

TESTIMONY

SB 1203

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Acadia Hawaii Residential Treatment
Center (Formerly Children's
Comprehensive Services

Adolescent Services Program, Kaiser
Permanente Medical Care System

Aloha Pride Center

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
Assistive Technology Resource Ctrs. of HI
Bay Clinic, Inc.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Blueprint for Change

Bobby Benson Center

Catholic Charities Hawaii

Central Oahu Youth Services Assn.

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Community Assistance Center

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Support Services of West Hawaii

Foster Family Programs of Hawaii

Friends of the Missing Child Center of HI

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Behavioral Health

Hawaii Foster Parent Association

Hawaii Student Television

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition

Hina Mauka Teen Care

Kahi Mohala Behavioral Health

Kama'aina Kids, Inc.

KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth)
Project

Kids Behavioral Health

Kids Hurt Too

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Life Foundation

Marimed Foundation

The Maui Farm, Inc.

Maui Youth and Family Services

Palama Settlement

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

Planned Parenthood of Hawaii

Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.

Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

Turning Point for Families

Waikiki Health Center

Women Helping Women

YouthVision

YWCA of Kauai

February 10, 2009

To: Senator Dwight Takamine, Chair
And members of the Committee on Labor

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

Testimony on SB 1203 Relating to Community Service

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports the intent of SB 1203 Relating to Community Service. HYSN believes that community service programs have the best outcomes for youth and communities when participation is voluntary and recommends that the bill be amended to be voluntary rather than mandated.

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN) supports a Positive Youth Development approach to service planning and delivery. The Positive Youth Development approach suggests that helping young people to achieve their full potential is the best way to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors. Organizations and communities that promote Positive Youth Development give youth the chance to exercise leadership, build skills, and get involved. The self-confidence, trust, and practical knowledge that young people gain from these opportunities help them grow into healthy, happy, self-sufficient adults.

When community members and policymakers harness the positive energy and initiative of youth, good things happen:

- Youth believe they can be successful instead of internalizing the negative stereotypes about them that often appear in the media.
- Youth engage in productive activities that build job and life skills and reinforce community-mindedness.
- Youth grow comfortable questioning and exploring their roles as citizens in a participatory democracy.

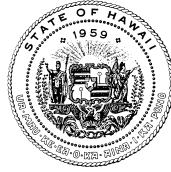
Community service programs are an example of Positive Youth Development, but only when the participants genuinely care about the services they provide. Mandating community service turns what should be an act of caring into a focus on

building up the required hours. Young people are less involved when service is mandated, learn less, and are less likely to be motivated to participate in community service as adults.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



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Testimony of the Office of Community Services

Good Morning Chairs Chun-Oakland and Takamine, Vice Chairs Ihara and Taniguchi and members of the committee,

My name is Sam Aiona and I am testifying as the Executive Director of the Office of the Community Services supporting the intent of SB 1203. The Office of Community Services (OCS) currently administers over seventy contracts in eighteen program areas to ensure the self-sufficiency of low-income persons, refugees, and immigrants.

OCS at this time supports the intent of the bill. However, there are some issues that may need to be addressed before this bill becomes law. First and foremost, the mandate of the Office of Community Services addresses the needs of low-income and disadvantaged persons, as well as refugees and immigrants. Although this does not preclude us from serving young adults ages sixteen to twenty, it does require OCS to substantiate that they are in fact low-income, disadvantaged, refugees, or immigrants.

Additionally, the bill is unclear as to how the funds would be properly administered at the time of expenditure. OCS would like guidance on what would qualify an educational program. The verbiage "any educational program" does not specify type, duration, or qualifying features that would ensure that the monies held in trust would be used to effectuate the intent of the legislation.

OCS recognizes there would be tremendous savings to the State with such labor applied to common, menial tasks, as well as a valuable work experience benefit to the individual doing the service. However, if the individuals providing this "community service" were to receive such remuneration, this may disqualify them from utilizing the hours spent towards areas that require "community service" in a stricter sense, such as out-of-state college applications.

Finally, as recognized in the bill, several legal issues may be raised by mandating such a program. OCS will defer to the Office of the Attorney General regarding passing Constitutional muster.

I thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify, and am available to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony for LBR/HMS 2/13/2009 2:30:00 PM SB1203

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jill Friedman
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jillf2184@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/11/2009

Comments:

I oppose SB1203. This is a waste of public funds. At a time when vital services such as libraries and smoking cessation services--to name just 2 among many-- are being cut for lack of funds this frivolous and unnecessary use of funds is innapropriate and unexusable.

Worse, this law would amount to involuntary servitude(slavery)without compensation and violates citizens' constitutional and natural right to privacy and to be left alone. Five hundred hours is a huge amount of time--over 12 forty hour weeks. It would create a hardship for young adults already struggling to survive, juggling jobs, school and family responsibilities.

Forcing people to do community service defeats the whole point of community service, which is to give of one's time and energy freely and VOLUNTARILY. And it would require transportation, which costs money and uses gasoline, a non-renewable resourse, and would increase traffic congestion, which is already a problem.

This bill, if passed would immediately be challenged in court and would result in costly and time consuming litigation. Please do NOT pass this bill out of committee.

SB 1203 Service Requirement

Good Afternoon, Senators. My name is Isaac Sproat and I am a senior at Kohala High School. I am testifying on SB No. 1203 Relating to Community Service. I stand in support this Bill requiring community service for all residents ages 16-20. I think that the bill is a great idea. Too many of our residents think that community service is a punishment to be paid after doing something wrong. I believe that we need to get back to the belief that we are our communities and that we all need to give back in order to create stronger communities. I also think this is a great idea that will help keep kids out of trouble and physically fit.

Implementing a bill that requires a minimum of 500 hours will be difficult, and I ask why 500 hours was selected as the criteria and not 250 hours. I also wonder what would happen if someone completed 500 hours of service by the time they were 17 years old. I can see this working well while kids are in school because we keep track of volunteer service hours at our school, but what happens when students leave school? Some will leave the state before age 20.

Kevin Cheney
3212 Loulu Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

Testimony in support of senate bill 1203

Hearing by LBR/HMS on 2-13-09 at 2:30 PM

My name is Kevin Cheney and I am a student at the University of Hawaii and an intern in this building. I am testifying today as a private citizen in strong support of SB 1203. At first glance, many youth may read this bill and say "oh no more work that I have to do" and may view it in the same way they view homework, with disdain.

However, we who have survived the high school experience know that while homework was rarely fun it was necessary and a valuable education tool. This bill has those same qualities. While many youth may feel that the proposal is unfair at first, under careful examination one can clearly see that this bill would benefit our youth, our neighborhoods, our state and also our nation.

1. First, the bill would benefit out youth in a multitude of ways. By requiring all youth to perform some type of community service we can guarantee their active participation in our communities. Many youth fall into the traps of drug use and other youthful indiscretions because they simply lack activities to do. 500 hours would mean they would have to spend a few hours a week over the course of two years to complete this project. This is certainly a reasonable amount of time.
2. The youth of Hawaii would also benefit by having a vested interest in the welfare of our state. By putting their sweat and time into making Hawaii a better place they would become more involved in the problems and solutions currently facing our state. The youth, who become actively involved in making our world a better place will one day, be adults helping to solve problems for future generations.
3. In our time of economic crisis ideas where both organizations and individuals can benefit should be given priority consideration. The youth will be paid \$1,500, or \$3 an hour, for their service. This means that non-profit agencies will be able to have more help because they will not have to pay them full salaries. The youth will benefit because many of Hawaii's high school graduates lack the financial means to go to college. The 1,500 could be used directly for tuition or other expenses such as books. Youth would have no choice but to enroll in college or other educational program in order to receive their money.

In conclusion, I strongly believe this bill will make our community a better place by engaging children in service projects. It will create a youth army of public servants who can accomplish many of the tasks that have been pushed to the side for years due to lack of staff or funding for labor. It will offer youth something to do rather than having excessive free time with which to experiment with the wrong path. And lastly it will send more youths to college. I, once again, strongly urge you to pass this bill out of your committee. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify.