



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
February 13, 2023

The Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
The Thirty-Second Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Buenaventura and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB144 Relating to Compacts of Free Association

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **SUPPORTS and offers comments on SB144**, which establishes the compacts of Free Association Census Task Force within the Department of Human Services to conduct a census of COFA residents in Hawaii.

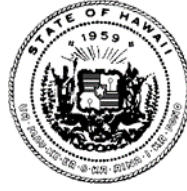
This measure will help our state identify, serve, and support our Micronesian community. We ask that the census created by the task force also identifies our intellectual and developmental disability community as part of our Micronesian community. I/DD goes underdiagnosed in minority communities and can increase the effect of racial/ethnic disparities on families. By identifying this sub-population, we can provide services and supports to these individuals and their families.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support and offer comments of SB144**.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
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February 11, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [SB 144](#) - RELATING TO COMPACTS OF FREE ASSOCIATION.

Hearing: February 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225 & Videoconferencing, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) provides comments on this measure, requests clarification as to its purpose, and respectfully requests that the measure be deferred.

PURPOSE: This bill establishes the Compacts of Free Association Census Task Force within the Department of Human Services to conduct a census of COFA residents in Hawaii.

DHS requests clarification of the purpose of this measure as federal entities have conducted both census and analysis of the population of residents in Hawaii, US territories, and several states. The US Census Bureau conducts the census of Hawaii residents, including those residents from member nations of the Compacts of Free Association. In addition, in June 2020, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its comprehensive Report to the Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, COMPACTS OF FREE ASSOCIATION, [Populations in U.S. Areas Have Grown, with Varying Reported Effects](#), (GAO-20-491). DHS participated in GAO's investigation and found the process thorough and fair.

DHS respectfully asks the Legislature to consider the findings of the GAO's report instead of formulating a task force. DHS provides benefits and services to eligible Hawaii residents; DHS does not have available staff to facilitate this workgroup, nor does it have the expertise to guide the requested work. Therefore, DHS respectfully requests that this measure be deferred.

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