

SB 186



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

February 5, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.B. 186, RELATING TO FOSTER CARE SERVICES

Hearing: February 5, 2009, Thursday, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 186 is to increase the foster board rate distributed by the Department of Human Services for foster care services for children.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services appreciates the intent of this measure; however, given the current fiscal difficulties, we must respectfully oppose this bill because it would not be prudent to pursue enactment at this time.

Based on our current data, the cost of increasing the foster board rate \$100 from \$529 to \$629 would raise the cost of foster board by \$19,200,000 in general funds for the biennium (\$9,600,000 general funds each year).

In addition to the monthly foster board payment, we provide to resource foster parents, the following payments and benefits on behalf of foster children:

- Clothing allowances for each child
- Mileage reimbursement
- Medical coverage for the foster children
- Difficulty of care payments up to an additional \$570 per month for children who have special needs
- Access to supportive services
- Training opportunities

We truly appreciate the commitment of Hawaii's resource foster parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.