

TO: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
HEARING: March 12, 2021- 2:00 PM  
FROM: Caroline Whitesel  
RE: In SUPPORT for S.B. 630 Relating to Child Support Enforcement

Aloha Chair Mark M. Nakashima, Vice Chair Scot Z. Matayoshi, and other committee members. My name is Caroline Whitesel and I am a current Junior in the BSW program in the Myron B Thompson School of Social Work for the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am currently employed as an intern for EPIC Ohana INC, an agency focused on a family proactive method to engage and support families and individuals who have been affected with Child Welfare Services (CWS) and relating agencies.

I stand before you today, not on behalf of either EPIC Ohana or the University of Hawaii, to highlight my support for SB 630 for its purpose of reinstating and addressing rights and procedures of the process of paying child support for the benefit of the children.

In my time with EPIC, I have overseen conferences involving multiple prominent figures, such as lawyers fighting in support of the family, employees of EPIC Ohana educating the family on the upcoming occurrences, and many other persuasive individuals all in person to aid and support the family in their time of need. Through a revision of S.B. 630, I believe the social workers, children, and families will be given more benefits, control, and rights in each aspect of the process of supporting each child through child support in a way that not only benefits the child, but the community as well. More specifically, the children in particular will be given the right to financial security through the full payment of child support and the right to safety in their home environment, such as S.B. 630 outlines. Ultimately, in order for the child and family to succeed after unforeseen circumstances, the need for the full payment of child support and the pressure of the enforcement of child support payments will provide financial security for families and children in a position where child support may not have been fully paid in the past.

To identify a concise path to restore the rights and security of children and families, clear definitions and actions must be taken to ensure the children and families will be supported and protected in any environment. Thank you all for your undivided attention and consideration on S.B. 630 Relating to Child Support Enforcement, and to reiterate, I am in a strong position on this bill.

Best,  
Caroline Whitesel