

# SB 2340

Measure Title: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

Report Title: Homeless; Outreach; Youth (\$)

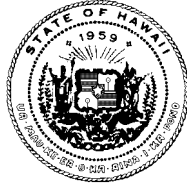
Description: Appropriates additional funds for outreach to homeless individuals and families, as well as homeless unaccompanied youth. Appropriates funds to the department of human services.

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: HMS, WAM

Introducer(s): CHUN OAKLAND, HARIMOTO



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 2, 2016

TO: The Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2340 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016; 1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) is supportive of this proposed bill as it clearly provides resources for enhancement of outreach which is a key function in our coordinated homeless service system. We note, however, that the Governor's Executive Budget contains an allocation of \$3 million for additional homeless outreach services, and are concerned about the potential that this proposal may have an adverse impact on the priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to appropriate additional funds (\$1.7 million) to the DHS for outreach to homeless individuals and families, as well as \$300,000 to the Office of Youth Services (OYS) for outreach to unaccompanied youth.

Homeless outreach is currently funded by DHS at a statewide total of \$2,193,661. Eight provider agencies on every major island seek out homeless individuals and families living in unsheltered conditions or in places not meant for human habitation. Outreach workers interact with the homeless, administer the VI-SPDAT (a screening instrument that provides information about the individual or family's needs), and work hard to establish trust to move toward permanent housing opportunities. It is the outreach workers who first hear the personal and

individual histories of the homeless. These outreach workers in essence become a lifeline for the unsheltered because their work involves consistent and assertive engagement toward the end goal of housing and services.

We defer to the OYS on the particular impact this proposal has on their services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
**OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES**  
707 Richards Street, Suite 525  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 1, 2016

**TO:** The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Merton Chinen, Acting Executive Director

**SUBJECT: SB 2340 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016, 1:30 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

**OFFICE'S POSITION:** The Office of Youth Services (OYS) supports the measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. Outreach to youth experiencing homelessness is an important foundational activity in building a trusting relationship that would lead to better outcomes. The outreach and relationship building are especially critical for hard to reach and resistant youth, many who suffered from trauma and/or other types of adverse childhood experiences.

OYS currently provides outreach and advocacy services for youth and families through purchase of service contracts statewide. Additional resources would bolster the continuum of care for this vulnerable population.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the measure is to appropriate additional funds to the Department of Human Services, including the Office of Youth Services, to provide outreach services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS**  
HONOLULU

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

February 2, 2016

**TO:** The Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

**SUBJECT: SB 2340 - RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016, 1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**POSITION:** The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of the measure, as it proposes to provide funding to address key aspects of the State's work to end homelessness. However, the Coordinator's support of this measure is limited to the extent that passage of this bill does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget. The Coordinator defers to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Office of Youth Services (OYS) in regards to specific issues related to implementation of homeless outreach. While the Coordinator establishes and coordinates State policy to address homelessness, the DHS Homeless Programs Office and OYS are responsible for the administration and implementation of homeless outreach services.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to appropriate additional funds to DHS, including the OYS, to provide homeless outreach.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness per capita among the 50 states. In addition, the number of unsheltered

homeless individuals and families has increased dramatically. Statewide, the number of unsheltered homeless individuals increased 23% between 2014-2015, and the number of unsheltered family households increased 46% during the same period.

While the number of unsheltered homeless individuals and families has risen dramatically, the level of funding for homeless outreach has remained unchanged. As a result, homeless outreach services are limited, particularly on the neighbor islands. For example, on Kauai, homeless outreach is provided by one part-time worker who is expected to provide services to the over-300 homeless individuals on that island.

Homeless outreach is essential to meet unsheltered homeless households where they are at and to build rapport with these individuals so that they can be connected to housing and supportive services, such as Housing First, Rapid Re-Housing, or shelter. The work of homeless outreach includes meeting homeless individuals on streets or sidewalks, or in remote rural areas that includes beaches and valleys. Homeless outreach providers assist homeless individuals to complete program applications, assist with the determination of program eligibility, assist with housing search, and work with the individual to obtain identification and other necessary documents. Without the assistance of homeless outreach, many homeless individuals are unable to access care and unable to navigate Hawaii's system of homeless services.

Further, when homeless individuals are removed from government properties or other restricted or unsafe areas, the role of homeless outreach is critical to ensure that homeless households have access to shelter, and are not simply moved from one unsafe living area to another. For example, in Kakaako Makai, the role of homeless outreach played a key role in

assisting 215 out of an estimated 293 homeless individuals to access shelter or permanent housing between August 2015 to December 2015. This number included 27 individuals who transitioned directly to permanent housing from the Kakaako sidewalks.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of SB 2340: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Gil Riviere, Vice-Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: Tuesday, 2/2/16; 1:15 pm; CR 016

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Riviere and Members, Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2340, which appropriates funds for homeless outreach, including for unaccompanied youth. I am Betty Lou Larson representing Catholic Charities Hawaii. We are also a member of Partners in Care.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. A priority for advocacy this year is affordable housing and homelessness.

This bill addresses our growing unsheltered homeless population. Besides ranking # 1 among the US states for homelessness per capita, Hawaii also has the highest rate of unsheltered chronic homeless. More people are falling through the cracks in Hawaii. Outreach can provide the compassionate contacts and housing navigation to help people be linked to appropriate resources with housing as the goal. Outreach teams are stretched thin. Intensive and more strategic outreach is needed to address homeless encampments as well as those visible in neighborhoods or hidden in bushes, etc.

We must also help unaccompanied youth, especially those who are newly homeless. Currently, there are NO state funds for outreach to unaccompanied youth. Providers are trying to make do, taking staff from other projects. 30% of all juvenile arrests in Hawaii were for running away—averaging 4,493 per year! These youths are at high risk for exploitation. Many trade sex for the resources they need for survival—food, money or a safe place to sleep. We need funding to DHS/Office of Youth Services to address this growing tragedy. National statistics show a shocking severity:

- 33% of teens will be lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home.
- The average age of entry into prostitution is 14.
- Homeless youth are 11 times more likely to experience mental health problems.
- Teens aged 12 to 17 are more likely to become homeless than adults.

Thank you very much for hearing and considering this important bill to help end homelessness. Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or [bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org) if you have any questions.







uary95-954 Makakilo Dr. #71 Kapolei, HI 96707 Email: [Rainbowfamily808@gmail.com](mailto:Rainbowfamily808@gmail.com) Phone: 808-779-9078 Fax: 808672-6347

January 1, 2016

TO: Senate HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

RE: SB2340 Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Appropriates additional funds for outreach to homeless individuals and families, as well as homeless unaccompanied youth

Aloha SEN CHUN OAKLAND and members of the Human Services Committee,

Rainbow Family 808 wholeheartedly supports HSB2340 to appropriate funds for outreach for homes individuals, families and homeless unaccompanied youth. Our group for the past two years have weekly purchased and delivered fresh produce and dairy to YO (Youth Outreach-Waikiki) because this population lacks 24/7 support. Our youth need daily shower facilities, laundry access, and other human services for their dignity, growth and success as valuable members of our society.

Hawaii is one of the states that lacks housing support for unaccompanied Homeless Youth. We need to put our Kokua into practice for the benefit our keiki.

SB2340 is a Humanitarian Measure that needs to become law immediately to help bring justice and humanity to the forefront to our state.

Mahalo nui loa,<sup>1</sup>

Carolyn Martinez Golojuch, MSW

President

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IF MORE PEOPLE BELIEVED IN JUSTICE, THE WORLD WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE!



## Community Health Outreach Work

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 226

Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone (808) 853-3292 • Fax (808) 853-3274

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### TESTIMONY in STRONG SUPPORT of SB 2340: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Sen. Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair and Sen. Gil Riviere Vice Chair;  
Committee on Human services

FROM: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, CHOW Project

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016 1:15 PM Conference Room 016

Dear Chair Chun-Oakland, Vice Chair Riviere, and Members of the Committee:

The CHOW Project is in strong support of SB 2340 which would appropriate 3 million for outreach to the homeless. As you know, Hawaii has the HIGHEST rate of homelessness among states in the U.S. and resources to connect the homeless to services through outreach are an essential component of our continuum of care.

The Community Health Outreach Work (CHOW) Project is dedicated to serving individuals, families, and communities adversely affected by drug use, through a participant-centered harm reduction approach. CHOW works to reduce drug related harms such as but not limited to HIV, hepatitis B/C and overdose. CHOW has successfully worked with Gregory House Programs over the years and is currently overseeing its Ryan White-funded activities. Our community is stronger because of programs like GHP and support for their case management activities will only make them more effective.

Throughout the past 20 years, the CHOW Project has used outreach to connect some of the most vulnerable in our community to services. While we hope that people will come to us for services, our data demonstrates that our approach to “meet people where they are” and take the services to the community has been immensely effective in linkage and access to care for those struggling with homelessness, addiction and mental and physical challenges. Please support this bill so that those who need help the most can be reached.

Sincerely,

Heather Lusk  
Executive Director  
CHOW Project



615 Pi'ikoi Street, Suite 203 T 808 589-1829  
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February 1, 2016

To: Committee on Human Services and Housing  
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair

**Re: SB 2340 Relating to Homelessness----IN SUPPORT**

Dear Senators Chun Oakland and Harimoto and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to allow Hale Kipa to provide testimony in support of this bill. Hale Kipa is astutely aware of many of the youth/young people who find themselves homeless through its efforts providing street outreach, emergency and transitional housing to this population.

Outreach has been an essential component of locating and servicing youth who are homeless. These youth are extremely vulnerable as they are separated from families, and often fall prey to numerous risks while living on the streets which include lack of education, medical care and positive support systems and a higher opportunity to be involved in crime and be sexually and physically exploited.

Sadly, monies for outreach services to youth in Hawai'i has suffered losses in the last few years leaving less youth-friendly, trained outreach workers on the street able to best identify new youth and link them to needed resources.

Please consider passage of this bill which would begin to right-size the services needed to curb the growing tide of youth homelessness. Hale Kipa would be willing to continue to partner with all interested agencies in providing services for the youth.

Sincerely,

Jaque Kelley-Uyeoka, ACSW  
Deputy CEO, Hale Kipa, Inc.



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2340: Relating to Homelessness**

**TO:** Senator (Chair) Chun Oakland, Senator (Vice-Chair) Riviere, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Sheila Beckham, CEO, and Jason Espero, Director of Care-A-Van

**Hearing:** **Tuesday, February 2, 2016 (1:15pm), Conference Room 016**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB 2340**, which appropriates additional funds for outreach to homeless individuals and families, as well as homeless unaccompanied youth.

Waikiki Health (WH) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization with a mission to provide quality medical and social services that are affordable and accessible for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. WH was established in 1967, and was recognized as a federally qualified health center in 1992.

WH's Youth Outreach (YO) program helps to meet the basic health and humanitarian needs of the homeless youth, age 24 and under. YO is the only resource on Oahu providing homeless youth with comprehensive services combined with non-judgmental, culturally-competent and caring support. YO provided 4,347 drop-in service encounters to 505 unduplicated youth; 2,222 street outreach encounters to 413 unduplicated youth; and 281 medical visits to 125 unduplicated youth. Currently, YO does not receive any State funding because there is no State funding available for youth outreach services.

WH's Care-A-Van (CAV) program provides a continuum of care to homeless families and individuals at its drop-in clinic, and through mobile medical outreach. CAV served 2,082 unduplicated individuals last fiscal year, and provided medical care to 542 unduplicated individuals, and behavioral health services to 456 unduplicated individuals experiencing mental illness and/or substance abuse.

Additional funding for outreach would allow service providers to hire more staff for purposes of coordinated outreach to homeless encampments. Coordinated outreach allows for a more robust approach to helping the homeless move into shelter, housing, and getting connected to critical resources in the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheila Beckham, RD, MPH

Jason Espero, MPA

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Big Brothers Big Sisters of

Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Central Oahu Youth Services

Association

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

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EPIC, Inc.

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Kokua Kalihi Valley

Life Foundation

Marimed Foundation

Maui Youth and Family Services

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Parents and Children Together

(PACT)

Planned Parenthood of the

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Hawaiian Islands

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community

Center

The Catalyst Group

Uhane Pohaku Na Moku

O Hawai'i

Waikiki Health

January 29, 2016

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

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1774 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, strongly supports SB 2340 Relating to Homelessness.

While we support the full bill, our testimony will focus on unaccompanied runaway and homeless youth.

Unaccompanied runaway and homeless youth are living on the streets without the support and guidance of their parents or other family members. They are the most invisible and most vulnerable segment of the homeless population.

Since 1981, Hawaii Youth Services Network has coordinated a statewide runaway and homeless youth collaboration. For the past 15 years, our partners have encountered 700 – 800 of these unaccompanied youth annually. Thirty percent (30%) of Hawaii's juvenile arrests are for running away from home, an average of more than 4,400 arrests each year.

What happens to youth who are living on the street? Many trade sex for the resources they need for survival – food, money, a safe place to sleep.

Homeless youth experience significant health challenges:

- Twice as likely to get sick, be hospitalized, and go hungry.
- 7 times as likely to die from AIDS; 16 times as likely to be diagnosed with HIV.
- 11 times as likely to experience mental health problems.
- 3 times as likely to experience major depression, conduct disorder, and PTSD.
- About 75% of homeless teens use drugs or alcohol as a means to self-medicate to deal with the traumatic experiences and abuse they face.

Safety is a constant concern:

- Trauma and rape rates among unaccompanied youth are 2-3 higher than those of the general youth population.
- A U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services study found that 46% of homeless youth left home because of physical abuse. 17% left because of sexual abuse.
- 5,000 street youth die every year because of assault, illness, or suicide.
- More likely to be the victim of a crime rather than the perpetrator.

Most unaccompanied youth practice unsafe sexual practices:

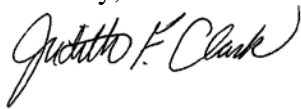
- 33% of teens will be lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home.
- Average age of entry into prostitution is 14.
- 95% of homeless youth have engaged in sexual intercourse.
- Over 33% report exchanging in sex for food, shelter, or drugs.
- About 50% of street youth have had a pregnancy experience.

Street outreach is the first step in helping these youth leave the streets for safer and more appropriate living situations. Reuniting youth with their families, if it is safe for them, is the first choice, with placement in foster care or other out-of-home care if the family is not able to care for the youth. Workers build trusting relationships and convince youth to accept help to leave the streets, while helping them meet their immediate survival needs.

If we want Hawaii's youth to grow up safe, healthy and ready to succeed, we must reach out to our homeless adolescents and end youth homelessness.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



January 29, 2016

Senate's Committee on Human Services  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 016  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, February 2, 2016 – 1:15 p.m.

RE: **SUPPORT for Senate Bill 2340** – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Aloha Chairperson Chun-Oakland, Vice Chair Riviere and fellow committee members,

I am writing in SUPPORT to Senate Bill 2340 on behalf of the LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. SB 2340 will appropriate funding for additional outreach to houseless individuals, families and unaccompanied minor youth. We will focus our testimony on Section 3, which deals with unaccompanied houseless youth.

We appreciate the focus on houseless unaccompanied minor youth, especially given that 40% of them identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ). The Caucus's has a couple of concerns over SB 2340 in its current form they are as follows:

- 1) The Department of Human Services (DHS) prime directive when dealing with minors is reunification with their biological family members. While that may sound ideal on the surface the problems arise when the family members are the reason the unaccompanied youth has left the house due to abuse (physical or mental), sexual assault or being thrown out because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- 2) There is not one youth shelter or 24/7 drop-in center for unaccompanied houseless youth due to the fact the way our laws are written, it is illegal to operate one in the Aloha State. So once DHS has outreached to these unaccompanied houseless youth where are they to go? The foster care system is over taxed and has way too few if any depending on the island of LGBTQ accepting households.

It should be noted that on O'ahu there is only one program that supports unaccompanied houseless youth and that is Youth Outreach (YO!), a joint program through Waikiki Health Center and Hale Kipa. Their drop-in center is open only on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 3-6 pm due to budget constraints. Due to their work we know that on average there are on average 125 youth that sleep on the streets of Honolulu with no family or government support and that is a crime.

So we hope that you are able to address these concerns for our unaccompanied houseless keiki because by addressing the growing houseless youth population will help curb future adult houseless.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
Chair



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

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TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Scott Fuji, Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: **Tuesday February 2nd, 2016 at 1:15 p.m. in Conf. Rm. 016**

**Testimony in Support of SB2340, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of SB2340 that appropriates additional funds for outreach to homeless individuals and families including homeless unaccompanied youth. PHOCUSED is a nonprofit membership and advocacy organization that works together with community stakeholder to impact program and policy change for the most vulnerable in our community, including homeless individuals and families.

Since March 2014, PHOCUSED has worked together with 30+ homeless service providers throughout Oahu for better coordination of housing placements for the homeless. Based on this experience, we have a deeper understanding of the many challenges facing homeless households who are trying to transition off of the streets and into a stable residence.

On Oahu outreach teams have been rapidly dispatched to "hot spot" encampment areas such as Kakaako, Kewalo Basin, Wahiawa, and others to ensure the accurate dissemination of information, offer services, and encourage the individuals and households there to work with them to permanently leave the streets.

This work has required additional coordination of outreach and would not have been readily available without a regular meeting of outreach providers to ensure that our limited resources were being placed in the most efficient means possible. However increased outreach in one area of the island often comes at a cost to another area. As outreach is the first step at engaging with and moving a household off the streets and into permanent housing it is a critical piece of our growing Coordinated Entry and Housing Placement system.

Once again, PHOCUSED strongly urges your support of this bill. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact PHOCUSED at 521-7462 or by e-mail at [admin@phocused-hawaii.org](mailto:admin@phocused-hawaii.org).





**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF WEST HAWAII**

*Supporting families and communities in providing love and care for our children... since 1979*

January 31, 2016

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Human Services

RE: SB2340 – Relating To Homelessness  
Hearing Date: February 2, 2016 – Conference Rm. 016

Dear Senator Chun Oakland;

Family Support Hawaii is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB2340 – Relating to Homelessness; particularly as it relates to “unaccompanied homeless youth”. We have been doing outreach to homeless youth in West Hawaii for many years through our collaboration with the Hawaii Youth Services Network. The Street Outreach Program funding from the Federal program was cut last year during a very crucial period in West Hawaii. With a small grant from Hawaii County, we have had a person on the street for a minimal amount of hours. In the last two months we have touched well-over twenty-five runaway and/or homeless youth on Ali’i Drive and the Old Airport area. We have seen an abundance of youth living among homeless adults, using drugs and often with health problems and no access to care.

Our organization is represented on many committees addressing homelessness but we are the only voice at the table serving this population because there is no funding. We need a drop-in shelter for daily support, we need funding to have outreach on the street for more than seven hours (what we currently provide) and we need emergency beds and transitional living homes.

We have been working with one 14-year old girl who has been running away from foster care and CPS for well-over a year. Her Mother came to Kona with her brother and sister to meet a man she met on Facebook. That fell apart and one night while mom was drunk, a concerned citizen called the police and CPS became involved. This young girl ran away from foster care within two weeks and found her mom on the street, strung out on Meth and Heroin, she began to traffic her 14-year old for money. This mother eventually left Kona with another man, she now has HIV and a serious drug addiction and she left her kids in Kona. This 14-year old is now 15, we see her regularly on the street and in the camps, we have fed her, bought her clothes and helped with her health needs. She is listed with CPS as a runaway but they can’t even keep up with her. We let them know when we see her and work with the Police in town to keep her as safe as we can until her case comes before the judge at Family Court. We just want to keep her alive and make sure she knows we care about her. She will often bring youth to our office that needs help. Please don’t forget the homeless and unaccompanied youth of our islands, they are out there and struggling.



**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF WEST HAWAII**

*Supporting families and communities in providing love and care for our children... since 1979*

Thank you for supporting our efforts to address this issue and the opportunity to testify on this matter. We will be watching as this moves forward and would be happy to answer any questions you have relating to this issue. I have spoken to Senator Green and Representative Lowen and they are aware of the concerns in our community.

Sincerely,

*Toni Symons*

Toni Symons  
Community Engagement Coordinator  
Youth Programs Manager  
Family Support Hawai'i



Hawaii  
**Children's Action Network**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

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To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2340 – Relating to Homelessness - Support**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016 – February 2, 2016 – 1:15 P.M.**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), formerly Good Beginnings Alliance, we are writing in support of SB 2340, Relating to Homelessness.**

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2016 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2016policyagenda>.

HCAN supports SB 2340, which would appropriate funding for outreach to homeless individuals and families, as well as homeless unaccompanied youth.

**Homeless Children:** Hawaii has the highest homeless rate in the nation. It's estimated that one-third of the homeless in Hawaii are children.

Outreach to unaccompanied youth is especially critical. Currently there are no state or federal funds in Hawai'i for this outreach. Unaccompanied youth living on the streets have different needs and issues than homeless adults and families. They need outreach programs that are tailored to address their specific needs, and workers who understand adolescent development.

**Unstable Housing:** Many of our families may not be living on the street or the beach, yet they don't have permanent housing -- they stay with friends and family -- moving frequently.

**High cost of housing for families:** 60 percent of households with young children in Hawaii pay more than 30% of their income for housing.

We need a comprehensive affordable housing solution that helps families at every stage to secure stable housing solutions.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill.**



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 2340 Relating to Homelessness  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
Scheduled for Hearing Tuesday, February 2, 2016, 1:15 PM, Room 016

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*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice Hawai'i Appleseed is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*

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Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Riviere and Members, Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2340, which appropriates funds for homeless outreach, including outreach funding for unaccompanied homeless youth. This bill is especially important because there are currently no state funds for outreach to unaccompanied youth—one of the most vulnerable segments of our population. Outreach connects homeless individuals, families, and youth to services that are critical for their survival and well-being. Outreach to homeless youth provides an important opportunity to intervene relatively early in a life that would otherwise be destined for hardship, creating a potential turning point that can avoid a lifetime of the financial and human costs of homelessness.

We need to make the investments necessary to reverse the course of the homelessness problem in Hawai'i. Hawai'i has the highest rate of homelessness in the nation, and the highest rate of unsheltered chronic homeless. Despite greater attention to the issue, our homelessness problem continues to grow. It will continue to do so until we devote the resources necessary to stop it.

Unaccompanied homeless youth have a special need for outreach services, and such services provide the opportunity for significant cost savings:

- Teens aged 12 to 17 are more likely to become homeless than adults
- 30% of all juvenile arrests in Hawai'i were for running away—averaging 4,493 per year
- 33% of teens will be lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home
- The average age of entry into prostitution is 14
- Homeless youth are 11 times more likely to experience mental health problems than non-homeless youth

By funding a robust system of outreach, we can connect homeless individuals, families and youth with the services they need soon after they become homeless, saving significant financial and human costs. SB 2340 is a smart investment that will, in the long run, save both lives and dollars.

Thank you very much for hearing and considering this important bill.



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[FamilyProgramsHawaii.com](http://FamilyProgramsHawaii.com)

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services

HEARING: Tuesday, February 2, 2016  
1:15 PM  
Conference Room 016

FROM: Judith Wilhoite  
Family Advocate  
It Takes An `Ohana

RE: SB2340 - Relating to Homelessness

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am the Family Advocate for Family Program Hawaii's It Takes An Ohana (ITAO) program and a resource caregiver. The ITAO Advisory Committee, made up of resource caregivers (formerly called foster parents) and adoptive parents support SB2340.

This bill correctly states that "unaccompanied homeless youth are often hard to locate and identify and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation". Our concern is centered on the impacts of homelessness on youth - they can be complex and long-lasting.

According to the Women's and Children's Health Network, many homeless young people become exposed to drug use, inadequate nutrition, limited access to medical care, very limited social support, repeated abuse and violence, unsafe sexual practices and inadequate or unsafe shelters.

They may also use risky ways to survive that may lead them to come into contact with the criminal justice system or experiencing physical and/or mental health problems.

We support the appropriation of additional funds to the department of human services, including the office of youth services, to provide outreach services to this vulnerable population of youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support for this bill.

We help kids

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HMS Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [ajc@aloha.net](mailto:ajc@aloha.net)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2340 on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM  
**Date:** Monday, February 01, 2016 11:12:41 AM

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**SB2340**

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for HMS on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alika Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support funding for outreach services to people experiencing homelessness, especiall to youth/young adults who are some of the least likely individuals to seek out services as most services are aimed at older adults.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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February 1, 2016

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Human Services Committee

I left home shortly after turning 18, i no longer felt the need to put up with my alcoholic father and decided that I would be better off on my own.

At first it wasn't so great. I wandered the streets, sleeping on the beaches, eating next to nothing, just wondering what to do with my life. I was lost in my world, yet i felt free, and things got better all the time. I learned to care for myself, and weather i was deep in the jungle or bumming the beaches in town the island usually provided. when times got hard though i would often steal and break into businesses and such to sleep inside and take food. I was very careful, and thankfully was never caught.

Soon, i encountered others that were lost, like me. We saw the need to stick together and eventually formed very tight bonds that will last a lifetime. There were about 12 of us. Together we built a sweet bushcamp that was our home base. It felt like family again. And for a moment, things weren't so hard anymore. In fact, we were kind of happy. Having the time of our lives. We did anything we wanted and no one could stop us. Life was a Neverending party i cant even begin to recount all the amazingtimes we had together.

During this time, by attending parties and making connections, i got the chance to try just about every substance you could think of, in excess. In fact i pretty much abused it. Anything that was offered i would take and any money i got went towards acid molly or shrooms. At some point i began selling anything i could get my hands on to make money and free drugs, and suddenly i was a drug dealer so i could continue my habits. with the help of my crew i was able to move anything faster than i thought possible. there were points when no one could tell weather i was high or not.

Eventually, a few members of our tribe made connections with dealers of cocaine. I had tried it a few times but i preferred psychedelics and most it was of terrible quality and i tried to stay away from some of the less favorable drugs, but when i saw the amazing profit potential it quickly became part of our inventory and moved up to be the main focus point, and within a few months i was selling alot of it. Quite a bit of it also went up our noses. Soon we were all very addicted and a few had moved on to meth and heroin and dragged me down with them. It was pretty bad. I began to mistrust those closest to me as they lost control to drugs.

Many were arrested until they finally located and shut down our camp. Thus the lost boys were disbanded. Most were in jail now or left with crippling addictions they could not cope with having lost access to a virtually limitless supply. Anyone left that I knew was either untrustworthy or hiding somewhere



I realized that I had lost my way, and i knew i had to get out fast before it was too late. The only way that this was possible was to remove myself from this mess. I moved into a tree house with a friend out of town and stayed off the drugs and eventually started working to take care of myself. I stayed in kona for a while until I got bored of it and moved out to puna, where i was invited to live in a castle where i began a beautiful relationship with my current girlfriend who i love very much.

,  
alot of things changed very quickly during the time i was homeless, and i dont believe it would have turned out as well without the help of others. And i can honestly say that the ones that helped me the most were the ohana at Family Support Hawaii. Because of them i was able to get the documents i needed to get my foodstamps in order and feed myself, they also provided me with supplies that I needed many times. Their staff has been friendly and caring and i always felt like I could count on their help.

I wanted to add my voice this session to any bills about youth and homelessness. There are no programs in Kona except for the one that helped me at Family Support Hawaii. I hope you will pass this bill and bring much needed programs to our community. We really need a youth center where they can come get help. I know that many of the kids in our youth family would have benefit from that type of program and more outreach to our camp.

Thank you for letting me share my story. My brother was also homeless with me at the same time and we are now both healthy and raising children of our own because of the homeless program at Family Support Hawaii.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HMS Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [matt.tn.hom@gmail.com](mailto:matt.tn.hom@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2340 on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM\*  
**Date:** Monday, February 01, 2016 10:14:29 PM

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**SB2340**

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for HMS on Feb 2, 2016 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matt Hom	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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