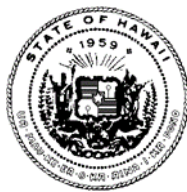


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

January 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 777 – RELATING TO BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Hearing: Thursday, February 2, 2023, 09:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconferencing, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill. This measure is similar to administration measures HB1064 and SB1362.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill authorizes the Department of Human Services to conduct national criminal background checks for current and prospective employees; volunteers; contractors; and contractors' employees, agents, and volunteers who are in positions that require close proximity to certain minors, young adults, or vulnerable adults.

Having the statutory authority to conduct comprehensive national and State fingerprint-based criminal history record checks and periodic rechecks will allow DHS to obtain information directly from the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center. The public will benefit from the Department's ability to conduct State and national background checks as an added measure to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of minors, young adults, and vulnerable adults receiving child welfare, child protective, extended foster care and higher education supports, social services, and adult protective or community services from DHS.

The current pre-employment background clearance process includes the State of Hawaii name-based criminal history record check. It relies on prospective new hires to self-report any convictions outside of the State of Hawaii.

The proposed amendments will impact the Department's Human Resources and Social Services Division staff to conduct additional State and national background checks and periodic rechecks of the current and prospective employees, volunteers, contractors, and their employees, agents, and volunteers.

The Department's budget request includes adding one permanent full-time position to conduct background checks and the necessary funds to support the position.

The additional procedures proposed by this bill may cause a delay in hiring prospective employees. Also, the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center may experience an increased demand for services by individuals.

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