gubernatorial nominees, submission of the following information is required:

- (1) A description of your experience in the field of Human Services, or any related field;

I have worked in various capacities in this field for the last twenty years: beginning in 2001 as an outreach worker with the Sex Abuse Treatment Center where I worked with intermediate and high school students to educate them about safe relationships, domestic violence, and sexual assault; to my work as a deputy AG where I represented the Department of Human Services-Child Welfare Services Branch. That experience was particularly eye-opening for me, as I was able to see the various needs of the department and also witness the difficult and traumatic work our workforce endures every day on the job. In 2011, I was appointed as the Exec. Director for the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (administratively attached to DHS) and worked closely with our DHS leadership on various legislation pertinent to women and girls (with a specific focus on economic justice, violence prevention, and access to reproductive healthcare). In 2017, I was appointed as Deputy Director and consider myself lucky to have been mentored by former Director Pankaj Bhanot.

I served as Deputy until 2020, then was appointed to the Director position just a few months into the pandemic. For the last five years, I have overseen all policy, budget, and administrative decisions for the department. Additionally, I have increased cross sector collaboration with our community stakeholders, non-profit organizations, and national policy organizations (APHSA, NGA, etc.) to increase our department's ability to remain collaborative, innovative, and creative in the ways we approach the work we do.

- (2) An assessment of your strengths and weaknesses;

Strengths: I pride myself on being an honest and caring hard worker. I am a self-starter and enjoy finishing projects through completion. I appreciate thoroughness, competence, honesty, diligence, compassion, empathy, and integrity. I was raised to see true value in hard work and humility. I can learn new things quickly, which is a benefit to me in this large department with competing interests, various federal funding streams, and various ongoing initiatives. Additionally, I can balance many different ongoing projects and see things through to fruition. I consider myself a strong mentor and staff come to me for assistance with their professional development, training, and advancement. I can assess complex and difficult situations quickly and comprehensively to plan for the best possible outcome. In emergency or crisis situations, I have the ability to make quick, sensible solutions.

Weaknesses: Prior to the pandemic, I had difficulty detaching from my work. The pandemic's pace and impact only exacerbated that. I recognize that I need to take better care of myself to have longevity in this career.

- (3) An assessment of the department's strengths and weaknesses. Please include an explanation of how the department's strengths may be best utilized, as well as how the department's weaknesses may be improved;

Strengths: DHS is a single state agency designated to receive federal funds to administer various programs, including Medicaid, TANF, SNAP, Child Care, Child Welfare, Vocational Rehabilitation, Youth Services and Public Housing. During the pandemic, leadership and our dedicated staff were able to quickly apply for and receive federal waivers for various programs as well as administer several rounds of pandemic relief funds (child care subsidies, child care provider grants, child welfare funds, adult protective funds, Medicaid, homeless funds, etc). Although we recognized previously that DHS was functionally well organized and poised to respond to crises/emergency situations, this was well proven and validated throughout the last three years of the pandemic. Our ability to transition quickly to administer hundreds of millions of dollars in relief funds is also a testament to the caring and dedicated individuals who work for the department.

We have strong, dedicated, and committed leadership throughout our department and that has only strengthened and evolved over the last three years.

Weaknesses: Human Services organizations across the country are experiencing a difficulty in filling critical positions and retaining current staff due to the pandemic's impact on stress and burnout. After three years of pandemic response, we have to evolve into a modern employer in order to attract, recruit, and retain staff. This means we need to understand the needs of younger employees, especially employees who have caregiving responsibilities. Additionally, we have to create better paying positions with positive upward mobility in order to keep the staff we have and provide leadership training opportunities. This is not something that government or civil service positions were designed to do.

Additionally, we desperately need another deputy to be able to help lead an ever-growing department. Just last year, a new unfunded commission was legislatively attached to DHS. Additionally, we received one year funding for various programs that take time to set up, draft and complete administrative rules for, and procedurally set up. We require additional high-level staff to be able to accomplish the will of the legislature.

- (4) An overall vision for the department, specifically what goals can be accomplished within the next four years and what types of annual benchmarks can be used to evaluate the department's progress towards those goals;

Please see attached strategic plan, performance metrics, and overview of departmental accomplishments.

- (5) The department's top budgetary priority for the biennium;

POD Expansion

Shortage and differential pay for CWS workforce

Increased training for CWS workforce

Hospital and Nursing Sustainability Funds

Increase in contract payments for contracted providers

Additional Funds for Safe Spaces Program (Office of Youth Services)

Additional Positions for Office of Youth Services

2nd Deputy and Communications Director

- (6) An assessment of the department's staff morale, including the turnover rate for personnel; and

Human Services workforces have suffered across the nation during the pandemic. Workers have dealt with unimaginable trauma, crisis, and emergency response in their workplaces as well as in their own homes. Consequently, many of our most experienced workers who were at retirement age have chosen to retire. Additionally, workers who have felt burnt out or “quietly quit” have left our workforce to find better and more lucrative opportunities in the private sector. Nonetheless, many of our dedicated and committed employees have stayed on. Staff morale is oftentimes dependent on adequate, compassionate, and supportive supervisors. I can attest that staff morale remained high when I was re-appointed. When a new person takes on this critical role, it does have an impact on staff who do not know how a new person in this role will treat them. Throughout the pandemic, I have made it clear to all staff, regardless of their position in our “hierarchy”, that their mental health and families matter. We cannot do this difficult work without taking care of ourselves and ensuring our families are safe and healthy. I will note that incendiary and oftentimes untruthful depictions of child welfare workers and eligibility workers in the media takes a toll on our workers morale. It is impossible to know the complexity and difficulty of their work without seeing them in the field every day. My role is tasked with ensuring they are able to do their jobs successfully and ethically, while also allowing them to feel heard and seen as dedicated employees to the department.

- (7) Any foreseeable possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service in the department and how you would overcome them.

I don't foresee any conflicts of interest. I regularly consult with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission, the departments deputies AG, and my internal team to make the best ethical decisions.

I continue to serve on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Filipino Lawyers Association and the Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts (CEAC). I have served on these committees in various capacities over the last decade. Currently, no board I serve on receives any funds from DHS, nor do they have any issues or lawsuits before the department.

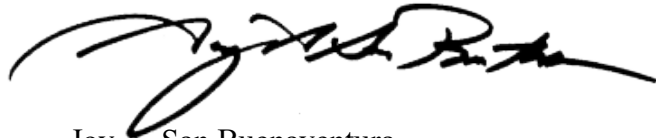
Please submit the requested information to:

Sen. Joy San Buenaventura
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
sensenbuenaventura@capitol.hawaii.gov

I also want to take this opportunity to remind you that any testimony submitted to Senate committees on your behalf will be posted on the Legislature's website as submitted. It might be helpful to remind individuals who intend to submit testimony on your nomination of the public nature of the testimony.

Your prompt response in providing the above information will ensure that the Senate confirmation process can proceed in a timely manner.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joy A. San Buenaventura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Joy A. San Buenaventura
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human
Services
Hawaii State Senator
District 2, Puna

March 1, 2023

Written Statement re: GM 512

From: Catherine Betts

Good afternoon, Chair San Buenaventura Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I would like to thank you for hearing this GM today and would also like to extend my appreciation for being able to share a few words with you today.

I could not and would not be considered here today without the incredible team of leaders behind me. The last three years were relentless and difficult. However, they also reminded me of the goodness and kindness of humanity, and the many reasons why I chose a career in public service. This department was tasked with protecting and caring for Hawaii's residents during a global pandemic; we all had initial moments of panic and crisis and terror. We took a deep breath, and then we rolled up our sleeves and got to work. We worked evenings, weekends, and every other time in between to ensure our safety net services could be accessed and viable for Hawaii's residents. Our greater community came together to ensure we met the needs of our most vulnerable residents. My greater DHS 'ohana -- a team of hard working, dedicated, and caring individuals -- came together to ensure a rising sea could lift all boats.

Together, we expended hundreds of millions for child care, P-EBT, and SNAP benefits.

Our Medicaid program now covers 467,000 individuals in the state. Additionally, Hawaii became the first state in the nation to implement Medicaid coverage for residents from Compact Nations.

In our Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division, we assisted more than 190,000 individuals to ensure they could receive supplemental nutritional benefits, and we recently became the first state in the nation to have our Pandemic EBT plan approved by the federal government.

We worked alongside our legislative partners in the House and Senate to ensure we could use TANF for housing assistance. And, we partnered with our community stakeholders and partners to implement Family Resource Centers and expand civil legal services to houseless individuals.

We worked with WIC to ensure that families who are eligible for WIC can also access needed SNAP benefits. And, we worked with law enforcement and the Attorney General's office to recover foster youth who were being trafficked on the street.

And, our Office of Youth Services reached a goal of having zero girls incarcerated.

I have served this department through four different directors and four different governors and I can safely say that we have changed the way state government functions. By implementing

organizational change management, IT modernization, and our Ohana Nui framework, we have proven to staff and residents that government does not need to be entrenched in the past nor does it need to be business as usual. We can think outside of the box, we can care for residents and our staff, and we can do things differently and more efficiently.

At the core of the work I do, I always remember survivors. Survivors are why I strive to make a more equitable system and why I care as much as I do about the work this department does. No one should have to navigate a system set up to imitate a labyrinth, just to get job training, supplemental nutrition, or health care. I will always have the heart of an advocate, and I am grateful for this opportunity you have afforded me.

My vision for this department is simple. We continue to care for individuals and families that need it, we invest in our staff to ensure they are equipped with best practices, trauma informed care, and information, and we invest in our technology to continue de-siloing our government legacy systems that no longer serve us. At the end of the day, we must serve Hawaii's residents with transparency, efficiency, and integrity. I would like to thank Governor Green for appointing me in this role, and I would like to thank you for this opportunity and humbly request your support.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 27, 2023

TO: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** GM No.512 – CONFIRMATION AS DIRECTOR, DHS,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, CATHERINE BETTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE
12-07-2026.
Hearing Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2023
Time: 1:00 pm
Location: Conference Room 225

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

EOEL strongly supports the confirmation of Catherine A. Betts as director of the Department of Human Services. Catherine Betts has been with the Department since 2011 and has held the Director position since September of 2020.

It has been our Office's pleasure to work with Ms. Betts on a multitude of matters, with particular focus on our State's youngest children and families. She has led the department through the significant difficulties from the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated many of the issues and inequities our communities face. It was through her leadership that the Department was able to quickly pivot programs and services, leverage and expend a significant amount of federal funds and other aid, and to effectively and efficiently partner with other governmental partners and stakeholders to mitigate the risks of the pandemic and address some of the State's most pressing issues.

Ms. Betts's extensive experience in both the public and private sector, and with the DHS in various roles, has enabled her to be a strong advocate for children, families, and residents that face many burdens and challenges across the State. Ms. Betts consistently demonstrates being a compassionate public servant, always focusing on strengthening relationships through partnership and collaboration.

EOEL looks forward to our continued work with DHS under Ms. Betts's leadership and focusing on better outcomes for children and families in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Catherine Betts's confirmation.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

March 1, 2023

To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Health and Human Services Committee

Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

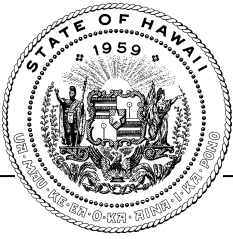
Re: G.M. 512 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services CATHERINE BETTS for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) **strongly supports** Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Ms. Betts has served as the Director from 2020 overseeing and managing roughly 2000 employees across our State with an operating budget of \$3.6 billion. During her tenure, she facilitated the implementation of "Ohana Nui," the multi-generational approach and framework to eliminating intergenerational poverty for Hawaii's families.

The DLIR appreciates its partnership with DHS in supporting Hawaii's vulnerable communities and believes that Ms. Betts' compassion and dedication leading the DHS will ensure that there are social programs to support the community and provide opportunities to overcome challenges and thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 512.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
SCOTT GLENN, Director

LATE

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

in consideration of
GM 512

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Catherine Betts, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of the appointment of Catherine Betts to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

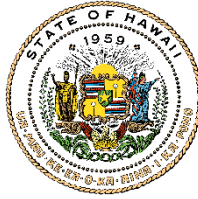
Ms. Betts has an extensive record in public service leadership. She is a passionate advocate for the beneficiaries of Department of Human Services (DHS) programs. Her leadership of the DHS, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic, has helped families across the state. Her expertise in DHS' critical federally funded programs will be especially helpful as Hawaii receives increased funds through the Inflation Reduction Act and navigates changes in federal appropriations and program implementation.

For these reasons, I humbly ask for Ms. Betts' confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 512
RELATING TO GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE CATHERINE BETTS FOR DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

LATE

Governor's Message 512 proposes to confirm as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Catherine Betts, for a term to expire 12-07-2026. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department recognizes that Ms. Catherine Betts has held positions as the Deputy Director for the Department of Human Services, Executive Director for the State Commission on the Status of Women, and an Attorney specializing in Family Law. She has extensive experience with policy and budget decisions, legislative advocacy, and negotiation. The skills and relationships that Ms. Betts has built working in the public and private sector for the benefit of Hawai'i residents make her an ideal candidate for the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of GM 512.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

In consideration of G.M. No. 512

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial nominee, Catherine Betts

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

DATE: Wednesday, March 1, 2023

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

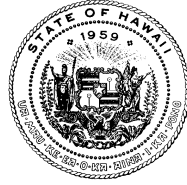
LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Ms. Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Given her past leadership roles with DHS, as well as her experience with other human services programs and initiatives, I believe Ms. Betts has the knowledge, skillset, and leadership abilities to continue to lead DHS. I believe Ms. Betts is prepared and committed to work with the communities in serving the best interests of the State and am confident that she will do a great job.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 512.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

In reply, please refer to:
File:

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM512
Submitting for consideration and confirmation
as the Director, Department of Human Services,
Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**



SENATOR JOY SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: 3/1/2023

Room Number: CR 225

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

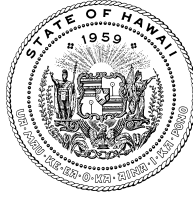
2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the nomination of
3 Catherine (Cathy) Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). Cathy has
4 a long record of service to others that includes a successful track record of management and
5 leadership positions within DHS. She demonstrates professionalism, humility, and a genuine
6 care for the individuals served by DHS. The DOH partners closely with the DHS and has valued
7 the close and collaborative partnership during Cathy's tenure as Director.

8

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

10

11 **Offered Amendments:** None



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of
Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawaii

Before the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

In consideration of
Governor's Message No. 512

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of Governor's Message No. 512, the appointment of Catherine "Cathy" Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Cathy has had the privilege of serving as the Director of DHS since September 2020 and prior to that served as the Department's Deputy Director from October 2017 until her confirmation. In these roles, Cathy has worked closely with all the departmental divisions and agencies, providing supervisory and managerial support to achieve the department's goals of encouraging self-sufficiency and supporting the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in our State. She also oversaw the implementation of DHS's 'Ohana Nui concept, the multi-generational approach to help eliminate intergenerational poverty for Hawaii's families.

I am confident that Cathy will continue to serve the State well in her capacity as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Mahalo for your consideration.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

In consideration of G.M. No. 512

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, gubernatorial nominee, Catherine Betts

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

DATE: Wednesday, March 1, 2023

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225

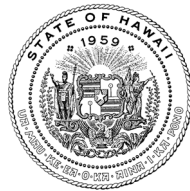
Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Ms. Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Given her past leadership roles with DHS, as well as her experience with other human services programs and initiatives, I believe Ms. Betts has the knowledge, skillset, and leadership abilities to continue to lead DHS. I believe Ms. Betts is prepared and committed to work with the communities in serving the best interests of the State and am confident that she will do a great job.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 512.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 512

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Room 225 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, CATHERINE BETTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE ON 12-07-2026.

Chair Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Catherine Betts to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am working with Ms. Betts in my professional capacity as Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Ms. Betts is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Betts has been serving as the Director of the DHS since September 2020. Prior to that, she was the Deputy Director of DHS from October 2017 to September 2020 and the Executive Director of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women from December 2011 to October 2017. Her experience and knowledge of DHS will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



TESTIMONY BY:
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 P.M.
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
State Capitol

LATE

In consideration of
Governor's Message 512
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human
Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Catherine Betts

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **strongly supports** Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). Ms. Betts earned her BA from the University of California, Los Angeles and her JD from the University of Hawaii, William S. Richardson School of Law.

Ms. Betts has served as Director at DHS since September 2020, overseeing operations, policy and budget decisions for the department while providing leadership and support to a statewide staff of 2000 employees. She previously served as Deputy Director at DHS from October 2017, executive director for the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, Deputy Attorney General with the State of Hawaii, Law Clerk in the First Circuit Court, a Community Outreach Coordinator for The Sex Abuse Treatment Center at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children; and as an attorney in private practice.

The DOT appreciates its partnership with DHS in addressing homelessness and believes Ms. Betts has the compassion and drive to keep Hawaii's people and their families healthy and safe with opportunities to thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

LATE

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 512,
RELATING TO GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE CATHERINE BETTS

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BY

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA
ADJUTANT GENERAL,
DIRECTOR OF HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY,
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services.

I am Major General Kenneth Hara, Adjutant General, Director of Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and Homeland Security Advisor, Department of Defense, State of Hawaii.

I respectfully submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of GM512, relating to Gubernatorial Nominee Catherine Betts for Director, Department of Human Services.

Ms. Betts possesses broad experience and expertise having worked in both the public and private sectors and has spent the last twelve years as a dedicated public servant in support of our State. She is a proven leader, and she has served at the highest levels in the State during the COVID-19 pandemic directing and guiding the Department of Human Services (DHS).

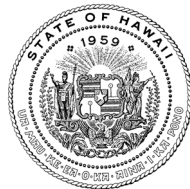
Ms. Betts also understands the importance of family and has dedicated her life for the good of others. She has worked in community outreach and education, litigation, and family law, and has served as the Executive Director on the State's Commission on the Status of Women. Ms. Betts possesses the perfect blend and background to lead the department, as well as a track record of success serving as both Deputy Director and Director of the DHS. She is the ideal candidate for continuity to ensure the well-being of individuals, families and communities in State.

Ms. Betts is someone I believe to be committed to bettering the state and helping people in need. I would be honored to serve with her and am confident she will be a pillar to help guide and lead Hawaii into the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

MG Kenneth S. Hara: kenneth.s.hara@hawaii.gov; 808-672-1001.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 512

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Room 225 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, CATHERINE BETTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE ON 12-07-2026.

Chair Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Catherine Betts to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am working with Ms. Betts in my professional capacity as Deputy Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

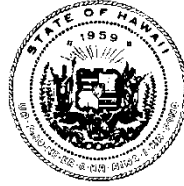
Ms. Betts is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Betts has been serving as the Director of DHS since September 2020. Prior to that, she was the Deputy Director of DHS from October 2017 to September 2020 and the Executive Director of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women from December 2011 to October 2017. Her experience and knowledge of DHS will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

LATE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
1:00 PM
Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
GM 512

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, CATHERINE BETTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026

Honorable Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 512, to consider and confirm Ms. Catherine Betts to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services.

Since becoming the Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS) in 2020, Ms. Betts has provided leadership, support, and care to the State's often overlooked and under-served populations.

Ms. Betts has many years of experience serving in the Human Services arena as a sex abuse community outreach and educator, Deputy Attorney General, Executive Director of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, Deputy Director of DHS, and Director of DHS. Ms. Betts uses this experience to work with her staff to provide hope and a better quality of life for everyone DHS serves.

It is truly my honor and privilege to be working alongside with her on a broad spectrum of HPHA issues, especially during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The HPHA and DHS

worked collaboratively to provide health and safety supplies to tenants and staff, outreach, testing, vaccination clinics and desperately needed services to assist our most disadvantaged populations.

There is no doubt in my mind that she will continue to bring a fresh perspective on how to deliver department services, improve the experience of those we serve, and strive to efficiently and effectively maximize taxpayer dollars to serve those in our community who rely on the critical services that DHS provides.

The HPHA urges the Committee to pass GM 512 and confirm Ms. Betts to the position of Director of Human Services.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2023
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 225 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

GOVERNORS MESSAGE NO. 512

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Chairperson San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Gubernatorial Nominee, Catherine Betts as the Director, Department of Human Services (DHS). Catherine has demonstrated experience and leadership during her previous service as the DHS Director overseeing six programs, 2000 employees and an operating budget of \$3.6 billion. Catherine Betts has been serving the people of Hawaii in several areas of Human Services, including the Status of Women since 2011.

Respectfully requesting your vote to confirm her nomination to serve as the Director, Department of Human Services. She is qualified and the right person for the position.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





HAWAII FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE
Making Hawaii's Families Strong

Executive Director February 27, 2023
Gail F. Breakey

Advisory Board Senator Joy A. Buenaventura, Chair Human Services Committee
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice-Chair, Human Services Committee
Greg Auberry, Co-Chair
Victoria Schneider,
Co-Chair

Nicole Brodie
Jessi L. Hall, Judge
Patti Lyons
Elizabeth MacFarlane
Patricia Morgan, MD
Victoria Schneider, MD
Matthew Shim
Karen Tan

Re: GM 512, Confirmation of Cathy Betts as Director of the Hawaii Department of Human Services

Dear Senators Buenaventura, Aquino and Members of the Human Services Committee

Consultants
Linda Coble

My name is Gail Breakey, I am Director of the Hawaii Family Support Institute and enthusiastically endorse Cathy Betts nomination to continue as Director of the Department of Human Services.

I first knew of Director Betts through the YWCA Leader Luncheon committee to nominate candidates as women leaders in Hawaii. We had many nominations to review, each of which usually involved committee discussion. However when we reviewed the nomination for Cathy Betts, her resume was so outstanding that all members agreed in a few minutes that she was our first nominee.

Since then, she of course became Director of the Department of Human Services and has not surprisingly done an excellent job of both managing the Department and being responsive to community needs and input.

The community at large and the State administration are extremely fortunate to have someone as competent and committed as Director Betts willing to continue to serve as Director of our Department of Human Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Gail Breakey'.

Gail Breakey, RN, MPH, Director
Hawaii Family Support Institute



To: The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Henry Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Paula Arcena, External Affairs Vice President
Mike Nguyen, Public Policy Manager

Hearing: Wednesday, March 1, 2023, State Capitol, Conference Room 225

RE: **GM512 - Consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of the confirmation of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services.**

Founded in 1994 by Hawai`i's community health centers, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 80,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Approximately half of our membership are keiki. We are Hawai`i's only health plan exclusively dedicated to serving Medicaid beneficiaries. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for access to quality health care for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person health needs.

As a Medicaid plan, AlohaCare is grateful for our strong partnership with the Department of Human Services, and we're delighted to have a proven advocate and leader in Ms. Betts to ensure the success of the Medicaid program for the benefit of our state's residents. Ms. Betts has an extensive resume demonstrating her commitment to the people of Hawai`i, especially our wahine and keiki. Most recently with the COVID pandemic and throughout her career, Ms. Betts has demonstrated her ability lead with vision and empathy embracing our state's diverse communities and working closely with community-based organizations and other community stakeholders. For these reasons and more, we think Ms. Betts is uniquely qualified for the position of Director of the Department of Human Services

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of the confirmation of DHS Director Catherine Betts.**



TO: Chair Joy San Buenaventura

FR: Nanci Kreidman, M.A.
Chief Executive Officer

RE: GM 512

Cathy Betts - Support

Aloha,

I submit this testimony in unqualified enthusiastic support of Cathy Betts to serve as the Director of Department of Human Services. Her leadership is defined by integrity, best intention, experience and courage.

I have known Cathy for more than ten years. I have seen her lead community efforts elevating the needs of children and families pertaining to financial stability, civil and criminal Justice system improvement, safety from harm, access to health care and education. Cathy has earned the respect - deserves the respect - of her colleagues, community allies, businesses and leaders in multiple sectors.

The Department of Human Services has the largest mandate of any state agency, caring for the needs of our island communities across Hawaii. Cathy has the finesse, will, insight, wisdom, conviction and ethical foundation to carry this Department. It is not a job for just anyone. With insufficient resources, and multiple challenges within and beyond the Department, Cathy carries the work and the hope forward into our communities.

She is a woman we can rely on. Cathy made adjustments to standard operating practices in a flash when the pandemic descended. The sophisticated skill set required to collaborate, guide, make difficult decisions on multiple issues - all day long, day after day requires the centered, smart, ethical professional we know Cathy to be. Her analysis of issues, challenges, barriers, and possibilities has proven to be exemplary.

It is in our collective best interests for Cathy to provide leadership for Hawaii, in her capacity as Director of Department of Human Services. Thank you for your favorable action on this nomination.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION CENTER

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 3198, HONOLULU, HI 96801-3198

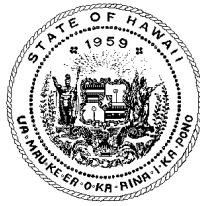
LEGAL HELPLINE: (808) 531-3771

TOLL-FREE NEIGHBOR ISLAND HELPLINE: (800) 690-6200

WEBSITE: WWW.DOMESTICVIOLENCEACTIONCENTER.ORG

EMAIL: DVAC@STOPTHEVIOLENCE.ORG

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



MARI McCAIG BELLINGER
Chair

CLIFTON Y.S. CHOY
Commissioner

JO KAMAE BYRNE
Commissioner

PAMELA FERGUSON-BREY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII – KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
**CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION
COMMISSION**

Ke Komikina Uku Luaahi Kalaima

1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1530
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Telephone: 808 587-1143
Fax: 808 587-1146

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 512
Consideration and Confirmation for Catherine Betts
as the Director, Department of Human Services

by

Pamela Ferguson-Brey, Executive Director
Crime Victim Compensation Commission

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 1, 2023; 1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

Thank you for providing the Crime Victim Compensation Commission ("Commission") with the opportunity to testify before you today. The Commission strongly supports the appointment of Catherine Betts to service as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Ms. Betts has led the Department of Human Services in leadership roles since 2017 and has proven herself to be not only a dedicated public servant but also a tireless advocate for marginalized individuals, families, and communities.

The Commission is a quasi-judicial body that provides compensation for violent crime victims to pay un-reimbursed expenses for crime-related losses due to physical or mental injury or death. Many victims of violent crime could not afford to pay their medical bills, receive needed mental health or rehabilitative services, or bury a loved one if compensation were not available from the Commission. The Commission has taken the lead to ensure that Hawai'i's mass violence response integrates the needs of victims, survivors, and the community into State and County Emergency response plans and incident command systems.

I have had to opportunity to work with Ms. Betts in her various capacities for more than a decade. First, in her capacity as the Executive Director of the Hawai'i State Coalition on the Status of Women and later in her capacity as the Deputy Director and then Director of the Department of Human Services.

During her tenure at the Hawai'i State Coalition on the Status of Women, Ms. Betts led efforts to ensure equal access to education through Title IX, championed the rights of crime victims, and secured federal grant funding that resulted in foundational research that informs employment policy decisions affecting women and girls.

In 2017, Ms. Betts became the Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services and in 2020, became the Director where she continues to serve the public by utilizing her skills and breadth of knowledge to advocate for economic equity within our community and to ensure the provision of services to our most vulnerable populations. The Commission is working with the Department of Human Services to establish a victim-centered approach to our State;s mass violence response. Her commitment to this issue is critical to this effort.

Ms. Betts' legal background, strong executive leadship skills, and work within the community have proven that she has what is needed to lead the Department of Human Services.

The Commission strongly urges you to confirm Ms. Betts to continue to lead the Department of Human Services as its Director.



PŪ'Ā FOUNDATION
Empowering Individuals, Families & Communities

GM 512

Gubernatorial Nominee - Catherine Betts for the Director of the Dept. of Human Services

To: The Honorable Senators Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair; & Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

From: Toni Bissen, Executive Director – Pū'ā Foundation; toni.bissen@puafoundation.net

Date: Wed., March 1, 2023, 1:00 pm; Conf. Rm. 225 State Capitol; 415 South Beretania St.

Re: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of GM 512 – Gubernatorial Nominee – Catherine Betts for the Director of the Dept. of Human Services**

This testimony is in **strong support** of GM 512 to confirm Governor Green's nominee Catherine Betts for a second term as Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am writing as a community resource and partner that has worked with Director Betts for years, beginning with her leadership at the Commission for the Status of Women as the executive director.

By way of background, I am the executive director of the Pū'ā Foundation, a non-profit organization with a social justice focus that specializes in community organizing, capacity building and training. We develop and provide resources to support justice-involved women and their families, especially those of Native Hawaiian ancestry, that are affected by trauma and incarceration. Our motto is, “Trauma to Transformation, Incarceration to Independence.” We are committed to developing resources in the areas of housing, economic sustainability – earning a livable wage, and establishing healthy relationships to achieve reduced recidivism, ending the over-representation of Native Hawaiians incarcerated and increasing services to families affected by trauma and incarceration.

Through our work, we came to know Ms. Betts in her position to advocate for women in Hawaii. As she began her tenure at the Dept. of Human Services we continued to be supportive community partners with initiative such as `Ohana Nui. Currently we are working with DHS on providing public benefit resources for women exiting prison, namely SNAP, Financial, and Health Insurance. The Pū'ā Foundation has also coordinated training and technical assistance workshop resources from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Humans Services, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with a Hawaii team that includes DHS, with Director Betts as a member of the Advisory Team. She is a proven leader, and has assembled her top management team to operate the Department together effectively. While there are significant challenges in the area of human services, with her years of experience, methodical and strategic approach to managing financial and human resources and community partnerships, I believe she will continue to serve the people of Hawaii well in the capacity as the Director of Human Services.

Again, I strongly support the confirmation of Governor Green's nominee Catherine Betts for a second term as Director of the Department of Human Services. Mahalo for opportunity to submit this testimony in support of GM 512.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, March 1, 2023; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Via Videoconference**

RE: GM0512 -- SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE CATHERINE BETTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2025.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Hirokawa and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of Human Services.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The HPCA has long held that the social determinants of health -- more than any other factor -- contribute to the overall wellbeing of our people. Persons who experience homelessness, language barriers, and poverty are more likely to suffer persistent, chronic health issues and have shorter life expectancies than those who do not.

We believe that Ms. Betts's impeccable credentials, steadfast dedication and tireless commitment to furthering the health and wellbeing for all of Hawaii's communities make her uniquely qualified for the position of Director of Human Services. As demonstrated throughout her career, Ms. Betts fully understands the importance of socio-economic equity in the pursuit of optimal health outcomes for all our citizens.

For these reasons, the HPCA urges your confirmation of the nomination of Ms. Catherine Betts for the position of Director of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiPCA.net.



1130 N. NIMITZ HWY, SUITE C-210, HONOLULU, HI 96817
PHONE: (808) 838-7752 TOLL FREE: (866) 636-1644 FAX: (808) 838-1653

To: Senate Health and Human Services Committee
From: Laurie Arial Tochiki, Executive Director
Re: Support for GM 512
Date: March 1, 2023

I am Laurie Arial Tochiki and I am the Executive Director of EPIC 'Ohana. I am writing to provide my whole-hearted support for the reappointment of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services. I have known and worked with Cathy since she was a student at the William S. Richardson School of Law and I was Associate Dean for Student Services. In this long relationship I have experienced her compassion, her clear thinking and her integrity.

In addition, as Executive Director of EPIC 'Ohana our organization is deeply grateful for Cathy's collaborative approach. When there are problems or obstacles, Cathy is open to listening and finding solutions. I have been working in the child welfare system for 40 years. First as an attorney representing parents and children in child welfare cases, then as an employee of the Judiciary where I helped to establish programs relating to families and children, including Kids First. In 1996 I was blessed to serve as one of the founders of 'Ohana Conferencing. Over those 40 years I have experienced several different directors. Cathy's approach is refreshing.

There are many challenges and the system is extremely complex. Over the last four years Cathy led the department through the pandemic. Mired by sometimes unnecessary state bureaucracy, Cathy's clear thinking helped the department navigate while also being both humane and careful.

Cathy's support for our HI HOPES foster youth leadership boards is extremely important. During the pandemic she and Daisy Hartsfield spent an hour getting to know our foster youth leaders. She also reached out to the non-profit organizations serving the department with a hand of collaboration and care when the pandemic began. This was in contrast to official state communications that were inhumane and rigid.

Thank you for your consideration.



Date: February 27th, 2023

To: Committee on Health and Human Services
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: **Strong Support for GM 512**, Relating to the confirmation of CATHERINE BETTS as the Director of the Department of Human Services

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. Over 300 ECAS network partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS strongly supports GM 512. GM 512 will consider and confirm CATHERINE BETTS as the Director of HHS Department of Human Services, with a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Director Betts has proven to be a champion for children and families and appreciates the critical leadership role that DHS plays in meeting the needs of Hawai'i's most vulnerable keiki and families. Over the last several years, Director Betts has worked on improving the child care system, has supported trauma-informed care efforts across the islands, expanded Medicaid coverage to meet health care demands, improved the turnaround time on contract payments for direct service organizations and has worked across state departments to streamline services for children and families. Director Betts is a systems-thinker and systems improver and the ECAS network has appreciated her leadership and partnership.

As Governor Green frequently says, "Hawaii's children deserve a trauma-free life." The Department of Human Services is one of the top two departments in the state that can ensure our keiki have a trauma-free life. Please support Catherine Betts nomination.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support of GM 512.**

91-1841 Fort Weaver Road
Ewa Beach, HI 96706
Phone 808.681.3500
Fax 808.681.5280
www.childandfamilyservice.org



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Council on Accreditation
Better Business Bureau

AFFILIATIONS
Kauai United Way
Maui United Way
Hawaii Island United Way

February 27, 2023

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **GM 512 –Testimony in Support of Catherine Betts
as the Director for the Department of Human Services**

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing in strong support of Catherine Betts for the role of Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS). Cathy is a strong leader with vision who understands the complexities and challenges of running DHS. She is a great collaborator, problem solver, and has worked tirelessly to ensure the department is functioning well.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Karen Tan, LCSW
Child & Family Service
President & CEO
Email: ktan@cfs-hawaii.org
Phone: (808) 681-1460



Aloha United Way

“We’re all about FAMILY”

Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



**Parents And
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 512

TO: Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, & Members
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO
DATE: March 1, 2023 at 1:00 PM

Parents and Children Together (PACT) supports GM 512, the gubernatorial nomination of Catherine Betts for the position of Director of the Department of Human Services.

Cathy is an experienced attorney, advocate and leader who is highly qualified to in this position. She has been serving our community well as Director since 2020, and prior to that as DHS Deputy Director as well as Executive Director of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women.

Cathy is a champion for the children and families of Hawaii and has consistently fought to protect, preserve and uplift the rights of our residents. Her exceptional career as an attorney, advocate, and leader has garnered her a great deal of respect from peers and the community alike. She is a leader who wants the best for our community, collaborates to achieve the most effective outcomes and understands the complexities of managing a large state department. She leads with honesty, integrity, clarity and a sincere mission of serving Hawaii. We are confident that Cathy will continue to work with all constituents to ensure the best for the Department and the many children and families of Hawaii.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senator San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: GM512, consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services
1:00 p.m., March 1, 2023

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to **testify in STRONG SUPPORT of the nomination of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services.**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) provides essential supports and services for Hawai'i. At any given moment, they are serving **at least 1 in 4 Hawai'i residents and more than half of Hawai'i's keiki**. Their programs and services also cover the lifespan—from prenatal supports for pregnant people to protecting our eldest kūpuna from abuse and neglect. DHS provides these supports through nearly 2,000 employees across more than 80 offices statewide and with nearly \$4 billion in federal and state funds. Simply put: It is a big department with big impact for our communities.

Members of our organization have worked with Director Betts in a number of different capacities, including, for the last two years, as director of DHS. Her career has prepared her well to lead the department. She has a thorough understanding of government processes—in all branches. She leads with empathy which is critical for the keiki, 'ohana, and kūpuna that receive services and benefits from DHS. And, **she has a vision for Hawai'i that is equitable, just and full of thriving communities.**

During Director Betts' time at the helm of DHS, we have appreciated her willingness not only to hear areas of improvement but to welcome support and assistance from the community. One example of this has been her openness to improve the ways the department regulates and subsidizes child care programs. The pandemic meant not just significant struggles for child care providers but also an influx of federal monies. Director Betts has ensured her staff included community input at various points over the last two and a half years. These efforts meant that when DHS pushed out more than \$70 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to the child

care sector, the grant program allowed providers to use monies in ways that made sense to them. This is thanks to Director Betts' insistence that any plans for ARPA monies be informed by the practical and lived experiences—and challenges—of families' and the early childhood community.

While the worst of the pandemic is over, the impact is not. Many of the programs and services DHS administers will be going through significant transitions as the public health emergency winds down. Keiki, 'ohana, and kūpuna will continue to feel the impact of stressors born out of the pandemic for years to come. And, in turn, they will come to rely on the programs and services of DHS in new and old ways.

The department—and Hawai'i—deserves a leader who can lead it out of the pandemic and to an even brighter future. We can think of no one better for that role than Catherine Betts.

Mahalo,

Deborah Zysman
Executive Director

Ke'ōpū Reelitz
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy



February 27, 2023

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Acquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Hearing on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 1:00 p.m., Conference Room #225
Regarding GM 512, “Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director,
Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a
term to expire 12-07-2026.”

Dear Chair San Buenaventura and Vice Chair Acquino and Members of the Senate Committee
on Health and Human Services,

I ask that you would **strongly support GM 512** to enable Catherine Betts to continue to provide
the guidance, oversight and vision for the State Department of Human Services as the Director of
the Department of Human Services.

Partners in Development Foundation (PIDF) is a 501(c)(3) celebrating over 25 years of service to
the communities of Hawai‘i addressing needs of at-risk youth and families in areas of multi-
generational education, strengthening families and communities in areas of social services, and
promoting island resiliency through PIDF’s environmental projects. PIDF would not be as
equipped to provide these services without the leadership and support of people like Catherine
Betts. Currently PIDF partners with the Department of Human Services in multiple
projects: Project Pilina recruits resource caregivers across the state for the children and youth in
the foster care system; Ke Kama Pono Safehouse runs a 24-7 residential service for adjudicated
male teens contracted by the Office of Youth Services; and the Kawailoa Youth and Family
Wellness Center collaboration has just launched an eight year \$20 million grant from the W.K.
Kellogg Foundation which would not be possible without the partnership of Catherine Betts and
the Office of Youth Services.

The momentum of all of this critical work must continue and the confirmation of Catherine Betts
as the Director of the Department of Human Services is essential toward providing the continuity
of management, collaboration and support that Director Betts has been able to maintain.

Serving Hawai‘i’s Families, Living Hawaiian Values

I ask that you support GM 512.

Me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn".

Shawn M. Kana'iaupuni, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer



March 1, 2023

To: Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Hawaii Association of Health Plans Public Policy Committee

Date/Location: March 1, 2023; 9:30 a.m., Conference Room 211/Videoconference

Re: Testimony in support of GM 512 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of GM 512, the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Ms. Betts is an experienced professional that has worked in various roles throughout the state. She's currently serving as the Director of the Department of Human Services, where she oversees and provides leadership support to roughly 2,000 employees across the state. She has also served in various leadership roles including the Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services and the Executive Director of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women.

Ms. Betts has long been a champion for Hawaii's women, families and children. Prior to leading the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, she was a partner at Betts & Wood, LLC where she practiced in the field of family law. And she served as the Deputy Attorney General for the Department of the Attorney General Family Law Division.

She is a leader who understands the value of compassion, collaboration, and community. With a Juris Doctorate from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, William S. Richardson School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of

AlohaCare | HMAA | HMSA | Humana | HWMG | Kaiser Permanente | MDX Hawaii | Ohana Health Plan | UHA Health Insurance | UnitedHealthcare

hahp.org | 818 Keeaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96814 | info@hahp.org



California, Los Angeles, we believe that Ms. Betts is highly qualified for the position of Director.

Thank you for the opportunity to support GM 512. Your consideration of the confirmation of Ms. Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services is appreciated.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee
cc: HAHP Board Members

AlohaCare | HMAA | HMSA | Humana | HWMG | Kaiser Permanente | MDX Hawaii | Ohana Health Plan | UHA Health Insurance | UnitedHealthcare

hahp.org | 818 Keeaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96814 | info@hahp.org



HIPHI Board

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Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public
Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: February 28, 2023

To: Senator Joy. A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry JC Aquino, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: Support GM512 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the
Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee,
Catherine Betts, for a term to expire 12.07.2026

Hrg: Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at 1:00 PM, Conf Rm 225

The Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI) is in **Support of GM512**, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Catherine Betts**, for a term to expire 12.07.2026.

Since 2011, Catherine Betts has served our state at the Department of Human Services. She served as the Executive Director of the Hawai'i Status on Women, where she spent six years moving progressive legislation for women, families, and victims of gender-based violence. She then served as the Deputy Director of Human Services, where she was vital in optimizing federal funding in the Social Services Division, and increased staff training and retention.

She was appointed Director of the Department of Human Services, where she has had overwhelming support. She continues to uplift communities by supporting inclusive, results-focused policies, increased federal funding, and navigated the Department of Human Services through a pandemic, a department that saw rapid changes with those they serve. Ms. Betts led with compassion for her employees, accountability to our state, and a commitment to those her department serves.

Cathy Betts will continue to serve our state with this dedication, and for these reasons, HIPHI supports Cathy Betts for another term as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peggy Mierzwa'.

Peggy Mierzwa
Director of Policy & Advocacy

ⁱ Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 28, 2023

TO: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura
Chair, Committee on Health and Human Services
Submitted Via Capitol Website



FROM: Mihoko Ito

RE: **GM512 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire on 12-07-2026. Hearing Date: Wednesday, March 1 at 1:00 p.m. Conference Room: 225**

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I respectfully offer this testimony in **strong support** of Cathy Betts' appointment as director of the Department of Human Services.

I have known Cathy in a personal and professional capacity for many years, as Director and Deputy Director for the Department of Human Services, as a Board Member on the Hawaii Women Lawyers, and as Executive Director for the Commission on the Status of Women.

What has always impressed me about Cathy is that she is compassionate, caring and driven by doing the right thing, but also strives to listen to people with different viewpoints. I have always trusted Cathy's advice and counsel without hesitation, and have found her to be honest, hardworking, and insightful on issues we have worked on together over the years.

The Department of Human Services has been extremely fortunate to have Cathy serve as its Director for the last several years. She has done excellent work in overseeing the Department's many social services benefits and programs, which provide an extremely important safety net for our community. I have full confidence that Cathy will continue to be an effective leader for the Department.

For the above reasons, I strongly support Ms. Betts' nomination, and request that the Committee advise and consent to her nomination as the director of the Department of Human Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



March 1, 2023 at 1:00 pm
Conference Room 225

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

To: Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura
Vice Chair Henry J.C. Aquino

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy
Associate Vice President, Government Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**
GM 512, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Catherine Betts

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the healthcare continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities, and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to **support** the nomination of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services. We have appreciated Ms. Betts' commitment to helping the most underserved in our community, her openness to meeting with members of the community, and her willingness to engage in difficult conversations and make changes if they are appropriate. She has a deep, public service-driven ethic that she clearly applies to her role as leader of the department that is encouraging.

The healthcare community is still recovering from the pandemic and we are facing historic staffing issues and inflationary pressures. The department will be well served in tackling those issues with Ms. Betts at the helm, especially as the MedQUEST division undertakes historic efforts on redetermination and supporting access to critical services such as primary care and long-term care. The Hawaii residents who rely on critical benefits provided by the department will undoubtedly benefit from the continued, steady, and compassionate leadership of Ms. Betts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony for this nomination and we would urge your committee to approve Ms. Bett's confirmation.



HAWAI'I STATE
**COALITION AGAINST
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

March 1, 2024

Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura
Vice Chair Henry J.C. Aquino
Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Sen. Brenton Awa

LATE

Re: GM512 consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) addresses the social, political, and economic impacts of domestic violence on individuals, families, and communities. We are a statewide partnership of domestic violence programs and shelters.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 28 member programs statewide, I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of the nomination of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) provides essential support and services for Hawai'i and is the administrator of federal funds for domestic violence shelters and supportive services. At any given moment, they are serving at least 1 in 4 Hawai'i residents and more than half of Hawai'i's children. Their programs and services also cover the lifespan—from supporting survivors of domestic violence and their children to protecting our eldest kūpuna from abuse and neglect. DHS provides these supports through nearly 2,000 employees across more than 80 offices statewide and with nearly \$4 billion in federal and state funds. Simply put: It is a big department with a big impact on our communities.

Members of our coalition have worked with Director Betts in several capacities, including, for the last two years, as director of DHS. Her career has prepared her well to lead the department. She has a thorough understanding of government processes—in all branches. She leads with empathy which is critical for the survivors of domestic violence and that receive services and



HAWAI'I STATE
COALITION AGAINST
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

benefits from DHS. And, **she has a vision for Hawai'i that is equitable, just, and full of thriving communities.**

During Director Betts' tenure at the helm of DHS, we have appreciated her willingness not only to hear areas of improvement but to welcome support and assistance from the community, especially as we address the challenges survivors of domestic violence experience when navigating the child welfare system.

Sincerely,

Angelina Mercado, Executive Director

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



DOUGLAS MURDOCK
CHIEF INFORMATION
OFFICER

OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HI 96810-0119
Ph: (808) 586-6000 | Fax: (808) 586-1922
ETS.HAWAII.GOV

LATE

Testimony of
DOUGLAS MURDOCK
Chief Information Officer
Enterprise Technology Services

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 512
NOMINATION OF CATHERINE BETTS, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SERVICES
Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of Governor Josh Green's nomination of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Ms. Betts has served as the DHS Director since 2020, and Deputy Director from October 2017. In these roles, she worked closely with all departmental divisions and agencies, providing supervisory and managerial support, and overseeing the implementation of 'Ohana Nui, the multi-generational approach to eliminate intergenerational poverty for Hawai'i's families. Under her leadership during the pandemic, she worked to meet the dramatic increase in demand for social services statewide.

She has also served as the Executive Director for the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and as a Deputy Attorney General for the Social Services division's Child Welfare Services branch.

Ms. Betts is very qualified to continue in her position as Director of DHS and I am proud to support her confirmation.

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



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 512

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

LATE

From: The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights
Co-Chairs Amy Agbayani and Pat McManaman

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights works to achieve equity, justice, inclusion, uphold civil rights, and eliminate discrimination. We stand in **Strong Support of Cathy Betts'** confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) protects and provides services for Hawai'i's most vulnerable residents including low-income persons, disabled persons, domestic violence and human trafficking victims, abused children, and frail, disabled, and abused elderly persons.

Ms. Betts' compassion, legal training, and experience are the right mix to lead the DHS into the future. Ms. Betts is thoughtful and deliberate, collaborative, and a champion for Hawai'i's most vulnerable persons. She is the right person at the right time to provide leadership at DHS.

Thank you for the opportunity to support Ms. Betts.

Date: March 1, 2023

To: Committee on House of Human Services

Chair: Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventra

Vice Chair: Henry J.C Aquino

Committee Members



RE: Catherine Betts Consideration and Confirmation as Director, Department of Human Services.

Thank you, committee chair, vice chair and committee members, for allowing me the opportunity to share my testimony for the consideration and confirmation of Catherine "Cathy" Betts as Director, of Department of Human Services. Ms. Betts has been the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) since 2020.

Ms. Betts meets the qualifications and has had a successful career. Prior to her appointment in 2020, Ms. Betts was also the deputy director in 2017. Ms. Betts brings experience and knowledge to the table and that's not disputed. What is disputed is her capacity and her ability to carry out her job duties as Director of DHS and the Child Welfare Services (CWS) division.

DHS and the CWS Division is a challenging position that requires truth and accuracy when dealing with the Family Court. Ms. Betts has not shown, nor has she been responsive to many requests to follow up on cases where there has been clear evidence regarding conflicts of interest, fraudulent reporting, omission of exculpatory evidence and Constitutional Violations under both the United States Constitution and the Hawaii state constitution specifically addressing the 4th Amendment, the right to be free of illegal search and seizure and of 14th Amendment, which addresses the right to Due Process, which includes the right to be presumed "innocent until proven guilty." Currently DHS and CWS continue to violate these rights with impunity. In the CWS "System," parents are automatically presumed "guilty until proven innocent," which is prohibited in any other court of law.

As an independent consultant and victim advocate, I have consulted many families involved in Criminal Court, Civil Court and Family Court. I have advised parents to document their concerns and to provide grievances in writing to CWS and directly to Ms. Betts. To date, reports by parents confirm that multiple phone calls/emails were sent during their cases for which there was no response. Parents had or continue to have no home visits. Parents who contested the allegations have waited for more than a year for adjudication, while caseworkers were non-responsive and retaliatory. Parents who have completed all "recommended" services are still awaiting reunification with their children. These above actions or non-actions are often referred to as "institutional neglect."

In the recent high-profile case involving the murder of Ariels Sellers (aka Isabella Kalua) her siblings were split up and the oldest sibling (13) who is also a victim/witness to a crime, is currently placed in a facility which also holds youth status offenders. Ariels older sibling has reported being threatened, punched, and intimidated by other youth in the facility. The sibling reported these events to the CWS Social Worker, and no action was taken. In addition, a biological aunty of the siblings has been asking, from the

beginning, to have the siblings placed with her. CWS SW denied the aunty any involvement in the case since she was not “blood related.” This is not true or accurate and the aunty continues to fight for placement.

Currently, the aunty has filled out all necessary documentation requesting placement. She has completed all foster care licensing requirements. She has completed all training and has had four walk throughs of her home. A Home Study was completed but has not been submitted to the court. The aunty signed a *consent to release* the Home Study Report to the family court. CWS SW told aunty she would “think about it.” Again, another example non-action or “institutional neglect.”

The high-profile case of Ariel has once again highlighted the flaws in the system. The same flaws have been outlined via independent audits as far back as 1989. These flaws have also been addressed in the most recent articles published by investigative reporter John Hill from Civil Beat. John Hills series entitled “*Hawaii vs. Parental Rights*,” has also highlighted the same concerns that have been discussed for over twenty years and still DHS and CWS operates under the system of secrecy, and they hide behind the “cloak of confidentiality.” Ms. Betts has continued and remains unresponsive to the needs of those involved in the flawed CWS system. At this time, and for the above reasons, I do NOT support the confirmation of Catherine Betts Director, Department of Human Services.

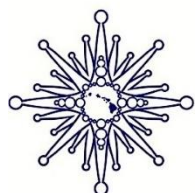
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Nonohe Botelho, MSCP

Independent Consultant/ Victim Advocate

Hawaii Coalition for Child Protective Reform



HAWAII COALITION
FOR
CHILD PROTECTIVE REFORM



Hawaii Family Advocacy Group

14-3399 Alii Rd Pahoia Hi 96778

(808) 365-8773

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Joshua Franklin

Due to Fraud, Lack of response, Retaliation, Professional Misconduct

Date: March 1, 2023

Re: STRONG OPPOSITION for Cathy Betts as continuing Director of DHS

My names is Joshua Franklin; I have been a family advocate on Hawaii Island for the last decade. I have found the Department of Human Services to be broken and filled with corruption, including a lack of training or blatant disregard for laws to protect citizens. This past year I have been appalled at numerous family cases as I have witnessed bias, discrimination, and fraud. I have contacted Ms. Betts's office numerous times on multiple issues involving different families and concerns with social workers to no avail. Despite sending her irrefutable evidence of professional misconduct, Ms. Betts has refused to meet with me. She has advocated for this behavior through her lack of response. The Department now has advised me that they will not speak to me, and I have been prohibited from asking any questions on case files even after a formal privacy release has been signed. Cathy Betts is aware of this. I was retaliated by and

through C.W.S. in association with Parents Inc as one of the fathers I represent audio recorded a supervised visit of which a fraudulent report was produced. If not for the audio, we would have no proof that the agency actively is advocating for parental alienation of fathers from children. We have a systemic issue of discrimination against fathers, yet Ms. Betts refuses to address this issue. Shortly after this, I was blackballed by Parents Inc regarding employment opportunities as their supervisor then, Sossity Rapoza accidentally sent me an email indicating that she planned not to give me an interview. She was terminated only after the agency couldn't deny this attempted retaliation. I fear the agency is corrupt and have asked for an internal investigation to the act of fraud yet have not gotten any response from Ms. Betts, The Department of Human Services Is aware P.A.R.E.N.T.S. Inc supports parental alienation and professional misconduct up and including doctoring up false narratives of supervised visitation reports and having illegal hiring practices. Child Welfare is understaffed, leading to bias and prejudice guiding some social workers' cases. It's simply "less work" to discriminate against certain families or individuals. I am currently dealing with multiple cases of fraud, committed perjury, defamation, and retaliation. I remain highly concerned that Ms. Betts's lack of response is due to her lack of passion for her position, as she has not taken her directorship seriously. We need someone accountable and responsive at the very least.

Sincerely

Joshua Franklin

(Family Advocate)

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 3:02:06 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Yamamoto	Testifying for Hawaii Coalition for Child Protective Reform	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee members,

I have been helping families understand their rights in the child welfare system and supporting legislative reform for 10 years.

I oppose the confirmation of Ms. Betts for the following reasons.

She has been either the second in command or Director of DHS for the past 5 years. During that time, 4 children died while in foster care, according to the DOH report to the legislature by the death review board, 2 children died at the hands of parents after extensive contact with DHS. There has been no transparency to the public regarding the causes of death or improvements made to prevent those deaths.

In 2016, I was told that CWS needs no warrant to remove a child from a parent. Since then, Civil Beat has published the truth about the lack of training on the constitutional rights of families or the statutory laws that govern child protection. Ms. Betts has had two years to implement warrant training since professional power-point training was made available to the department in November 2020.

I've seen countless disregard of the law and policies of DHS by caseworkers. Parents have sent hundreds of emails and made phone calls to caseworkers all the way up to the Director's office. I can't remember that any parent ever received a response.

It's time for leadership in the department by someone who first and foremost understands the right of parents to raise their children without government intervention unless there is due process and a leader who will hold the entire department accountable for training and compliance with its own laws and directives.

Hawaii's former DHS Director Lillian Koller was subject to a Senate investigation when two children died under her watch as DSS Director in South Carolina. She resigned after having been given a vote of "no" confidence due to a testimony that was defensive and offered no solutions to the accountability of the department.

A new Director in the South Carolina Department admitted on the record that the agency cannot guarantee the safety of children in state care. It's time for a leader in Hawaii who will admit that the Child Welfare Division is gravely in need of reform and who can articulate the measures that will be taken to address that.

There have been 21 lawsuits filed or settled against the Child Welfare Division of DHS since 2013. 4 are currently active and another is pending. That is too many and a direct reflection of the competency of the Director. The public should not have to foot the bill for indifference to the need for strong leadership.

The state cannot afford another Ariel Sellers' tragedy while a working group seeks to recognize what has already been published by experts for decades. The lack of training and due process contributes to case overload and the ripple effect of unnecessary child deaths. The public deserves transparency and accountability from its Directors of government departments.

Marilyn Yamamoto

Hawaii Coalition for Child Welfare Reform

Pankaj Bhanot
Honolulu, HI

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino., Vice Chair
Committee on Health Human Services
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

From: Pankaj Bhanot

Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Re: GM 512 for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire at noon on 12-07-2026.

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, Senator Shimabukuro, Senator Moriwaki, and Senator Awa of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Pankaj Bhanot and I am submitting this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Catherine Betts' consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a term to expire at noon on December 07, 2026.

I had the pleasure of working with Cathy as a colleague, mentor and supervisor in my capacity as the Director of DHS from September 2016-August 2020; and Deputy Director of DHS from December 2010-January 2012 and January 2015-August 2016. During my tenure as the DHS Director, Cathy served as the Executive Director of the Commission of the Status of Women; and as the Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services from September 2017-August 2020.

Cathy was appointed as the Director of DHS on September 1, 2020, by then Governor Ige and she was confirmed by the Senate on March 12, 2021. Governor Green has nominated Cathy to continue to lead the DHS because she has served the department and our Aloha State with exemplary competence, dedication, and courage.

Cathy possesses relevant professional experience and all tangible and intangible knowledge, skills and abilities that are needed to manage and lead DHS, one of the most critical and complicated executive agencies in the State of Hawai'i, during the pandemic and challenging economic times. Cathy played a critical role in developing DHS' response to the Covid-19 pandemic; development and implementation of the first comprehensive strategic plan for DHS based on Article IX Section 3 of the Hawaii's Constitution, 'Ohana Nui, multigenerational and integrated approach to alleviating poverty in Hawai'i, and Aloha Spirit; functional reorganization of all major divisions of DHS; development of DHS' budget and critical legislative

initiatives; overseeing the operation of all major business units of DHS; and overseeing and managing all major litigation efforts of DHS.

She successfully lead the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women for nearly seven years and oversaw several legislative and policy successes including: the final passage of the Compassionate Care Act, which ensures rape victims have access to emergency contraception emergency rooms in Hawai'i; various state Title IX reforms to ensure Hawaii continues to protect and preserve the late Congresswoman Patsy Mink's legacy; protections for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault; reforms for temporary restraining order process; and increased training on gender based violence. Cathy has also practiced in government and private legal practice since 2006. Cathy's legal background and experience as a deputy attorney general (Family Law Division) will be an asset as all DHS programs, benefits, and services are heavily regulated by the federal and state laws and rules.

Cathy was honored by the Hawai'i State Legislature in 2014 for her commitment to Title IX, received the President's Award from Hawai'i Women Lawyer's in 2015, and successfully hosted the 2016 National Association of Commissions for Women Annual Conference which brought together Commissions from every state, here in Hawai'i. In March 2018, she received the Women's History Month Honoree award by Family Values at Work, an organization dedicated to expanding paid family and sick leave across the nation, as well as being awarded Soroptomist International's Central O'ahu Ruby Award Winner. In May 2020, she was recognized as one of four YWCA Women's Leader Awardees. Most Recently, in February 2021, Cathy was awarded the Rhoda Lewis Award by the Hawai'i Women's Legal Foundation for outstanding public service. Cathy has deep roots in the community and has also served on the board of Hawai'i Women Lawyers, Hawai'i Filipino Lawyers Association, as co-chair and Chair of the HSBA Diversity, Equality, and the Law Committee, the Board of Directors for Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking, and the Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts.

Cathy earned her BA in Sociology from the University of California at Los Angeles and her juris doctorate from the University of Hawai'i, William S. Richardson School of Law, where she served as the Patsy T. Mink Legislative Fellow in the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye's Washington D.C. office.

In addition to her very successful and well-decorated professional career, Cathy, along with her husband Aubrey, is raising two wonderful children and finds time to contribute to many social causes.

Cathy's educational background, professional experience, character, integrity, fairness, professionalism, empathy for those who are struggling to make ends meet, desire to serve and do the right thing for right reasons, commitment to protect health and safety, and promote well-being and self-sufficiency of Hawai'i's families and children, makes her an ideal person to lead DHS during these challenging times.

For the foregoing reasons, I strongly urge the Senate Committee on Human Services to recommend Cathy's appointment to the full Senate to be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Human Services for a term to expire at noon on 12-07-2026.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Veronica A.M. Fuentes
(808) 392-7638
goddesscheong@yahoo.com

TESTIMONY BY
VERONICA A.M. FUENTES
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

March 1, 2023

1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 225

Submitting for consideration and confirmation Governor's Message 512 as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire at noon on 12-07-2026.

I am submitting this testimony in **Strong Support** of the nomination and confirmation of Catherine Betts as Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS). Director Betts' knowledge and understanding of DHS and the essential services it provides to Hawaii's most vulnerable residents puts her at the forefront of leading the department. Her experiences as a Deputy Attorney General representing DHS in child welfare cases, as Executive Director of the Commission on the Status of Women, as Deputy Director of DHS, and since September 2020, serving as Director – uniquely qualifies her to continue to lead the department.

Director Betts' professional commitment to public service, humanity and humility are essential parts of her leadership. Throughout the pandemic, she has continually emphasized health and safety measures for all of DHS staff, their providers, and the public that they serve. Her open communication has encouraged the various units of DHS to be responsive to the community's needs and envision ways to improve access to benefits and services. She is a collaborator with legislators, other executive branch agencies, and community providers to assist and deliver additional federal stimulus funds and address the community needs.

With her leadership and guidance, DHS will continue to thrive in assisting the most vulnerable and needy residents in our State. I am in **strong support** for the nomination of Ms. Betts to continue to serve as the Director for the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

March 1, 2023 at 1:00 pm
Conference Room 225

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

To: Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura
Vice Chair Henry Aquino

From: Joseph Campos II, Deputy Director

Re: **Testimony in Strong Support**
GM512, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the
Department of Human Services, Catherine Betts

I am Joseph H. Campos II and currently serve as Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services. I am writing this letter in **Strong Support** of the nomination and confirmation of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Director Betts has an in-depth understanding of DHS and the essential services DHS provides to Hawaii's most vulnerable residents. Her experiences as a Deputy Attorney General representing DHS in child welfare cases, as Executive Director of the Commission on the Status of Women, as Deputy Director of DHS, and since September 2020, serving as Director of DHS, uniquely qualify her to continue to lead DHS. Her proven leadership through the pandemic will serve Hawaii well through the transition to recovery.

Director Betts' professional commitment to public service, her tireless efforts, and her understanding of the complex legal and administrative processes required to oversee a statewide staff of more than 1,500 who deliver benefits and services to more than 467,000 Hawaii residents make her a valuable and necessary asset to our State.

Director Betts' humanity and humility are essential parts of her leadership. Throughout the pandemic, she has emphasized health and safety measures for DHS staff, DHS providers, and the public DHS serves. Her open communication has promoted and encouraged the various units of DHS to be responsive and empathetic to the community's needs to find ways to improve access to benefits and services. She is especially mindful of pandemic and economic stressors on families with children and Hawaii's multigenerational households. She has worked collaboratively with legislators, other executive branch agencies, and community providers to deliver additional federal stimulus funds and address community needs.

With her leadership and guidance, DHS will continue to innovate and be responsive to the fundamental needs of Hawaii's residents so that everyone has the opportunity to recover and thrive.

I **strongly support** the nomination of Ms. Betts to continue to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 2:08:35 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Delia Ulima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I would like to submit testimony in support of Catherine Betts as DHS Director. I have worked with foster youth for over 13 years to advocate for improvements in the child welfare system and to promote the voices of those with lived experience. Director Betts has been supportive of youth engagement and youth voice and involved in various ways. She is a wonderful example of hands-on, effective leadership with aloha. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Governor's Message No. 512

Relating to the Nomination of Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services

March 1, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
Testimony of Noa Dettweiler-Pavia

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Noa Dettweiler-Pavia and I testify in SUPPORT of Governor's Message No. 512 regarding the nomination of Catherine A. Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services.

It is my great privilege to have known Cathy for 20 years: first as a fellow law student, then as a colleague, and always as a friend. Cathy first proved her mettle as a staunch advocate for Hawai'i's families when we were Deputy Attorneys General in the Department of the Attorney General of the State of Hawai'i's Family Law Division. The cases she handled were both professionally and emotionally challenging but her commitment to the pursuit of justice for Hawai'i's children was resolute.

Through the fifteen years that I have been a family court litigator in child welfare services cases, guardian ad litem for foster children, and foster parent – turned - adoptive parent, I have a good understanding of Hawai'i's child welfare system and the many problems that plague it. As the DHS's director, Cathy has worked tirelessly over the past several years in collaboration with various government and private entities to improve CWS outcomes. This is an especially significant achievement at a time when the social and economic realities facing Hawai'i's families are so harsh.

It has been exciting for me to watch Cathy grow as one of Hawai'i's most dynamic and selfless leaders. Her ability to successfully steer the DHS through unprecedented difficulties over the past several years is demonstrative of that leadership ability. By confirming her nomination as director, you affirm the primacy that we place on social justice in Hawai'i, particularly for its most vulnerable populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 27, 2023

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services

RE: GM 512 - Nomination of Catherine Betts as Director, Department of Human Services

Aloha Chair, San Buenaventura, Vice Chair, Aquino, and members of the Committee:

I agree with Governor Green's nomination and **strongly support** Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services. Ms. Betts understands and knows how to stand up for individuals and families served through the department's programs and services. Her professional training in law and compassion as a woman and mom incorporates trauma-informed care in her relationships with others. In September 2021, despite being at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Betts accepted the challenging role of leading the department. In addition, she continues to advocate for the marginalized, victimized, and vulnerable individuals in our communities.

Ms. Betts leads with department-wide oversight, emphasizing children from infant and early childhood to youth and their families, supporting a continued streamlined and equitable access to public assistance programs, and using state, federal, and other funding to modernize the department for more efficient and faster distribution of public assistance program benefits and delivery of ancillary services.

Please confirm Ms. Betts' appointment as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Katherine Korenaga

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 6:02:34 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen M Radius	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a retired Family Court Judge. I submit this testimony as my individual testimony, I have known Catherine Betts since the early 2000a and have found her to be an extremely focused hard working professional . She has clear insights into the many issues facing the Department of Human Services, its large staff and the many individuals, children and families who are impacted by the Department and its policies. Besides understanding the federal and state law and regulations governing the Department Ms Betts has a real heart for the work of improving conditions Hawaii's children and families. She has persevered, facing the challenges presented directing the DHS through the covid pandemic and has now expressed a willingness to continue in this work. I highly support her continued appointment as DHS Director.

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:57:30 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allicyn Tasaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of Cathy Betts to serve as Director of the Department of Human Services. She has shown her leadership, knowlege and skills to lead the department having served as its director under the previous two governors. I have known Ms. Betts for over 20 years and worked with her on issues to improve the lives of women and families in Hawaii. We are both former executive directors of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women. I urge your favorable consideration for Ms. Betts to continue as director. Thank you for the opporituity to submit my testimony in strong support.

Allicyn Tasaka

From the Desk of Justina D. Acevedo-Cross

Dear Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to offer my **strong support** for the appointment of Cathy Betts to the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services as director. As a resident and advocate for social justice, I believe that Cathy's extensive experience, track record and qualifications make her an ideal candidate for this crucial position.

Cathy has devoted her career to improving the lives of those in need, particularly children and families. She has pursued this work through various positions giving her deep understanding of the challenges facing Hawai'i's underserved populations. Under her leadership Ms. Betts has worked tirelessly to develop and implement innovative programs and make services work better. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the wellbeing of all members of our community.

Perhaps most importantly, Cathy is deeply committed to the people of Hawai'i. She has a strong understanding of the unique challenges facing our State and has a proven track record of working collaboratively with community leaders, government officials, and stakeholders to find solutions.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to support the appointment of Cathy Betts to the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services. She is an exceptional candidate and will continue to effectively lead this important agency. I am confident in her leadership.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Justina Acevedo-Cross

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/24/2023 6:40:28 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Morishige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in ***strong support*** of the appointment of Cathy Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services. While I submit this testimony in my personal capacity, I currently work as the Administrator of the DHS Benefits, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD), and previously served as the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness. I have known Cathy since 2014, when I met first met her while advocating in support of increasing Hawaii's minimum wage, and have had the privilege to work closely with her as an employee of DHS under her leadership since 2020.

Cathy demonstrates both the leadership skills and the compassion that are needed to effectively lead DHS. In addition to being a strong government leader, Cathy actively advocates on behalf of the most vulnerable in our community, and works hard to ensure that the department delivers its services in a way that is compassionate and trauma informed. Cathy's dedication and commitment to the people of Hawaii is clear and I can think of no one more qualified to lead our department.

Cathy has worked tirelessly to advocate on behalf of the many employees within DHS and its attached agencies. During the pandemic, Cathy and the Director's office staff worked tirelessly to ensure that staff had access to PPE, as well as current information about the evolving COVID-19 situation.

Once again, I write in strong support and encourage you to reappoint Cathy as DHS Director for the next four years.

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

From: Winnie Groves

Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Re: GM 512 for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire at noon on 12- 07- 2026.

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Winnie Groves, and I am submitting this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Catherine Betts' consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a term to expire at noon on December 07, 2026.

I met Cathy almost seven years ago while obtaining my master's in social work degree at UH Manoa. Since then, I've known Cathy as a supervisor, a friend, and now as a colleague. During my yearlong internship at the Hawaii State Commission of the Status of Women (HSCSW), I learned how to navigate complex situations, such as the legislative system, with grace and nimbleness, as well as how to think about challenging policy issues through a systemic lens. As a friend and a colleague, Cathy has continued to be a thoughtful, generous, and compassionate person.

During my 900-hour internship with Cathy Betts at the HSCSW, I not only learned about the areas I was interested in – policy, legislation, and social justice – I also had the opportunity to see a great leader in action. Cathy's style of leadership is inclusive and considerate, and she treats everyone with respect, and in doing so, I believe she brings out the best in people. Additionally, she brings an immense knowledge base, many years of experience advocating for Hawaii's most vulnerable, and a high level of integrity.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support.

Winnie Groves

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. I am writing in support of GM512, the confirmation of Catherine Betts to serve as the director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Ms. Betts is highly-qualified and has the critical skills and experience to lead DHS as director. She has shown a strong commitment to the mission of DHS, and, most importantly, to the people they serve. Her proven ability to formulate and execute on strategies that focus on ways to address challenging social welfare issues, throughout our diverse communities, makes her an excellent candidate for director.

Throughout the COVID crisis, Ms. Betts ensured that DHS services continued to be delivered in support of the most vulnerable in our community. She worked closely with the various departments throughout the State to advocate and elevate awareness for her programs and those her department serves.

Ms. Betts has a long record of community service that reflects her deep commitment and desire to address social issues outside of the workplace. Her many years of service as a member of the Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women and the HSBA's Diversity, Equality, and the Law Committee clearly speak to her values and character. She has committed herself to public service in her professional career and in her personal life.

It is for these reasons that I submit this letter of support for Catherine Betts to be confirmed as the director of the Department of Human Service and humbly request your committee vote to confirm her appointment.

Mahalo,

Keith Regan

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 7:34:31 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mimari Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee,

I stand in STRONG SUPPORT of Governor Green’s nomination of Ms. Catherine Betts to continue serving as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). I work for the DHS but am testifying in my personal capacity.

Cathy is a working mother who understands the challenges many working families in Hawaii face to balance work/professional life and family life. She is inspirational and a role model for many girls, women, mothers, and parents/caregivers. Cathy successfully led DHS to continue serving individuals and families in need of assistance throughout the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her leadership shows her values deeply. She is a kind, thoughtful, and compassionate person who understands the pain and suffering of others. She is open-minded and cares deeply about equity and equality. I can think of no one more qualified than Cathy to continue leading DHS, especially now as the Public Health Emergency winds down when stability in DHS is paramount to the continuity and timeliness of service as well as the success and morale of DHS employees.

I respectfully ask your committee to confirm Cathy’s appointment. Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 8:11:17 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Sadayasu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee.

I support the appointment of Catherine Betts to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Ms. Betts has been serving as the Director of the Department since September 2020. Prior to that, she was the Deputy Director from October 2017. Her experience and leadership skills will continue to benefit the State should she get confirmed as Director. She is also a fellow graduate of the University of Hawai'i William S. Richardson School of Law.

I respectfully ask for Ms. Betts' confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services. I look forward to collaborating with her to fulfill our departments' respective missions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

February 28, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Daisy Hartsfield

SUBJECT: **GM 512 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director,
Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 1:00 PM
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

I am submitting this written testimony as an individual citizen and support the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services. I have known Ms. Betts for over a decade, meeting her for the first time while we were deputies at the Attorney General's Office. She has since received various accomplishments and accolades.

Ms. Betts was initially appointed to this position in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. With her leadership, despite mandated restrictions that required social distancing, the Department was able to provide its staff a successful transition to teleworking and still adequately meet the community's increased needs. With the foresight of usefulness of modern technology, the department was able to take advantage of that, resulting in no disruption of any services during the pandemic. Families continued to receive financial and medical benefits as well as vocational, protective, and other support services.

Ms. Betts manages a highly-qualified team of leaders that with her guidance, continue to improve the services the department provides, as well as the systems involved. She is not just an advocate for members in the community but also for staff in the department – from administrators down to the line workers.

Ms. Betts has demonstrated that she believes in the department's mission to have families in Hawaii thriving and not just surviving. She is more than capable of leading the department. She deserves to be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Human Services and has my full support. It would be a shame and detriment to Hawai'i if she is not confirmed.

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 1:04:37 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meredith Nichols	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

I have had the great honor of working with Cathy Betts during her tenure as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) and, before that, while she was Deputy Director of DHS. Her steady, thoughtful and kind leadership of the Department has inspired so many of us to persevere through challenging times with a clear focus on doing our collective best for the diverse communities we are entrusted to serve. I cannot imagine a better leader and role model for the Department of Human Services. Mahalo for your support of her nomination.

Aloha,

Meredith Nichols

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF CATHERINE BETTS,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services



From: Lila King

RE: GM 503
Consideration and Confirmation of Catherine Betts as Director, Dept. of Human Services

CHAIR SAN BUENAVENTURA, VICE CHAIR AQUINO, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong support** of the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Throughout the many years of government services, I have had the honor of working with Cathy in various capacities. As a fellow Deputy Attorney General representing DHS in Family Court, I witnessed firsthand the compassion that Cathy possesses in dealing with the vulnerable populations that DHS serves – the children and families affected by the trauma of child abuse and/or neglect as well as individuals with mental health issues. As for the two terms I served as the Special Assistant to the DHS Director, I worked with Cathy when she was asked to be the Executive Director of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women and later as she served as the Deputy Director and then when she took on the broad responsibilities to care for all those served by DHS as the current Director of DHS. In all positions held, Cathy has been steadfast in advocating for those individuals, children, and families to ensure that their rights are protected, they have access to legal support, and ultimately, that they have a voice.

Cathy has and continues to bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to DHS from her many years of service and advocacy outside and within the Department of Human Services. She works tirelessly for DHS, but also for the larger community, to build effective collaborations to better serve the families of Hawaii. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to confirm Ms. Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in strong support of Cathy.

February 28, 2023

LATE

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie

SUBJECT: **GM 512 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director,
Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 1:00 PM
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

I am submitting this written testimony as an individual citizen and support the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have worked with Ms. Betts for the past three years at the Department of Human Services. While only a short time, her compassion, leadership and guidance to staff and the community are second to none. Ms. Betts has led, with uncompromising commitment, the Department to successfully deliver a multitude of services to Hawaii's families in need during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Betts has demonstrated that she is more than capable to continue to lead the Department of Human Services. Through passion, commitment and innovation, Ms. Betts has delivered strong and successful advocacy and service delivery to Hawaii's families so that they may thrive.

I strongly support the confirmation of Ms. Betts to the Director of the Department of Human Services.

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 1:50:07 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Mohr Peterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Judy Mohr Peterson and I am providing testimony in strong support for GM512 which seeks to confirm the appointment of Cathy Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). I have had the privilege to work with Cathy for as long as I have worked in Hawaii; first as a colleague when she was the Executive Director for the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, then as she served as Deputy Director of DHS and for the past several years, as Director of DHS.

Cathy's leadership, temperament, intelligence, and most importantly, her empathy and compassion have been key for DHS, particularly during the past incredibly challenging years. She has a clear and unifying vision that pulls the diversity of programs and services together to serve the public with integrity, and with a keen awareness that the work we do matters deeply for the people we serve. I deeply value her leadership and guidance, and am very pleased that she has been nominated to continue to serve in this role. We are very lucky to have her!

LATE

To: The Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: **GM 512- Catherine Betts, confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services**
1:00PM, March 1, 2023

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and committee members,

**Testimony in support of GM 512, the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the
Director of Human Services.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of the nomination of Cathy Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Director Betts has been an exceptional leader in Hawai'i during the recent difficult years and she is the leader Hawai'i needs during this time of rebuilding.

In 2020, when every day brought a new unprecedented challenge to overcome, Ms. Betts became the Acting Director of DHS. Covid changed everyone's life but the people DHS serves may have felt it most keenly. She spent those early days meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people in our state and planning how DHS could continue to meet the growing demand for each of its programs. From SNAP to child care, Medicaid to assistance for survivors of family violence, these safety net programs expanded at a rapid rate we had not seen since 2009. The federal funding that came to help meet the need was critical but brought its own challenges. For most programs, the federal funding was more money than ever received at one time and they came with quick deadlines to spend the funding. As the committee is aware, moving money into the community, in an equitable and efficient way, takes time. Ms. Betts led her team and provided the critical, and at times life-saving, resources people needed. One example of this is how the Department handled the increased federal child care funding. If it had not been for the grants made available to child care providers, Hawai'i would have seen a dramatic reduction in care. Providers were barely hanging on when relief came, and I know how hard Director Betts and her team worked to get the money out. The children and families of Hawai'i are grateful for their work.

As the post-pandemic time begins, there will be challenges facing the state. The end of the federal public health emergency declaration has begun and the unwinding will be complicated and difficult to navigate. As Ms. Betts led the state in the blooming of federal programs, she is also the best to help the shrinking of federal funding and flexibilities. And she will keep DHS' vision, to see the people of Hawai'i thriving, at heart of the efforts while doing so.

It is hard to imagine that someone sitting in the hearing is not familiar with Director Betts. From her early days advocating for justice-involved families, to serving as the Director of the Commission on the Status of Women, to overseeing one of the most important departments in the state, we have all had a chance to witness the intellect, dedication, and passion she brings to her job. She has already accomplished amazing feats to improve the lives of the people of Hawai'i and if confirmed again, she will continue to do so. It is for these reasons that I ask the committee to support the nomination of Ms. Betts.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 2:11:21 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Scardino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the consideration and confirmation of CATHERINE BETTS as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you.

FROM: James W. Walther
TO: Senate Committee on Human Services
DATE: February 28, 2023

LATE

RE: GM 512
Consideration and Confirmation of Catherine Betts as Director,
Department of Human Services
Hearing before the Senate Committee on Human Services
March 1, 2023

CHAIR SAN BUENAVENTURA AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

I write in support of Catherine Betts for your consideration to be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Ms. Betts is an exceptional candidate with the experience and personal characteristics to fill this crucial and difficult position.

Ms. Betts is incredibly intelligent. She is knowledgeable about the many diverse areas that fall under the umbrella of human services. She is thoughtful and principled in making decisions that affect peoples' lives on a daily basis.

Whenever I am called on to provide legal assistance to Ms. Betts, she is open to discussion and weighs all possible options before making a decision. Ms. Betts is thorough in her review of matters, and is passionate about public service and doing what is right for the people she serves. She also cares deeply about the employees in the department she leads and watches out for their well-being.

Finally, I would like to say that Cathy is a genuine, kind, compassionate, good-natured, loving person and it is those personal qualities, in addition to her professional excellence, that make her an exceptional candidate to lead the Department of Human Services.

LATE

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 6:36:19 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Fernandes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

I write to offer my strongest support for the confirmation of Catherine Betts to continue serving as Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services. Having known Cathy for a number of years, and having had the chance to work with her in both her current role as Director and in her previous roles, I know her to be a dedicated, knowledgeable, and compassionate leader. She embodies the mission of her department and is an asset to our state. I respectfully request that you support her nomination. Mahalo.

February 28, 2023

Senate Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

RE: GM512 Strong Support for Confirmation of Catherine Betts
Hearing March 1, 2023 at 3:00 PM; CR 225 & Videoconference

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members,

It is an honor to write a letter of strong support for the confirmation of Ms. Catherine Betts as Director of the Department of Human Services. I have known and worked with Ms. Betts for over a decade and Hawaii is most fortunate to have her leadership and commitment to public service. I was serving as Chair of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW) when Ms. Betts interviewed for the position of Executive Director. Our Commissioners unanimously voted to offer her the position. She was tasked with restoring the Commission's pre-eminence in women's policy work, building public private partnerships, and establishing the Commission as the convener for collaborative initiatives to advance the status of women and girls in Hawaii. She excelled in every way! She gained the respect of community partners with her legal skills, knowledge, authentic passion for and commitment to the issues, and most of all, she established trust.

Governor Green made a wise choice to re-appoint her as Director of Human Services, where she has gained valuable on the job experience and has proven her skills as an effective leader. She leads the Department that is critical in protecting our most vulnerable members of the community. She does so with compassion and integrity.

Ms. Betts' CV speaks volumes for her academic achievements, her breadth of professional experiences, and her vast community contributions. She continues to be a voice for those in need and an unfailing champion for the underserved. She has been recognized with many organizational awards for her outstanding efforts, yet she remains humble and totally dedicated to the work.

Ms. Betts represents the best in our next generation of leadership. I respectfully ask for your unanimous support of her confirmation. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Leslie Wilkins

Lesliewilkins1@gmail.com

808-280-0376

February 28, 2023



To: Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Judy Kern

Re: **GM512**, submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Position: SUPPORT

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Catherine Betts as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

As incumbent DHS Director, Cathy has demonstrated effective leadership throughout her tenure. In what is a challenging job even in the best of times, she and her team ensured that critical services to some of our most vulnerable individuals and communities were sustained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cathy's extensive knowledge and skills in legislative, budgetary, managerial, and programmatic areas continue to serve the department well. As gaps and disparities in human services persist as we recover from economic, pandemic, and other impacts, it is good to have experienced, committed leadership to help guide DHS on the steep road ahead.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Cathy Betts' confirmation.

GM-512

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 8:27:48 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena Cabatu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, please accept my FULL SUPPORT for GM 512 to consider and confirm as the Director, Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, CATHERINE BETTS. I have known her since my service on the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women over 10 years ago when she led the commission as its Executive Director. Her elevation in the ranks throughout the years has been exemplary for all women looking to actively participate in public service. How fortunate are we as a state to have Cathy Betts continue as the Director of the Department of Human Services. I am in full support of GM 512 and I look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish as the head of the department in this term.

Elena Cabatu

GM-512

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 11:53:16 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/1/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason A Schmidt	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I am a father that was discriminated against by and through DHS through Child Welfare services as my children's mother accused me of sexually molesting our daughter, who was two years old at the time she is now 7. I have not seen her since. There was no response to Child Welfare or concern that I was being alienated. Today I pray daily that I will be able to see my children and attain custody of them as their mother has and will continue to subject them to psychological violence. I found the Hilo Child Welfare office not to have any training regarding fathers who are alienated, as I spent thousands of dollars on psychosexual assessments, which stated I am not a pedophile. I called Betts office numerous times to never get my calls returned as staff stated they would have someone call me back, but they never have. Here I am years later, broken. I have been depressed and saddened over this. It is only with strong prayer and meditation that I have been able to continue. I fear I am not the only father affected by this and fear my children are not the only ones harmed by Ms. Betts's refusal to address valid concerns brought to her office.

Sincerely

Jason Schmidt

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Dara Carlin, M.A.
Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate

Date: March 1, 2023

Re: STRONG OPPOSITION for Cathy Betts as continuing Director of DHS

Good afternoon, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and Senate Health and Human Services Committee Members,

I am an independent Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate with over 30 years of experience who works (primarily) with women and their children who have “successfully escaped” domestic violence. Unfortunately, I cannot support Ms. Betts’s nomination as DHS Director and would like to apologize for what I feel morally bound to inform you of here.

One of the worst by-products of domestic violence is the many betrayals the victim-survivors endure by those they once loved, or literally entrusted with their and their children’s lives. This latter category includes professionals, many of whom ascend to leadership positions purporting and proclaiming themselves to be champions of the abused, who instead of doing what’s right, honest and ethical by these most vulnerable throw them “under the bus” instead, most times to cover-up and conceal their own malfeasance or the wrongdoing of those under their supervision. I am sorry to inform this body that Cathy Betts falls into this category and as such, is unfit to continue serving as the Director of Hawaii’s Department of Human Services.

To exemplify my assertion here, please consider the following redacted email excerpts from one of my domestic violence survivor moms below. This mom desperately sought out Ms. Betts’s assistance and intervention when CWS illegally removed (without warrant or court order) her toddler from her as she tried to escape her abusive marriage with this child (as is legal for her to do under Hawaii state statute):

“I have spoken with literally every single supervisor, branch administrator, and admin person affiliated with CWS here in Hawaii everybody except for the director I’ve had at least one if not multiple conversations with them. Some of the higher-ranking ones would be XX, XX, XX, XX, XX, Kathy Betts (who actually went behind DHS’s back on my behalf and gave me a private referral to an attorney named XX. He had started working on my case and unfortunately passed away only a number of days into it. I can provide emails and documentation showing that Kathy specifically talk to that man into helping me because she knew DHS was dead wrong)....”

“...before Christmas in 2018 I had been able to finally get a meeting with her (Ms. Betts) and the branch administrator, XX. They met with me and I voiced my concerns about XXX and all that jazz. XX kind of shrugged it off like it was something that they screwed up with all the time however Kathy Betts kind of spoke with me more in private and told me that she was really scared for XXXX (mom’s toddler)

and that she believed everything I was saying and that she wanted to help me. Of course she only wanted to help me after learning that the ACLU was involved and currently was investigating the army for their participation in XXXX's removal. She gave me a private referral and told me not to say anything to anybody but to go and see him immediately which of course I did just to see what was going on there his name was XX. He was a high-profile well-paid attorney and was willing to do my case for peanuts. I was suspicious and thought his only interest was to gather information for Betts, so I half-way spoke to him kind of but didn't really tell him anything and he always was asking me about ACLU. He passed away about two weeks after I was introduced to him suddenly and unexpectedly. Suddenly Kathy acted like she didn't know me I got pissed off and I reported it to I can't remember who it is but it's like the office that investigates when officials make bribes and all that stuff I'll have to look up the agency but I made a complaint about it they said they were going to investigate it and I never heard back."

"Do you see because after I taking up a bunch of issues with the deputy attorney general, XX, (I chose to reach out to him specifically because he was in charge of the Justice Department and he was in charge of HPD so I was trying to bring my concerns to him in order for him to address the illegal removal which he refused to address)... Mr. XX even called over and spoke to Kathy a number of times and was in close contact with my Victim Witness Advocate, XX, with the Kokua program. While at the same time I had XX the woman that you met who used to work with the NCADV also calling over and talking to Kathy. Most of this stuff took place in December or early January as I was desperate to find help to try and at least make sure that somebody held them accountable just in case they killed XXXX (the toddler). I was frantic calling all over the city pregnant with (her 2nd child) being harassed by XX it was a nightmare."

Although I contacted Ms. Betts and her office directly, multiple times and in CC'd communications about this case and others throughout her tenure, I don't have a single letter, email or words from her of my own to share with you because she has been wholly unresponsive to me. If you had a subject matter expert willing, ready and able to assist you on a case where you feared for a toddler's life, wouldn't you want to consult with that person or at bare minimum, hear her or him out?

To be clear, Ms. Betts cannot misuse client or "case confidentiality" as an excuse to not respond or to not communicate with me because I specifically identified wanting to speak with her about *problems* involving **falsified documents, documentation and reports being made to HPD, medical professionals and the court to induce reaction, perjury, fraud and crimes against children and families by CWS social workers AND supervisors under her management** which I asserted was an *ongoing problem* with DHS/CWS.

The lives of mothers and children, who were already in a precarious position due to domestic violence then subsequently entangled in the CWS system (in many instances at their abuser's instigation) have been left effectively ruined, courtesy of Ms. Betts's failure to act and looking the other way. Over the past *several years*, Ms. Betts has had the power and authority to change her modus operandi and intervene but at every opportunity, has elected not to do so by remaining unresponsive.

Ms. Bett's character as illustrated in the above email excerpts is *not* what the people of Hawaii need or deserve to have seated at the head of the DHS with oversight of our islands' most at-risk populations. (And may I also ask you to consider the amount of taxpayer dollars that funded the play-act that Ms. Betts and her colleagues put on in pretending to take my client seriously? Because in absence of correction, that's what our taxpayer dollars are funding.)

Ms. Betts has been in her position since 2020 and was DHS Deputy Director since 2017 – *ample* time to address & correct any of the myriad of problems occurring under her watch at DHS which have only gotten worse and are coming more to light, thanks to the efforts of the Hawaii Coalition for Child Protective Reform, true journalists like John Hill of Honolulu Civil Beat and citizens who have absolutely had enough of DHS scandals and missing, dead, abused and/or traumatized children being illegally removed from their homes in violation of their 4th Amendment rights, case-in-point being the Ariel Sellers/Isabella Kalua case.

In that case (which would have never occurred if the Department were sufficiently trained on domestic violence and had followed proper placement protocol) the Department, *who is in-part responsible* for Ariel's disappearance and presumed demise, in response proposed (another) working group comprised of people/organizations of *their choosing* (with domestic violence representation noticeably absent, despite testimony recommending inclusion, even in HB1365 HD1 form) and asked for more funding - *that's* their "corrective action" for what happened to Ariel?! If your child were killed under CWS watch, giving more taxpayer money to the accomplices and authorizing a "Malama Ohana" working group would be sufficient for you? **This Legislature should be launching an investigation into Ms. Betts's actions and inactions pertaining to DHS malfeasance under her tenure and be demanding accountability** rather than rewarding her with the title, position and power to do more harm through neglect to Hawaii's most in-need.

Please know that it brings me no pleasure in having to submit this testimony to you, but remaining silent about what I've witnessed and experienced would be an injustice to the people I'm committed to serving.

If you sincerely care about ending familial abuse in our communities, then I urge you to find a candidate worthy to assume such a critically important role that serves our state's most at-risk victims, survivors, children, families, elderly, impaired and disabled in an honest, forthright and responsive manner. Hawaii is gifted with *many* talented, caring and committed professionals, qualified and capable of leading such a charge – please announce a search to find one of those to fulfill the DHS Director position.

Most respectfully,

Dara Carlin, M.A.

Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate