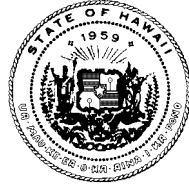


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 28, 2022

TO: The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HCR 117/ HR 177 - REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO IMMEDIATELY CEASE INTERCEPTING SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol Conference Room 329 and  
Via videoconference

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) Human Services (DHS) appreciates and provides comments.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the resolution is for the Department of Human Services (DHS) to set aside the money from social security payments for children in foster care to give to the children when they exit foster care, instead of DHS using the money to cover their room and board costs while they are in foster care.

Currently, DHS uses the Social Security Administration benefits payments of a child in foster care to cover the costs of caring for the child; this is the purpose of the benefits. If the amount of the Social Security benefit is less than Child Welfare Services (CWS) foster board payment, CWS uses State funds to pay the difference. Conversely, if the Social Security benefit amount exceeds the CWS foster board payment, the Department sets the money aside for each child's conserved funds (trust account).

When the child exits foster care, any balance left in their trust account is returned to the local Social Security Administration office. Then, a letter is sent to the child's caregivers (or to the young adult if they exited care at age 18 or later). The letter explains that they should apply for their unspent funds from the child's trust account and the monthly benefits for the child through the Social Security Administration. Social Security Administration benefits are tracked by the Department's Social Services Division's Management Information and Compliance Unit (MICU).

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