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February 2, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2088 – RELATING TO ADOPTIONS.**

Hearing: February 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure, which adds the requirement that written consent to adoption be notarized, provided that the implementation of this requirement does not delay permanency for children involved in Child Welfare Services.

Pursuant to section 587-2(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes, child welfare adoptions do not require parental consent when parental rights have been judicially terminated or when consent is dispensed with by order of the court. In cases where consent is required, notarization of adoption consents strengthens the integrity of the adoption proceedings by confirming that the appropriate parties knowingly and voluntarily provide consent. This additional safeguard reduces the risk of disputes regarding consent and legal challenges that could otherwise disrupt permanency for children.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okolokolo, Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third State Legislature, 2026 Regular Session

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 325

by

Dyan M. Medeiros
Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge
Luna Kānāwai 'Ohana Nui
Family Court of the First Circuit
'Aha Ho'okolokolo 'Ohana o ke Ka'apuni 'Ekahi

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 2088, Relating to Written Consents to Adoptions.

Purpose: Adds the requirement that a written consent to adoption be notarized.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary strongly supports House Bill No. 2088 which is included in the Judiciary's 2026 legislative package.

Currently, there is no notary requirement for written consents in adoption cases under HRS 578-2. By adding the requirement that written consents to adoption be notarized, it will help to prevent the possibility of fraudulent consents.

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