

Community Alliance for Mental Health

LATE

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To: The Hawai'i State House of Representatives Committee on Finance.
Re: SB 391 SD 2, HD1

To: The Honorable Representative Luke and the members of the committee.

Aloha,

The Community Alliance for Mental Health along with United Self Help strongly supports SB 391 SD 2, HD1, as vital to our community. What can be of more import than the safety and well-being of our youth?

Our schools are troubled, the youth suicide rate in Hawai'i is intolerable, and no one seems to have an answer. Perhaps our children can find their own answers if they only had a place of safety, with no pressure, that they could go to and search for their own individual answers.

We feel that this program has to potential to be brilliant. We wish it all the best and if there is any way in which either of The Community Alliance for Mental Health or United Self Help can be of service in helping our young people, especially the transition age consumers of Hawai'i we stand ready to be of service.

Mahalo,
Robert Scott Wall
Vice-President

LATE

April 3, 2013

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
And members of the Committee on Finance

Testimony in Support of SB 391

Chair Luke, Vice-Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and members of the House of Representatives Committee on Finance:

Thank you for your time evaluating SB 391 that would create an organized Safe Places program for Hawaii.

My name is Sara Thompson and I am an MSW student at Hawai'i Pacific University and am also an intern at The Children's Alliance of Hawai'i, Inc. This non-profit organization provides services for youth and their families who have survived sexual abuse.

Youth who have survived traumatic events, such as those who have been sexually abused, heal and recover through the help of the support of their families and communities. Establishing an organized and centralized system of safe places for youth would serve as another beneficial resource aiding in growth, recovery, and general adolescent development.

Thinking back at times in my life where having a Safe House in which I could turn to for support and resources, I can see how this initiative could have a positive impact on the youth of Hawaii as well as the criminal justice system in Hawai'i. By providing an all-encompassing service model while utilizing and building onto already existing programs, agencies, and organizations, the pilot program can start from a solid foundation of community partnerships and will have the ability to grow into a network of collaborative entities that have the best interest of the youth at heart. Providing these types of intervention services and resources, which had been identified by Hawai'i's youth through the 2012 Youth Summit, could in theory reduce the number of youth that become involved with the justice system. The Youth Safe House working group has had quite a bit of time to consider similar existing models that can be found on the U.S. mainland through which we were able to come up with an appropriate model for our state.

I am in **Support of bill SB 391.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.