



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
820 Mililani Street, Suite 817
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 587-5700
Fax: (808) 587-5734

March 16, 2009

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

FROM: Martha T. Torney, Executive Director

**SUBJECT: SB1666, SD2--RELATING TO TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO
NEEDY FAMILIES**

**Hearing: Monday, March 16, 2009, 8:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

The Office of Youth Services strongly supports SB1666, SD2 relating to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families which provides funding for essential and worthwhile services for youth and families. In recent years, TANF funding has been used effectively to expand the ability of government and non-profit agencies to address teen pregnancy and related issues through pregnancy education programs and prevention services. Such programs and services promote resilient youth and strong families and therefore, make a positive impact on the future of our State.

The Office of Youth Services appreciates the amendments to the original bill recommended by the Department of Human Services. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

Testimony on SB 1666-RELATING TO TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

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

Chair: Rep. John Mizuno Vice-Chair: Rep. Tom Brower

House Human Services Committee, Room 329, State Capitol

March 16, 2009, 8 a.m.

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 SB 1666 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 SB 1666 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 SB 1666 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’ across-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 SB 1666 that will preserve critical and essential services to our most vulnerable populations in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share these comments with you today.



To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Representative Tom Brower, Vice Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

From: Elisabeth Chun *Elisabeth Chun*
Executive Director
Good Beginnings Alliance

Date: Monday, March 16, 2009
8:00 a.m. Room 329

Subject: SB 1666 SD2: 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 \$19,800,000 for FY 2009-2010 and the same sum or so much thereof as necessary for FY 2010-1011 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.

Hearing date:
**Monday,
March 16,
2009, 8:00 a.m.**
House
Committee on
Human
Services.
Please deliver
copies of
testimony to
Room 329.

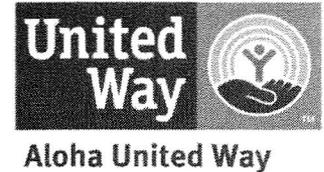
The Good Beginnings Alliance **2006-2007** unduplicated count data shows that:

- 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;
lchun@goodbeginnings.org

Aloha United Way
200 N. Vineyard Blvd., Suite 700
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-3938
Telephone (808) 536-1951
Fax (808) 543-2222
www.auw.org



March 13, 2009

House Committee on Human Services
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Tom Brower, Vice Chair
Monday, March 16, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329

SB 1666, SD2: Relating to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families- Written Testimony in Support

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Brower and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way encourages your favorable consideration of SB 1666, SD2 which details how the legislature will spend TANF funds.

Aloha United Way agrees with the concept of using TANF funds and reserves during times of economic challenge while maintaining a healthy balance between current needs and reserves. TANF funds can move individuals toward self-sufficiency, which is at the foundation of a healthy economy and a necessary component of consistent, on-going economic resiliency.

One of Aloha United Way's key priorities is to promote financial stability and independence. Our commitment is evidenced by our support of the Earned Income Tax Credit Program and the funding of projects intended to establish, increase, and/or sustain earning capacity. Programs that prevent teen pregnancy, increase high school graduation rates, and provide job training, are just a few examples of where Aloha United Way is investing in Hawai'i's future.

Aloha United Way thanks you for the opportunity to testify and we encourage favorable consideration of SB 1666, SD2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Doyle".

Susan Doyle
President & Chief Professional Officer

To: The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair
The Honorable Tom Brower, Vice Chair
House Committee on Human Services

From: Danielle Moskowitz, Vice President of Human Services
Laura Robertson, President/CEO
Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc.

Date: March 13, 2009

Re: **Testimony in support of S.B. 1666 SD2 – Relating to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families**

We applaud the legislature for its leadership in the area of supporting workforce development. During times of financial challenge, employment is a key component of the community's economic safety net. As government supports building a strong dependable workforce, its citizens become self-sufficient releasing their dependence on government assistance.

In fact, employment strengthens communities at all levels. Working citizens provide tax revenues to the government and are able to purchase goods and services from community businesses. Businesses run at top-efficiency when fully staffed with trained and motivated employees. When its citizens are employed, government is able to re-direct tax revenues to provide fundamental community services rather than family/individual financial public assistance.

Goodwill Industries of Hawaii is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing educational and career development programs. Goodwill works with people who have employment barriers, including welfare dependency, economic and resource barriers, lack of education/work experience, illiteracy and disadvantaged youth. Last year, Goodwill served more than 9,400 individuals throughout the state in its career development and training programs and placed over 1,800 into jobs.

We appreciate the State's support in helping its economically disadvantaged citizens become trained for work and obtain assistance with job-search activities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



**TESTIMONY
ON
SB 1666, SD2 RELATING TO TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY
FAMILIES
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

March 16, 2009

8:00 Am

Room 329

Aloha Chair Mizuno and members of the House Committee on Human Services. Blueprint for Change (BFC), a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve Hawai'i's Child Welfare System **supports** SB 1666, SD2. BFC's is interested in this bill because it relates to preventative efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect.

For the past 10 years, BFC, using TANF funds under a contract with the Department of Human Services, has worked to establish a state-wide series of family strengthening walk-in facilities, called Neighborhood Places, that provide support and strengthening services to family who may be at risk of child abuse and neglect. The staff of Neighborhood Places are truly special individuals who work hard at diverting these families away from being engaged with the State's Child Welfare System. Through the training and resources they provide, families become stronger, more able to withstand the stresses that come with financial hardship and crises, and they become more self-sufficient and less dependent on State assistance in the long term.

These prevention/diversion services save the State millions of dollars every year. As an example, for families who become engaged in the system, the State is frequently forced to pay thousands of dollars to cover the costs of placing the children into foster care. The monetary and societal cost increase exponentially when there are serious incidences of child abuse and/or neglect occurring in the family. Studies have clearly shown that children who are victims of abuse are much more likely to drop out of school, partake in dangerous and illegal activities, become incarcerated, and eventually become abusers themselves, thus continuing the endless cycle.

We can attest to the positive impact that prevention programs have on families and communities at large. In just the first few months of this fiscal year, the Neighborhood Places have seen remarkable transformations in the families served, primarily because they received help and support. Of the 68 cases closed this fiscal year, 63 families have completed their individual program plans, which are designed to put them on a track for success. Furthermore, there was not a single report of child abuse or neglect at the six-month follow up for any of the above mentioned families, all of which was done at a fraction of the cost of state intervention.

We support SB 1666, SD2 because the funding for cash payments, employment training, and teen pregnancy education provided by the bill ultimately help prevent families who are at risk from child abuse and neglect. We also need to view this funding as an investment in human capital and not a handout. This kind of support and assistance helps families like those served by the Neighborhood Places become more self-sufficient, productive citizens in the future.

We strongly urge the passage of SB 1666, SD2 and thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



House HUS Cmte
Mon, Mar 16, 2009
8:00 am
room 329

National Association of Social Workers

Hawaii Chapter

March 14, 2009

TO: Representative John Mizuno, Chair
Members of the House Human Services Committee

FROM: Debbie Shimizu, LSW
National Association of Social Workers, Hawaii Chapter

RE: SB 1666 SD2 Relating to Human Services- **SUPPORT**

Chair Mizuno and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Debbie Shimizu, Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Hawaii Chapter. I am also a member of the Financial Assistance Advisory Council (FAAC) of DHS and the Welfare and Employment Rights Coalition (WERC). **NASW supports SB 1666 SD2.**

This bill was signed by 23 Senators and is part of the Senate's majority caucus package. This sends a very strong message that they support the use of TANF funds to maintain the health and human services safety net for the people of Hawaii.

As the economy worsens, the safety net is needed even more. Government must assist vulnerable individuals and families meet their basic shelter, food and health care needs and support their return to the workforce. The middle class may also be losing their jobs, housing and suffering economic dislocation as a result of the recession, so TANF funds must also be used to help prevent the middle class from falling into poverty. In this time of economic struggle the health and human services sector needs to remain strong to help those who are in need of assistance.

We urge the House to join with the Senate to support the use of these federal funds for the purposed proposed in SB 1666 SD2.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

From: Linda Coble [lindacoble@mac.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2009 4:53 PM
To: HUS testimony
Subject: Healthy Start...TANF funds

From: Linda Coble, Advisory Board of Hawaii Family Support Institute
and child abuse prevention volunteer
284-2000

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB 1666, Monday, March 16th

Aloha Lawmakers,

I was shocked and confused, when I learned that Healthy Start was being eliminated from the State budget for reasons that absolutely are not valid. Healthy Start is not duplicative of other services.

The program's outcomes and effectiveness have been measured and evaluated more than any State funded program I know. Hawaii's Healthy Start has been the model for the nationwide Healthy Families America child abuse prevention programs across the country.

I have been involved as a volunteer since the first Healthy Start pilot in Ewa 25 years ago, and am proud of the fact that the program has morphed with the needs of our served community, to include clinical specialists able to address the more serious environments in which our most vulnerable keiki live. In fact, a recent 5-year, 2.5 million dollar grant from the Federal Administration for Children and Families to enhance the quality, impact and sustainability of Hawaii's Healthy Start Program...a highly competitive contract that went to only 17 programs nationwide...illustrates our success and potential. That will evaporate with the end of Healthy Start. But more importantly, I can't imagine what will happen when, in this skidding economy, the safety net is yanked out from under our greatest resource.

Please appropriate TANF funds to maintain this ID and home visiting program that prevents child abuse and neglect, and promotes healthy development among newborns of families at risk. Prevention is the key! Who will connect with families in hospitals at the birth of newborns to accurately assess risk for abuse, neglect, or developmental and learning problems? Who will provide valuable home visiting services that strengthen families, prevents child mal treatment and promotes child health and development?

Who will keep the floodgates in place, so other providers and hospitals don't drown in new cases after the damage is done?

I respectfully will defer to the providers, the number crunchers, the families who have found success in raising their children in a healthy and non-abusive environment because of Healthy Start, for the core arguments.

But as a volunteer...as a citizen of my adopted state...as a reporter who has covered the ugly end of abuse and neglect...as someone who understands the value of front end prevention...please use the smarts we elected you to exhibit, to keep Healthy Start intact for these difficult times to come.

Thank you for paying now, so we don't have to pay big time in the years to come.

Aloha,
Linda Coble