



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Comments Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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by

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SB 3034 SD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII CHILD WELFARE EDUCATION COLLABORATION

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee:

As the dean of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, I am pleased to provide written comments in support of SB 3034 SD1 which funds the opportunity for collaboration between the MBTSSW and DHS/CWS. SB 3034's appropriated funds will allow for the restoration of the Hawai'i Child Welfare Education Collaboration which assists in the training of graduate students from the University of Hawai'i Mānoa Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work for child welfare positions at the Department of Human Services.

MBTSSW and DHS/CWS have a history of collaboration and partnership in successfully recruiting and training social work students to work in the child welfare field in Hawai'i. If approved, the funding allocation for HCWEC will address well documented work force shortages within child welfare services.

MBTSSW is uniquely positioned to support HCWEC due to previous collaborative efforts with DHS/CWS as well as our capacity to deliver the MSW degree program to students who reside on each of the neighbor islands, thus ensuring funds appropriate to the HCWEC support DHS/CWS workforce development statewide.

I also encourage the committee to consider amending SB 3034 SD1 to ensure funding for HCWEC for at minimum three (3) years, to ensure CWS workers are supported through completion of MSW degree requirements. Funding for three (3) years will support DHS employees in Child Welfare while they work full time at CWS and take classes part time.

I strongly urge your favorable consideration of this bill, with the proposed amendment provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments.