

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
1010 Richards Street, Suite 314
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

March 9, 2018

TO: The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Merton Chinen, Executive Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1716 HD1, Relating to Youth Commission**

Hearing: Monday, March 12, 2018, 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

OFFICE'S POSITION: OYS supports the intent of the measure but requests that any appropriation not affect the priorities in the Executive Biennium Budget. There are currently youth driven advisory boards or councils in the community that focus on areas pertinent to their specific interests, such as the HI HOPES Youth Advisory Council that aims to educate, advocate, and collaborate with the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services, to improve the child welfare system, including foster care. Another example is the Teen Link Hawaii Youth Advisors sponsored by the Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii that provides valuable input regarding youth perspectives on living a substance-free lifestyle. OYS believes the youth voice should be recognized and included in determining policies and recommendations on important matters impacting their lives. OYS has the following additional comments on coordinating and sustaining an effective youth advisory commission:

- Members should be diverse, including a strong representation of youth at risk.
- Adequate funding for coordinating, training and implementation is critical for success.
- Recognize youth have busy schedules, need flexible options for meetings, and should be compensated accordingly for their valuable participation.

The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair

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PURPOSE: The purpose of the measure is to establish a youth advisory commission within the Office of Youth Services to advise the Governor and Legislature on issues relating to youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Sen. Josh Green Chair

Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Monday, March 12, 2018

2:45 pm

Room 016

STRONG SUPPORT - HB 1716 HD1- YOUTH COMMISSION

Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chairs Chang and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai'i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the families of **ASHLEY GREY, DAISY KASITATI, JOEY O'MALLEY, JESSICA FORTSON AND ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED UNDER THE "CARE AND CUSTODY" OF THE STATE** as well as the approximately 5,500 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that approximately 1,600 of Hawai'i's imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

HB 1716 HD1 establishes a youth commission within the Office of Youth Services to advise the Governor and Legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets relating to youth and appropriates funds for this purpose.

This Commission is a great way to engage our children and youth in civic issues and to help them understand the broader reach of policymaking. The Commission would be strengthened by including youth (male and female) who have been houseless, youth who have been justice-involved and youth who have been in the foster care system. This would enhance the Commission's knowledge and thinking about better ways to assist our youth who are struggling with challenges in their lives.

We urge the committee to pass this bill and help our children and youth become active and engaged participants in civic issues. These are our future leaders and our greatest treasures! Mahlo for hearing this important bill. We urge the committee to pass it. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

*"Rather than standing or speaking for children,
we need to stand with children speaking for themselves.
We don't need a political movement for children...
[we need to] build environments and policies for our collective future."*

Sandra Meucci

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of
West Hawaii

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action
Network

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Maui Youth and Family Services

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

Parents and Children Together
(PACT)

Planned Parenthood of the
Great Northwest and
Hawaiian Islands

PHOCUSED

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community
Center

The Catalyst Group

March 9, 2018

To: Senator Josh Green, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1716 HD 1 RELATING TO A YOUTH COMMISSION

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 1716 HD 1 Relating to a Youth Commission.

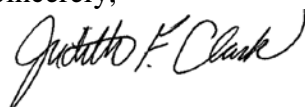
The Office of Youth Services needs input from the population it serves – youth. It will inform needs assessment, planning and evaluation of services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and those who are at risk of juvenile crime, substance abuse, and homelessness. And there are many benefits for the youth who participate on the advisory commission as well.

The children and youth of Hawaii are our future. The way we treat them today, the opportunities we provide them and the investments we make in their development will influence the kind of adults they will become. Children and youth live and participate in our communities. We must recognize and value them as community assets. We need to include young people in decisions that affect their lives in communities, school systems, churches and in our public policy decision making.

Youth civic engagement leads to reduced risky behavior, increased success in school and leads to greater civic participation later in life. Civic engagement provides young people with opportunities to gain work experience, acquire new skills, and to learn responsibility and accountability—all while contributing to the good of their communities. “

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



To: The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Trish La Chica, Policy and Advocacy Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Support for HB 1716 HD1, Relating to a Youth Commission**

Hrg: March 12, 2018 at 2:45 pm at Conference Room 016

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of HB 1716 HD1 which establishes a youth commission and appropriates funds in the Office of Youth Services to advise the Governor and the Legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets relating to youth.

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) engages in a number of policy efforts to ensure that Hawai'i is the healthiest place to live. The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i (Coalition) is a program of HIPHI that is dedicated to reducing tobacco use through education, policy, and advocacy. With more than two decades of history in Hawai'i, the Coalition has led several campaigns on enacting smoke-free environments, including being the first state in the nation to prohibit the sale of tobacco and electronic smoking devices to purchasers under 21 years of age.

Part of the Coalition's success can be attributed to the work of our Youth Council. The Youth Council is a statewide network of youth and young adults representing all four Hawaii counties. In the last four years, they have championed campaigns to raise the age of sale of tobacco to 21, protect minors from secondhand smoke in cars, and now – to regulate vaping and keep tobacco stores away from schools.

We have engaged our youth as part of policy solutions, providing ways for them to lead and channel their motivation and experiences into effective community change. Through youth-led legislative campaigns, our youth leaders have been able to explore community challenges in public health and potential solutions. They learn how to develop a campaign and build a network to educate their peers and create policy change.

HB 1716 provides a critical opportunity for Hawai'i youth to become involved in the legislative process and gain recognition as an important voice for change. HIPHI is in support of this measure and we respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish', is written over the word 'Mahalo'.

Trish La Chica
Policy and Advocacy Director



Chair Green
Vice Chair Chang
Senate Committee on Human Services

Monday, March 12, 2018
2:45 PM

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1716 HD1 RELATING TO A YOUTH COMMISSION

Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

Young Progressives Demanding-Hawai'i (YPDA Hawaii), representing nearly 600 registered members, consisting of community members, students, and other young people **strongly supports HB1716 HD1 relating to a youth commission.**

The youth are our future. That is why, the youth commission is so important. Bringing young people into the policy making process allows for their thoughts and ideas to be heard, giving them a voice in determining what direction the future should take. There are a lot of tough questions that still need to be addressed, questions that will not just go away that deal with issues and topics like Climate change/environmental concerns, homelessness/cost of living, aging population/Kupuna Care. Bringing young people to the table allows for more voices to be heard and together with stakeholders and decision makers, they would be able to help in finding new and innovative solutions, all the while developing into young leaders who are participating in these important discussions and understanding how everything works.

Even beyond this, the youth commission's outreach initiatives are going to be just as important. Reaching out to their communities, sharing their personal experiences, with these young voices telling the community how important it is to get involved as decisions are made every day that impact their lives, will be able to fight voter apathy. Even beyond that, they will be able to encourage further civic engagement through their testimonies by giving their contemporaries and their families hope and encouragement. That is why YPDA Hawaii **strongly supports HB1716 HD1 and requests for it to be passed through this committee.**

Thank you for your hard work and deliberation on this issue,

Jun Shin,
Board Member At-Large
Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawaii
1561 Kanunu St. #2106 Honolulu, HI 96814
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

HB-1716-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2018 2:35:28 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/12/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1716-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/9/2018 11:02:47 AM

Testimony for HMS on 3/12/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments: