

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1805
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Legislative Management, to which was referred H.B. No. 1805 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD WELFARE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish an independent Office of the Child Advocate within the Office of the Ombudsman to oversee and evaluate the delivery of services to children and their families by various state agencies and entities, receive and investigate complaints, and make recommendations for improvement.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Ombudsman; Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission; and Hoaloha Project. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committee finds that several recent tragic child abuse deaths have exposed critical flaws within the State's child welfare system, including the administration of foster care services. Your Committee further finds that the establishment of an independent and autonomous Office of the Child Advocate is critical to providing impartial oversight of the delivery of services to children and their families by state agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Department's Child

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Welfare Services Branch, and other entities that serve children and their families through funds provided by the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Establishing the Office of the Child Advocate within the Department of the Attorney General, rather than within the Office of the Ombudsman;
- (2) Deleting the definition for "state agency";
- (3) Inserting a definition for "agency";
- (4) Specifying that the salary of the Child Advocate shall be ninety percent of the salary of the Deputy Director of Health;
- (5) Deleting language that would have authorized the Child Advocate to employ or retain independent attorneys and make adjustments to terms and conditions of employment for its employees who are excluded from collective bargaining;
- (6) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Legislative Management that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1805, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1805, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Legislative
Management,



SEAN QUINLAN, Chair



