


OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Legislative Testimony
HB 739, HD 2

Relating to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

Date: March 24, 2009 Time: 2:15am
Room: 016

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs **supports HB 739, HD 2 with amendments.**

The purpose of HB 739, HD 2 is to inform how the Legislature will guide the Department of Human Services in allocating TANF funds for client programming services, administrative costs, and computer information system maintenance. This bill also proposes to transfer program funds to block grant programs to allow flexibility in this distribution of funds.

Due to the increase cost of living, and numerous job lay-offs, the livelihood of families is becoming more difficult to sustain and survive. Thus, HD 739, HD2 is important as it will assist many of our families and individuals whom are at risk, and improve a system of care.

The mission of OHA's Human Services Program is to better the social conditions of Native Hawaiian beneficiaries by enhancing access to resources, information and services through advocacy, technical assistance and financial support to Hawaiian agencies and other direct service providers. Therefore, we would like to suggest, if possible, to also include those who live in extreme poverty, especially those who are homeless or facing eviction. These beneficiaries experience extreme hardship with the loss of shelter, food, and basic necessities.

OHA would like to support HB 739, HD 2 with amendments.
Mahalo nui loa for allowing us to provide testimony.



To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

From: Elisabeth Chun 
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Tuesday, March 24, 2009
2:15 p.m. Room 016

Hearing date:
Tuesday,
March 24,
2009, 2:15
p.m. Senate
Committee on
Human
Services.
Please deliver
copies of
testimony to
Room 016.

Subject: HB739 HD2: Relating to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Details how the legislature will spend TANF funds, emphasizing child care services, work program contracts and related support services, the prevention of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, the purchase of service contracts for child protective services, information system maintenance, and administration costs. Transfers portions of TANF funds to the social services block grant and child care development fund.

The Good Beginnings Alliance is a policy and advocacy organization focused on Hawaii's youngest children and their families. We strive to ensure a nurturing, safe and healthy development for all children from pre-birth to age eight. We believe all children deserve safe and supportive environments that meet their needs as they grow and develop.

We strongly support this bill, especially with regard to the proposed transfer of funds to the child care development fund.

Since 1996, TANF funds have been a critical part of the safety net for Hawaii's families. The activities delineated in this bill are all foundational to sustaining and growing healthy families. For example, TANF quality funds could be transferred to Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for use as child care subsidies while parents are at work or in training. Why are TANF and CCDBG funding so critical to Hawaii at this time?

- This federal money is the only money coming forward which can assist our workforce with child care as families struggle to keep jobs or gain training to secure new jobs.
- This federal money is critical public money available to sustain Hawaii's early childhood system development work, as described by Act 14 of the 2008 session.
- This federal money is the only public money likely to increase over the next two years especially with the recent passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that would mean increased millions of dollars to Hawaii.

The Good Beginnings Alliance **2006-2007** unduplicated count data shows that:

- 38,016 children birth to 5-years-old in Hawaii are low-income children which is 41.9% of that population group. Their families earn less than 185% of the federal poverty level;
- 4922 children in Hawaii are in families identified by TANF or TAONF
- 2,155 children were served in preschools by the Department of Human Services Child Care Connection public money – either TANF transfer or CCDBG
- 1,105 children were served by Department of Human Services’ Preschool Open Doors.

We know the numbers of children served have increased since then and now, in the challenged economy of 2009, even more families are seeking work or are in training. Assistance to low-income families for early education and care is even more critical. This is a **current workforce issue**. Good Beginnings Alliance urges the committee to recognize that this is also a **future workforce issue**. We owe it to our children, families and State not to be short sighted in decision making even in scarce times – we urge you to pass this bill to help create a better future for our families. Without the quality funds allowable in the TANF transfer to CCDBG, Hawaii will struggle to progress.

For more information contact: Good Beginnings Alliance; phone: 531-5502;
lhun@goodbeginnings.org

Testimony on HB 739 -RELATING TO TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Senate Committee on Human Services

Chair: Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland Vice-Chair: Sen. Les Ihara, Jr.

By Howard S. Garval, MSW, President & CEO, Child & Family Service

March 24, 2009, 2:15 p.m. Conference Room 016

Two of our most critical societal problems are child abuse and domestic violence. There is strong evidence that in economic downturns the rates of child abuse and family violence increase at a time when the resources to both prevent and treat these problems actually decrease. This is the “perfect storm” and a scary proposition that Hawaii faces as government grapples with a sizeable deficit in the state budget.

I am Howard Garval, President and CEO of Child & Family Service, Hawaii’s oldest and largest human service organization that touches the lives of over 40,000 of Hawaii’s people each year. We provide a comprehensive continuum of services from child abuse prevention, family strengthening services, domestic violence intervention, services to help youth overcome a variety of emotional and behavioral problems, and programs that help our Kupuna to thrive in the community as long as possible and that provide support to their caregivers.

Child & Family Service supports HB 739 because it preserves services to families that help them stay in tact. With decreasing state funds, everything possible should be done to access alternative funds including Federal reimbursement like TANF. While last session the Legislature was concerned about protecting enough TANF funds in the reserve for cash assistance, the proposed use of TANF funds in HB 739 protects enough reserves for cash assistance and still continues to support services that meet the other three TANF purposes other than direct cash assistance: 2) Employment training programs to help families become self-sufficient; 3) Teen pregnancy education and prevention; and 4) Services that keep the family unit in tact.

Perhaps the best way to make the case for HB 739 is to look at what would happen if the TANF funded services go away. At Child & Family Service we already have experienced a 12% cut in FY 09 as part of the Department of Human Services’ cross-the-board cut to all TANF funded programs. This was the Administration’s response to the Legislature’s restriction of \$27.6 million to build up the cash reserve for cash assistance. This meant cuts to such child abuse prevention programs as Enhanced Healthy Start and Family Strengthening Services, reductions in funding for Domestic Violence Advocacy for TANF recipients who get a waiver from work requirements because of domestic violence, and reductions in teen pregnancy prevention. Without such services, the likelihood is great that incidents of child abuse and domestic violence will increase even without the likely increase due to the worsening economy. This will destabilize/disintegrate more families and the human, social, and financial costs to our community will be substantial.

Of course, another important reality has been missing in the discussion about cutting programs. For nonprofit organizations that have already trimmed budgets to the bare essentials, the loss of these TANF funds will mean significant additional layoffs that cannot be helpful to our economy. Some of those laid off employees could end up needing TANF benefits if they cannot find employment.

I urge you to pass HB 739 that will preserve critical and essential services to our most vulnerable populations in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present my testimony to you today.



Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees

Testimony **IN SUPPORT** for HMS 3/24/2009 2:15:00 PM HB739

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Lance Holter
Organization: Hawaii Democratic party
Address: PO Box 790656 Paia, Hawaii
Phone: 808-579-9442
E-mail: holter@maui.net
Submitted on: 3/24/2009

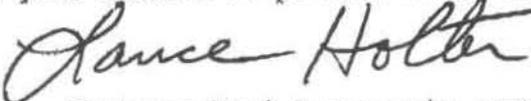
Comments:

The Hawaii Democratic Party fully supports preventative and voluntary programs which benefit newborn infants and young families. In fact it was Democratic party State Legislators, such as Neil Abercrombie, who were instrumental in the early formation of the Healthy Start program some 20 years ago.

It takes a huge effort and time to develop the trust which allows families to enroll in Healthy Start and now we have one of the most successful Healthy Start programs in the United States here in Hawaii. Thanks in large part to the efforts of dedicated women and men who have dedicated their lives to giving our keiki a chance for a positive future. Preventative advocacy is a long term money saver and I want to quote a Maui Healthy Start supervisor who has likewise dedicated her life to making Hawaii's keiki healthy and safe now and in the future, Ms. Ana Diaz...

The DHS estimates cost savings on services for a family already confirmed for abuse and involved in Child Welfare services at \$783,888 a year, compared with \$3,000 a year for Healthy Start's volunteer prevention services. The economic, social and moral justifications to keep Healthy Start adequately funded are blaring; please keep this indispensable prevention program alive and make a commitment to supporting families and Keiki.

Healthy Start is not a partisan issue it is a social justice issue and needs to be ours and the State's priority. Funding is crucial because in hard times you don't abandon the poor, innocent and needy but strengthen your resolve to protect those that can't protect themselves.

Sincerely 
Lance Holter, Chairman Maui Democratic party

The Democratic Party of Maui

PO Box 790656, Pa'ia, HI 96779

People - Our Only Special Interest

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

When considering HB 739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start Program** modeled after nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness. The Healthy Start Program works with low-income at-risk families with very young children between the ages of zero to three years old.

There is a very important and crucial **difference** between the **Enhanced Healthy Start** Program, which provides services to families **after** they have been identified with abuse and/or neglect and the **Healthy Start** program which works on **prevention** of child abuse and/or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their vulnerable children with resources, early intervention for physical, behavioral health, and environmental risks. Felitti's Kaiser 2000 study, "Adverse Childhood Experiences", shows a direct correlation of children with adverse experiences with adult chronic diseases: diabetes, obesity, heart and lung disease, cancer, smoking, depression and suicide, leading to premature death.

The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. We are hoping for the viability of the program once Federal funds and other private resources are available.

If you would like more information about the **Healthy Start** Program please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Cynthia Koziolas, M.A.
Director of Clinical Services
Maui Family Support Services
(808) 242-0900 x 233

March 24, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

I am writing to ask for your support for both the **Healthy Start Program** and the **Enhanced Healthy Start Program**. Please remember that these two programs are different, the first is focused on prevention and the latter is focused on intervention. Our community on Maui, especially families who are at-risk and with young infants and toddlers, need services being offered by both programs.

I can tell you that Healthy Start works in preventing child abuse and neglect. I had a niece who got pregnant at the age of 15. Healthy Start provided home visiting services for her, giving her positive parenting information as well as age-appropriate child development information. At the age of 15, my niece was still a child, who had the responsibility of raising another child. Without the support of Healthy Start, who knows what she could have done to her baby. My niece is now in her twenties, she had received her bachelor's degree with honors, and now working on her master's degree. Her child is now a healthy young lady who is doing well in school and involved in various academic and extra-curricular activities. Without Healthy Start, I do not know if this success story could have happened.

When considering HB 739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start Program**. The State of Hawai'i was the first to implement this program and it has been modeled after nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness. Please help the State in finding ways to continue to fund it. As you know, it has been deeply cut, and I am afraid, it may entirely perish without your support.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration

Edeluisa Baguio-Larena
1082 Makaala Drive
Wailuku, HI 96793
Tel. No. (808) 281-5691

March 24, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

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There is a very important and crucial **difference** between the **Enhanced Healthy Start** Program, which provides services to families **after** they have been identified with abuse and/or neglect and the **Healthy Start** program which works on **prevention** of child abuse and/or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their vulnerable children with resources, early intervention for physical, behavioral health, and environmental risks. Felitti's Kaiser 2000 study, "Adverse Childhood Experiences", shows a direct correlation of children with adverse experiences with adult chronic diseases: diabetes, obesity, heart and lung disease, cancer, smoking, depression and suicide, leading to premature death.

The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. We are hoping for the viability of the program once Federal funds and other private resources are available.

If you would like more information about the **Healthy Start** Program please do not hesitate to contact our fine leaders at Maui Family Support Services.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Leinell Coloma-Nahooikaika
Co-Coordinator Teen Services/Fatherhood Involvement Program
Maui Family Support Services
(808) 242-0900

March 23, 2009

RE: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF

Hearing: 03-24-09 at 2:15pm

To the Honorable Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland,

When considering HB 739 HD2, please do keep in mind the State of Hawaii's Healthy Start Program modeled nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness.

There is a difference between the Enhanced Healthy Start Program, which provides services to families after they have been identified with abuse and/or neglect and the Healthy Start program which provides services on prevention of child abuse and/or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their children.

Evidently, our economy is struggling. With this struggle comes rapid job loss, drastically reduced incomes and subsequently, increased rates of stress, anxiety and depression among families and communities. The Center for Law and Social Policy found that instances of child abuse and neglect increase during financial downturns. Healthy Start (HS) provides a safety net to Hawaii's most vulnerable families and infants along with its mission of preventing child abuse and neglect by providing supportive services to at-risk families. A commonsensical approach in such a desperate time would be to increase safety net programs such as HS, not to dispose of them completely, as you have proposed in your latest budget.

It is not surprising to know that economic stress on families is a large predictor of child abuse and neglect. A recent study on the relationship between unemployment and physical abuse of children found that 49% of maltreating families were experiencing unemployment at the time of abuse. What is surprising though is that in knowing this, you are still willing to cut this essential program completely amidst a growing economic crisis.

By cutting HS services, you are allowing those families who are at-risk to fall through the cracks. By removing the safety net of the HS program, CWS and other short term services such as Enhanced Healthy Start would be overloaded with high risk cases. Without HS, children are being harmed by the risks that could otherwise have been prevented. In an effort to balance the budget, our children are being used as pawns in a match they cannot afford to lose.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration.

Zina Andrade
Wailuku, Maui
808.264.0925

March 24, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF

Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

When considering HB 739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start Program** modeled after nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness. The Healthy Start Program works with low-income at-risk families with very young children between the ages of zero to three years old.

There is a very important and crucial **difference** between the **Enhanced Healthy Start** Program, which provides services to families **after** they have been identified with abuse and/or neglect and the **Healthy Start** program which works on **prevention** of child abuse and/or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their vulnerable children with resources, early intervention for physical, behavioral health, and environmental risks.

Felitti's Kaiser 2000 study, "Adverse Childhood Experiences", shows a direct correlation of children with adverse experiences with adult chronic diseases: diabetes, obesity, heart and lung disease, cancer, smoking, depression and suicide, leading to premature death.

The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. We are hoping for the viability of the program once Federal funds and other private resources are available.

If you would like more information about the **Healthy Start** Program please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Respectfully,
Leonora Etrata
Family Support Worker
Lanai City, HI. 96763
(808) 565-7484

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

When considering HB 739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start Program** modeled after nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness. The Healthy Start Program works with low-income at-risk families with very young children between the ages of zero to three years old.

I am writing in regards to the Healthy Start Program, which currently has faced many budget cuts. Healthy Start is a program that has supported many families in the community and is still trying to stay "afloat," despite the many lay-offs and cut backs. We are hoping that the State of Hawaii will help to keep this wonderful and supportive program thriving, as many families, especially in these current times, need the help and support of an agency like Healthy Start. Our Prime Directive is to utilize our collective resources toward the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Our Mission is to promote healthy family functioning by providing supportive services which build on family strengths. Healthy Start has built an awesome reputation for itself and we are humbly asking for your support in helping to fund this program.

Mahalo,
Patty Paranada-(808)276-5163
Kahului , HI 96732

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
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Honolulu, Hi 96813

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The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. We are hoping for the viability of the program once Federal funds and other private resources are available.

If you would like more information about the **Healthy Start** Program please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Raenelle Coloma, MAEd
Family Support Worker II
Maui Family Support Services, Enhanced Healthy Start
Phone: 808.242.0900 ext # 250 Fax: 808.249.2800
"The mission of Maui Family Support Services is to promote healthy family functioning by providing supportive services which build on family strengths".

Senator Donna Mercado –Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

While considering HB739HD2, please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's Healthy Start Program (HSP) modeled after nationwide and internationally for its effectiveness. The Healthy Start Program works with low-income, high risk families with very young children between the ages of zero to three years old.

It is critical family and mothers with newborn babies are informed of infant growth and brain development and to develop a healthy environment at home to prevent repeated generations of domestic violence that leads to low self-esteem, lack of self worth and chronic illness and suicide. Please we are the voices for the babies and we are the support for every family in HS to develop a healthy lifestyle and environment. A 2000 study conducted by Felitti on "Adverse Childhood Experiences" showed that early intervention is essential.

There is a crucial and important difference between the Enhanced Healthy Start Program, which provides services to families after they have been identified with abuse and /or neglect and the Healthy Start program which works on prevention of child and /or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their vulnerable children with resources, early intervention for physical, behavioral health, and environmental risks.

The program is funded through the State's Department of Health and Healthy Start Program has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Tammy Ruiz
Kula, Maui 96790
(808) 269-3506

Tammy Ruiz

The Mission of Maui Family Support Services, Inc. is to promote healthy family functioning by providing supportive services which build on family strengths.

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March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

When considering HB 739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start Program**. The Healthy Start Program works with low-income at-risk families with very young children between the ages of zero to three years old.

28 years ago **Senator Mamoru Yamasaki** championed Healthy Start because he wanted the children of Hawaii to have an early start in child development and for families to have a support system.

There is a **difference** between the **Enhanced Healthy Start** Program, which provides services to families **after** they have been identified with abuse and/or neglect and the **Healthy Start** program which works on **prevention** of child abuse and/or neglect by providing home-based services to overwhelmed parents and their vulnerable children with resources, early intervention for physical, behavioral health, and environmental risks. It is better to work with families at their familiar surroundings "their own home" versus a Foster Home which the state has to fund and care for these children until their parents pull their lives together which could be for a very long time at the expense of the tax payers!

The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. I have faith and trust in all of you to find the money that will sustain Healthy Start.

If you would like more information about the **Healthy Start** Program please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration,

Mei Amuro Senior FAW
Maui Family Support Services
(808) 242-0900 x 275

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

PLEASE pass **HB 739 HD2** which will allow TANF funds to be used for the State of Hawaii's Healthy Start Program. This program identifies high risk families with very young children between the ages of zero and three years old and provides home visiting services to them. The Healthy Start Program helps break the chain of child abuse. The Healthy Start Program teaches parenting skills, ensures the babies are receiving regular medical care including immunizations, identifies areas where a family may need more help and collaborates with other community resources to make sure the needed help is received.

The Healthy Start Program is funded through the State Department of Health and has already received deep funding cuts this year. Providers are struggling to continue to serve as many families as they can while being told they must cut the number served drastically to stay within the new budget. Please, I respectfully ask you to approve this bill so that the Healthy Start Program may continue providing services to Hawaii's at-risk families and children.

Thank you!

Doris MacFarlane
2575 Ala Olu Place
Haiku, Maui, HI 96708
(808) 575-7478

March 24, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
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Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

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The **Healthy Start** program is funded through the State's Department of Health and it has been targeted with deep cuts at the peril of non-existence. I humbly ask you to search for provision for its continuity. We are hoping for the viability of the program once Federal funds and other private resources are available.

Mele Stokesberry
Retired DOE teacher, Maui District, Baldwin High School

March 24, 2009

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Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
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Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun Oakland:

When considering HB739 HD2 please keep in mind the State of Hawaii's **Healthy Start** modeled after nationwide and international for its effectiveness. The Healthy Start Program works with low income at risk families with very young children between the age of zero to three years old.

Thank You for your kind attention to this crucial program,

Kehau Kaleiohi
FSW II
Maui Family Support Services

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM

Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS

Members of the WAM and HMS Committees

Hawaii State Capitol,

Honolulu, Hi 96813

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Thank you for your time and communication.

Sincerely,

Edward Taguba

98-1277 Kaahumanu St., #148

Aiea, HI 96701

March 23, 2009

Senator Donna Mercado-Kim, Chair, WAM
Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair, HMS
Members of the WAM and HMS Committees
Hawaii State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: HB 739 HD2, Relating to TANF
Hearing: 3-24-09 at 2:15 pm

Dear Senators Mercado Kim and Chun-Oakland:

This is a testimony in support of HB 739 HD2. During this economic downturn, families need more support to avoid trauma and provide a stable emotional and cognitive foundation for children, fostering school readiness and productive functioning in society. When parents volunteer for the Healthy Start program, they have a safety net to avoid adverse childhood experiences that are directly linked to adult mental health issues, chronic diseases, drug abuse, theft and incarceration.

The DHS estimates cost savings on services for a family already confirmed for abuse and involved in Child Welfare services at \$783,888 a year, compared with \$3,000 a year for Healthy Start's volunteer prevention services. The economic, social and moral justifications to keep Healthy Start adequately funded are blaring; please keep this indispensable prevention program alive and make a commitment to supporting families and Keiki.

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My purpose of writing this letter is to support HB 739 HD2 . Healthy Start has been on Molokai for over 20 years and has proven to be a successful Program. Families who utilized this program has learn and became nurturing parents raise their children in a healthy environment. With the way the Economy is going nowadays, people losing their jobs a lot of stress come between relationships. Which in time have child abuse and neglect if programs Such as the Healthy Start Program is not available for families going through such crisis. Please support this valuable Program. HB 739 HD2.
Mahalo,
Corinne Young

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Testimony for HMS 3/24/2009 2:15:00 PM HB739

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Colleen Welty

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Submitted on: 3/24/2009

Comments:

Please support HB 739. The money spent on these programs will save millions down the road in costs to the courts, the foster care system, the special education programs and the prisons of Hawaii. The children of Hawaii should not suffer during these hard times. Please invest in human capital along with infrastructure!

To whom it may concern,

Aloha and Mahalo for taking the time to read this.

It is with a heavy heart I write this letter because I am not only an employee of the Healthy Start Program but I am, a newly educated mother of compassion, patience and love. Even as an educated woman life alone could not prepare me mentally and emotionally for motherhood. I had no idea of the commitment and dedication that came with parenting. Healthy Start gave me the tools I needed to be a good mom. As an employee I have witnessed families transform from old ways..utilizing corporal punishment as means of discipline to actually disciplining through words and utilization ways to teach with out tears.

The program is one of the best investments any state has been benefiting from. The program services entire families to promote good up bringing through out a child's life. We teach methods of coping with stress that could potentially become abuse and neglect. If the program can not prevent or mend broken families we ensure that these families are linked to other resources that can surely get them closer to a better life or at least to a brighter future.

Hawaii needs Healthy Start for the families but mainly for the children. Save Healthy Start.

Mahalo, Shirley Burrows
Kaunakakai, Molokai

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