



# PHOCUSED

PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

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DATE: February 17, 2010

TO: Representative Marcus Oshiro

FROM: Alex Santiago, Executive Director  
PHOCUSED (Protecting Hawai'i's Ohana, Children, UnderServed,  
Elderly and Disabled)

RE: HB 2991 Relating to Public Finance

Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair of the Finance Committee, I am Alex Santiago, Executive Director of PHOCUSED, a coalition of health, housing, human service agencies and individual advocates voicing the needs of the marginalized and underserved in Hawai'i. **PHOCUSED supports HB 2991 and appreciates the efforts by the legislature to produce the needed revenues to ensure core support for the poor and needy.** In addition, PHOCUSED believes that a discussion is needed on how best to allocate these funds, and respectfully offers to be part of that discussion.

As advocates for the Health, Housing, and Human Services sector we are also concerned about balancing the budget at an enormous social cost to our children, as well as our disabled citizens, the frail elderly, families who are a heartbeat away from homelessness, victims of domestic abuse, infants and toddlers who need special attention at the start of their lives, and others among us who are particularly vulnerable at a time of fiscal restraint. Recent surveys have indicated that the needs of our most vulnerable residents have risen alarmingly, while services to address their needs continue to be cut by the State. We trust this measure and its resulting funds will be used as means to preserve essential safety net and core services.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns with you, and offer to be a resource to you in future deliberations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.