

To: Committee of: INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
Chairman: SENATOR DAVID Y. IGE  
Date and time of hearing: THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006

4/19/06

**Resolution Number and Title: HCR250 RELATING TO "RECEIVING HOMES" STUDY**

We are writing in support of the above resolution for a Receiving Home Study for the State of Hawaii, specifically for West Hawaii, to be completed as soon as possible. The 'receiving home' concept has been utilized on the mainland for decades.

In West Hawaii we have many children both in and out of foster care who need suitable short term emergency housing. Many of the children that come into foster care come out of drug homes, where they have been exposed to chemicals and chaotic environments. Also our homeless teenage population is in great need of emergency shelters. We need somewhere where they can be stabilized, assessed and their immediate needs met for: medical services, food, shelter and detoxification. In all of West Hawaii we only have 2 ½ beds at the Kona Salvation Army Shelter for teens, and only one (1) independent living bed. The shelter is licensed for eight (8). Several beds are for Probation. Basically we service all the same kids. We are in need of a 'Receiving Home' that will service the whole community. This will make it easier for our social workers to provide timely and appropriate care for the children right away, without delay caused by searching for suitable foster homes.

As Supervisor of Foster Care, I, Betty Hannah see everyday the need for emergency homes, group homes, shelters, and independent living situations for our children. We have very few foster homes that will take in teenagers. In total we have 299 children under Child Welfare Services and most would have benefited from coming into custody through a 'Receiving Center'. This would have reduced the number of placements, and given the professionals time to make the best decisions for their care.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely



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