

# Hawaii Family Forum 2006 Year End Report

2006 was an incredibly significant year at Hawaii Family Forum. The 2006 Legislature was as substantive and busy as ever, with HFF testifying over 50 times on 26 different proposals ranging from assisted suicide to abstinence education to affordable housing. (See summary below)

Nearly 80,000 people viewed our 2006 voters' guide project this 2006 election season.

And our newly launched 'Families for Waiting Keiki' project with HOPE In the Name of Christ adoption agency and the state Department of Human Services helped find forever adoptive families for 12 abused and neglected Hawaii children who are ORPHANS NO MORE this Christmas.

Thank you for your partnership with us. Without you, the work of Hawaii Family Forum would not be possible.

## 2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

### Physician-assisted suicide.

Three bills were again introduced, but the issue was never considered in Committee, thanks, in large part, to our coalition and grassroots involvement over the last several issues. The issue will be back in 2007.

### Religious Freedom/Sanctity of Life

We stopped a bill to mandate St. Francis to dispense the so-called 'Emergency Contraception' pill, which can also induce early abortion. This proposal violates the

religious freedom rights of St. Francis Hospital. Planned Parenthood and other groups are waiting for St. Francis to be sold so they can try again to pass a bill with no religious freedom exemption. This issue will be back in 2007.

### Attack on Abstinence Education

Bills were again introduced to prohibit state funding from going to any organization that promotes abstinence-only programs. Catholic Charities operates an extremely successful federally-funded abstinence only program called 'Try Wait'. Passage of this bill would have jeopardized their continued federal funding of this success program. We managed to stop this bill for at least the fourth year in a row and Planned Parenthood made very clear to the Legislature its displeasure with the outcome on this proposal. This issue will be back in 2007.

### Abortion

An abortion clarification bill, HB 1242 HD 1, was signed by the Governor on April 26, 2006 (Act 35). HB 1242 HD 1 was an attempt by proponents to 'update' Hawaii's statutes to conform to the current constitutional case law. Hawaii's abortion laws haven't been amended in decades and abortion proponents fear the eventual overturning of Roe v. Wade.

However, HB 1242 HD 1 actually goes further than current case law requires by allowing clinic or office abortions at any stage, thus jeopardizing women's health. Later term surgical abortions can have serious complications, which may require the emergency services available only in an inpatient setting.

Although HFF and the HCC had asked Governor Lingle to veto the measure and protect the health and safety of Hawaii's pregnant women, she signed the bill into law citing the need for the outdated statutes to be modernized.

Importantly, the worst provision of the original version of HB 1242 was dropped. The original version would have dramatically expanded Hawaii's already expansive abortion law by allowing 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester abortions of viable babies up to the point of birth for any reason.

### Continuous Sex Assault of a Minor

HB 2207 HD 1 SD 1 (signed the Governor on May 1, 2006 [Act 60]) and SB 2246 SD 1 HD 2 CD 1 ) taken together will again provide the people an opportunity to vote on a constitutional amendment allowing the legislature to better protect child from serial sex assault in their homes. These bills were previously passed by the legislature and approved by the people in November of 2004. The Supreme Court reversed the action on a technicality and now the legislature is again sending the issue back to the people.

ON ELECTION DAY, THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII AGAIN APPROVED THIS MEASURE. HFF'S Kelly Rosati, along with Hawaii Attorney General Mark Bennett, debated an ACLU attorney and a public defender in a televised debate before the vote.

## **Healthcare for Homeless and Runaway Youth**

The stated purpose of SB 2166 SD 2 HD 3 was to allow health care providers to render primary and preventive care to homeless and runaway youth without first obtaining parental consent. Obtaining parental consent in these instances was impossible and the minors often were in great need of care. Places like the Waikiki Health Center were taking legal risk by providing the care without the appropriate consent. The problem was that the original SB 2166 SD 2 HD 3 didn't just focus on the at risk youth. Instead, it deemed all 14 year olds "adults" for all medical purposes without limitation. We were able to get that provision revised with much difficulty. That's the good news.

The Governor vetoed this bill.

## **Electronic Enticement of Minors**

SB 2265 CD 1 provides a 1 year mandatory minimum jail term for those who use the internet to lure minors into meeting to have sex. We've seen many cases recently in the media where child predators have been caught by law enforcement, thankfully, BEFORE they were able to use abuse the minors. Unfortunately, none of these predators had been given tough sentences by local judges. Most have received probation.

This new law was used this year to arrest an alleged 40 year old predator who was using the internet to solicit a 14 year old minor for sex. Our work has real life consequences and it is gratifying to see how the legislative proposals passed protect and bring justice for real Hawaii children and families.

(NOTE TO PARENTS: Please know what your children and teens are doing on-line. the computer in an

open area and be sure your children know NOT to give or post personal information on-line.)

## **Protecting Children and Families from Unwanted Pornography**

HB 2885 HD 2 requires those who sell pornography to shield it from those who don't want to see it. HFF/HCC testified for this proposal later in the session and we are thrilled it has passed the legislature and signed by the Governor on April 26, 2006 (Act 032).

## **Homeless Issues/Affordable Housing**

After much deliberation, the Legislature passed (HB 2176 CD1) which enables partnerships to build temporary emergency shelters. The measure also increases the allocation of conveyance tax revenues to the Rental Housing Trust Fund and appropriates funds for various homeless and housing programs and projects. This bill will better address Hawaii's sad and growing homeless and affordable housing crisis. We are pleased this issue has been a bi-partisan priority as it has been a priority of HFF/HCC as well as Catholic Charities and the Diocesan Office of Social Ministry. It passed the legislature and signed by the Governor on May 16, 2006 (Act 100).

## **VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN:**

Voter resources for conducting a complete voter registration drive were distributed to over 170 churches statewide.

Over 68,000 people accessed the Primary Election Voter Guide.

Over 80,000 people have accessed the General Election voter guide.

## **MEDIA PRESENCE:**

HFF was featured in newsprint 14

times. (Honolulu Star Bulletin, Honolulu Advertiser, Garden Isle and the Hawaii Catholic Herald)

HFF's executive director Kelly Rosati was also featured on various radio, TV interviews.

## **HAWAII'S CHILDREN WHO ARE ORPHANS NO MORE: FAMILIES FOR WAITING KEIKI (FFWK) PROJECT:**

3,939 people have seen the FFWK presentation in 24 churches, mainly on Oahu. HFF's Kelly Rosati gives a comprehensive presentation on the needs of Hawaii's hidden orphans.

12 abused and neglected Hawaii foster children have found forever adoptive families and are orphans NO MORE this Christmas because of the joint effort of Hawaii Family Forum and Hope In the Name of Christ.

To read their stories that end in HOPE, please log on to our website [www.hawaiifamilyforum.org/familiesforwaitingkeiki.html](http://www.hawaiifamilyforum.org/familiesforwaitingkeiki.html).

## **NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY**

HFF Played a key role, along with HOPE INC, Heart Gallery Hawaii, and other stateholders, in the National Adoption Day Celebration at Pealridge. HFF's Kelly Rosati was featured on the FOX 2 morning news with Kirk Matthews and was a speaker at the event along with Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona and DHS Director Lillian Koller.

**Based on the election results from 2006 and the subsequent reorganization of our State House and Senate, 2007 will likely bring significant challenges. We covet your continued partnership and support of HFF!**



December 14, 2006

Dear Friend of the Family,

Merry Christmas! We pray you have a blessed season of celebration with your family. Christmas is a great time to count one's blessings and, at Hawaii Family Forum, we count you among ours.

Mahalo for your partnership with us on behalf of Hawaii's families. Your support, partnership and prayers are things we never take for granted. Enclosed, please find our 2006 annual report. It was an important year. We want you to know how you have helped Hawaii's families through your partnership with us.

This year brought a very busy legislative session and election season as well as a brand new faith-based project to find families for Hawaii's hidden orphans. The results have been nothing short of amazing! (Many more details enclosed, enjoy the reading.) We are so thankful to God.

As is always the case, the next legislative session is right around the corner. On January 17, 2007, the new Legislature convenes and our work begins again. The stakes will be as high as ever with life, family, and social justice issues at the forefront.

To help us continue the work of HFF, would you prayerfully consider adding us to your Christmas gift list? A monetary gift of any size would help assure our continued work into 2007.

On behalf of the Board and staff of Hawaii Family Forum, mahalo nui loa, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

For the Family,

Kelly M. Rosati, JD  
Executive Director