STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1001 -10

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 29 , 2010

RE: H.C.R. No. 165

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say Speaker, House of Representatives Twenty-Fifth State Legislature Regular Session of 2010 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred H.C.R. No. 165 entitled:

"HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING AN AUDIT OF THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM IN PROCESSING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND MISUSE OF CHILD SUPPORT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this concurrent resolution is to request an audit of the Child Welfare Services program in their processing and investigation of complaints of child abuse and neglect and the misuse of child support.

Parents for Righteousness and a concerned individual testified in support of this measure.

The Department of Human Services submitted testimony in opposition to this measure.

Your Committee acknowledges the fact that the Child Welfare Services program of the Department of Human Services (DHS) ensures the safety and permanence of children in their own homes, as well as out-of-home placements. It is also the responsibility of the Child Welfare Services program to investigate reports of abuse and neglect in Hawaii. It has been alleged, however, that claims of child abuse and neglect and misuse of child support have been ignored by the Child Welfare Services program in the past.

HCR165 HSCR HUS.doc

STAND. COM. REP. NO. Page 2

-10

To support this allegation and provide an impetus for the request of an audit, your Committee would like to take note of some testimonies. Hopefully, this will give more reason for supporting this audit request.

According to one testimony, a minor had called the Child Welfare Services program to report abuse and neglect and the misuse of child support monies. In response, the Child Welfare Services program only referred the minor to the Child Support Enforcement Agency. The Child Support Enforcement Agency, unfortunately, was unable to help her. It left the minor feeling helpless, while the abuse intensified more.

Another testimony states that "the current Child Welfare Services system is grossly flawed and its workers are overstepping their authority and breaking the law." It also stated that "as a parent if you assert your rights under the law to the Social Worker or anyone else in CWS, your case is treated with profound adversity." Lastly, the testimony noted "a direct conflict of interest in which, from experience, the family courts will allow only CWS social workers to testify and will not allow outside qualified experts to testify."

Therefore, based on compelling testimonies, your Committee feels it justifiable to request a program audit of the efficiency and effectiveness of Child Welfare Services in processing and investigating of child abuse and neglect and the misuse of monetary support for the child.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.C.R. No. 165 and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Legislative Management.

> Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Human Services,

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State of Hawaii House of Representatives The Twenty-fifth Legislature

Record of Votes of the Committee on Human Services

	Committee Referral: HUS, LMG 3.22.10			
□ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: Pass, unamended (as is) Pass, with amendments (HD) Hold Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
HUS Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. MIZUNO, John M. (C)	/			
2 PROWER Tom (VC)				
2. BROWER, Tom (VC)				
3. BELATTI, Della Au				
4. BERTRAM, Joe, III				
5. CARROLL, Mele	A Station way to a			
6. NISHIMOTO, Scott Y.			Second Section 201	
7. SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.				
7. SIMMADORORO, Maie S.L.				
8. YAMANE, Ryan I.				
	-			
9. WARD, Gene	/			
TOTAL (9)	5	0	0	U
The recommendation is: Adopted If joint referral, did not support recommendation.				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: <u>TomBrown</u>				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				