



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 1, 2010

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 2468 - RELATING TO VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

HEARING: Monday, February 1, 2010 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to establish a Vocational Rehabilitation Division within the Department of Human Services (DHS) and proposes to place services for blind persons and deaf services under this division. This bill will also require DHS to develop a strategic plan to restructure services to deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind persons through a comprehensive service center.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services respectfully opposes this bill.

A Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division (VRSD) is already established in DHS. VRSD provides services to qualified persons with disabilities including blind, deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind persons.

Further, this bill poses a separation of powers issue because the establishment of a division within a department is an executive function, not a legislative function. HRS 26-38 allows the

head of a department, with the approval of the Governor, to establish or abolish any division or administrative unit.

The Legislative Reference Bureau has completed a report on Vocational Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing through a Comprehensive Service Center (Report No. 1, 2009). The Findings and Recommendations include VRSBD working with recognized authorities to develop a plan for restructuring the Deaf Services Section of VR as part of a comprehensive center (page 24). VRSBD has committed a one-time expenditure of American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funds of \$200,000 toward this effort and there is no on-going funding available.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee.

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1 FEBRUARY 2010

HB 2468 RELATING TO VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the House Human Services Committee. My name is ART FRANK and I am the deaf Chair of the DEAF HARD OF HEARING ADVISORY BOARD (DHHAB) , for VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION, DEPT OF HUMAN SERVICES.

I want to thank this committee, particularly your Chairman for amending Section 348-3 Hawaii Revised Statutes to include rehabilitation services for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf blind. I definitely support this change because it's inclusive and long time in coming. Mahalo nui loa for your support.

ART FRANK
CHAIR, DEAF HARD OF HEARING ADVISORY BOARD

LATE
Testimony