

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 29, 2008

RE: H.B. No. 524
H.D. 2

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred H.B. No. 524, H.D. 1, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to provide foster youth who are subject to a permanent plan the opportunity to participate in permanent plan hearings.

The Department of Human Services, Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, and several concerned individuals supported this bill.

Your Committee understands that foster children may have valuable opinions and information concerning their future, and agrees that their participation in hearings held subsequent to permanent plan hearings may provide important insights.

Recognizing that there may be circumstances when a foster child might not be available for service and that a hearing may need to commence for reasons of judicial or administrative efficiency, your Committee has amended this measure by deleting the provision that prohibits a hearing from commencing unless the foster child, 14 years of age or older, has been served with notice.

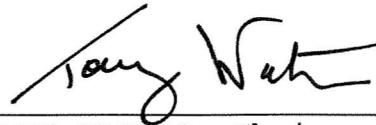


In addition, your Committee has also amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting the provision allowing for a shortening of time for a notice of hearing to be served to a foster child, 14 years of age or older, when the hearing is set within a shorter time frame;
- (2) Changing its effective date to January 1, 2112, to promote further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for style, clarity, and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 524, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 524, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



TOMMY WATERS, Chair



