

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

February 1, 2018

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

FROM: Merton Chinen, Executive Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2089, Relating to Youth Commission**

Hearing: Monday, February 5, 2018, 3:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 16

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

February 1, 2018

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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.



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2089, RELATING TO A YOUTH COMMISSION

Senate Committee on Human Services

Hon. Josh Green, Chair

Hon. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Monday, February 5, 2018, 3:45 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Honorable Chair Green and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 400 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2089, relating to a youth commission.

Sex traffickers prey on our state's school children, often loitering around public school campuses to target our children. Traffickers are experts in observing and selecting their victims, and often infiltrate public schools by using students to recruit their peers. One of the largest child sex trafficking rings discovered on Hawai'i's shores was unearthed in 2014. It included 16 students, most whom were students at Mililani High School and Moanalua High School, two of our state's top performing schools. Currently, IMUAlliance is involved in investigations at six schools facing trafficking problems, all of which were initiated this year.

We are one of the state's largest victim service providers for survivors of sex trafficking, for which childhood sexual abuse is frequently a precursor. Over the past 10 years, we have provided comprehensive direct intervention services to 130 victims, successfully emancipating them from slavery and assisting in their restoration, while providing a range of targeted services to over 1,000 victims in total. We are also a leading provider of anti-sexual-exploitation education, teaching over 10,000 students each year about the perils of sex trafficking and the commercial sex trade. When we provide anti-trafficking instruction in the Department of Education schools, students report that themselves or someone they know are being or at risk of being trafficking at a 2:1 ratio—two victims for every class we teach. Teachers, in turn, frequently request information and assistance in meeting the needs of traumatized students and preventing their children from being ensnared by our state's prolific slave trade. Each of the victims we have assisted has suffered from complex and overlapping trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and

anxiety, dissociation, parasuicidal behavior, and substance abuse. Trafficking-related trauma can lead to a complete loss of identity. A victim we cared for in 2016, for example, had become so heavily bonded to her pimp that while under his grasp, she couldn't remember her own name.

Sex trafficking is just one of many issues facing the youth of Hawai'i, whose voices are too often silenced in policymaking involving children's well-being. From topics ranging from bullying prevention to improving our public school system, our state would benefit from coordinating a forum to amplify the opinions of our most vulnerable constituents. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

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

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

February 2, 2018

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2089 RELATING TO A YOUTH COMMISSION

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 2089 Relating to a Youth Commission.

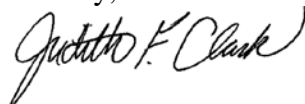
The Office of Youth Services needs input from the population it serves – youth. It will inform needs assessment, planning and evaluation of services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and those who are at risk of juvenile crime, substance abuse, and homelessness.

And there are many benefits for the youth who participate on the advisory commission as well. “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.” (Center for the Study of Social Policy)

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.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

SPOCÈ

Student leaders 2017-2018:

President:
Dwane
Tegman

Vice-
President: Rob
Jones

Volunteer
Coordinator:
Casey Shoji

Treasurer:
Kiana
Nakanelua

Secretary:
Sharon
Soileau

Public
Relations
Officer: Lucy
Brown

Forms
Coordinator:
Monika
Wurlitzer

Class
Coordinator:
Rachel James

Students for Public Outreach and Civic Education

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

February 5, 2018, 3:45 P.M., Conference Room 16

Testimony of Students for Public Outreach and Civic Education in STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill No. 2089

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

Students for Public Outreach and Civic Education (SPOCÈ) strongly supports Senate Bill 2089.

SPOCÈ is a student organization at the William S. Richardson School of Law at UH-Manoa. Our organization's mission is to empower members of our community by teaching classes about the law and its effects on their lives, and to help them become more informed citizens and active members of society.

SPOCÈ carries out its mission through various public outreach and civic education programs, where law students teach the law and interact with the community. A few such programs are: the Jon Van Dyke First Amendment Project, Mock Trial and Moot Court Coaching for high school teams, the Annual Discover Law Conference (a national program provided to high school students across the state), and the Courts in the Community Project (provided through a partnership with the Hawai'i Supreme Court).

SB 2089 complements and furthers our organization's mission by providing Hawai'i's youth with an interactive civic education. The focused opportunity provided by a Youth Commission engages Hawai'i's youth with policy makers today. We believe this engagement will encourage youth to become informed and responsible leaders in our community and nation.

SB 2089 creates the avenue needed to facilitate intergenerational dialogue, empowering Hawai'i's youth to contribute to decisions that most affect their generation. Passage of SB 2089 will enable young people to represent and advocate for the needs of their peers through the democratic process.

We believe it is vital for our Legislature to support the development of leaders who are equipped to tackle complex societal concerns. Your passage of SB 2089 will evidence your concurrence with this imperative.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We trust this committee and the Legislature at large will welcome Hawai'i's youth into the legislative process by passing SB 2089.

Mahalo,

SPOCÈ

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Sen. Josh Green Chair

Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Monday, February 5, 2018

3:45 pm

Room 016

STRONG SUPPORT - SB 2089 - 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 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.

SB 2089 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this measure and we respectfully ask that the committee add language that ensures that some of the youth have experience in the juvenile justice system and also in the foster care system to provide a broader perspective for the Governor and policymakers on the needs of all of our youth.

We see this Commission as an important way to engage a broad cross-section of our youth, especially those who have been involved with the juvenile justice and foster care systems, have been run-aways, or homeless. Their experiences can help frame policy issues that would be so much better informed if we involved the youth who have been through these struggles.

THE BENEFITS OF INVOLVING YOUTH IN DECISION-MAKING¹

Recognizing and involving youth in a community's decision-making processes is about more than engaging young people for the sake of inclusivity. It's about recognizing the measurable benefits youth offer to organizations and whole communities.

Youth need meaning, control and connectedness to thrive in an adult-youth partnership. Youth must feel like they are involved in something important, have a valued say in what happens and the opportunity to work with other youth and adults in the community.

How adults benefit from involving youth in decision-making:

- Adults begin to see youth as contributors, and stereotypes are broken down.
- Adult levels of commitment, attachment and energy for an organization often increase when they gain an opportunity to work with youth.
- Adults gain a better understanding of young people; a fresh perspective; a bridge to other youth; enthusiasm, creativity, flexibility and pro-activeness.

How organizations and communities benefit from involving youth in decision-making:

- Involving youth is a human rights issue! Involving young people fulfills the right to be involved in decision-making and recognizes full citizenship.
- Engaging youth encourages young people to become active community members who will be more likely to vote and be engaged in the democratic process.
- Young people are given the opportunity to assume leadership roles and gain skills and practical experience leading to more effective decision-making in the future.
- Granting youth control over decisions affecting their lives builds capacity in young people to take ownership for their lives and their communities.

¹ The Benefits of Involving Youth in Decision-making.

<http://www.peernetbc.com/benefits-of-involving-youth-in-decision-making>

ADDRESSING THE INTERSECTIONS OF JUVENILE JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT AND YOUTH HOMELESSNESS²

A very powerful study was recently released by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice² that listed Principles for Change.

“A young person’s involvement with the justice system can increase their likelihood of later experiencing homelessness for many reasons, including the fact that educational disruptions and juvenile delinquency records can make it harder to obtain employment. Youth experiencing homelessness may also be swept into the juvenile justice system through laws that prohibit simply being in public spaces, such as juvenile curfews, or anti-sitting or sleeping ordinances. Both juvenile justice involvement and youth homelessness have long-term negative consequences.

The Principles in Part I of this document provide a roadmap for communities to help young people avoid experiencing juvenile justice system involvement and/or youth homelessness. This includes doing the following:

Principle 1: Ensure that the laws and policies in your jurisdiction do not lead youth experiencing homelessness to be cited, arrested, or charged for survival acts or “quality of life” offenses.

Principle 2: Ensure that young people are diverted from juvenile justice system involvement whenever possible, and that any diversion programs or services are appropriately tailored to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

Principle 3: When juvenile justice system involvement cannot be avoided, ensure that comprehensive transition planning begins immediately after – and continues throughout – a youth’s confinement or probation supervision.

Principle 4: Ensure your community has both long- and short-term safe housing options available for youth who are, or have been, involved with the juvenile justice system.

Principle 5: Ensure your community provides youth and their families with related services and supports that can help them obtain and keep safe and stable housing.

Principle 6: Ensure that youth, and their families, are not kicked out of their homes or denied housing because the youth have been arrested or adjudicated for a delinquency offense.

² ADDRESSING THE INTERSECTIONS OF JUVENILE JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT AND YOUTH HOMELESSNESS: PRINCIPLES FOR CHANGE <http://juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/FINAL%20Principles%20.pdf>

Principle 7: Ensure youth help lead and shape the identification and implementation of policy and practice solutions to address the connections between juvenile justice and youth homelessness.

Principle 8: Ensure efforts prioritize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth, gender non-conforming (GNC) youth, youth of color, and other over-represented populations to address and reduce the disproportionalities that exist in the populations of youth experiencing homelessness and/or involved with the juvenile justice system.

Principle 9: Ensure that law enforcement, courts, schools, and service providers employ gender-responsive and age- and culturally-appropriate trauma-informed responses when working with youth.

Principle 10: Undertake and fund research to help better understand the issue of youth homelessness and identify solutions.

Part II of this document includes specific resources and examples to guide communities as they work to put Principles for Change into practice. We also encourage you to engage with the Collaborating for Change project at www.juvjustice.org/homelessness as we continue to develop new resources on these issues.”

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.

We urge the committee to pass this bill and help our children and youth become active participants in civic issues. These are our future leaders and our greatest treasures!

Mahalo 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

SB-2089

Submitted on: 2/1/2018 11:24:56 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/5/2018 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Mizusawa		Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Esteemed Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

My name is Richard Mizusawa and I support this bill to establish a Youth Commission. There have been many elected officials, community leaders, and most importantly, young people, who have worked tirelessly to get a youth commission established in our state for the past several years. Having this platform for our youth to be a voice in government and to have a say in the issues that matter to them and their future is key to ensuring all voices and perspectives are heard, and a true investment into developing the leaders of tomorrow. I was actively involved in student governance, from high school to my college years, and being a voice for my peers was probably the highlight of my time as a student. I hope this same experience can be felt and provided to others who want to also be a voice and advocate on issues that matter most for the youth of Hawaii. I ask for your support and encourage your colleagues in the Legislature to come together to make this happen. Mahalo for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Richard Mizusawa, M.Ed.

SB-2089

Submitted on: 2/1/2018 11:26:19 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/5/2018 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2089

Submitted on: 2/1/2018 6:59:16 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/5/2018 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Bickel		Support	No

Comments:

As a teacher I see both the need for the input of young people on policy and the talent and ideas some young people could bring to public policy. Creating a youth commission could improve policy.

Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang,

Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services. My name is Jun Shin. I am 18 years old, a Freshman Political Science major at UH Manoa, and representing Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawaii, which I serve as a board member at-large. I am writing this in strong support of SB2089 which is due for a hearing on Monday, February 5 2018 at 3:45 PM, and ask it to be advanced through this committee.

I want to personally emphasize how important this bill will be to individuals under the age of the majority, in the youth commission's case, 14-17 year olds. Although they are not eligible to vote, here are some of the things that you as a 14-17 year old can do in the State of Hawaii:

-14 year olds: **You can start getting employed and work.**

-15 year olds: **By 15 ½, you can begin to drive a learner's permit and even get married with the permission of your parents/guardians.**

-16 year olds: **Legally can have sexual intercourse, have a provisional license.**

-17 year olds: **You can have a full on unrestricted driver's license, and donate blood with the proper permission from your parents/guardians.**

And as TurboTax pointed out in an article before tax reform took place in our national government, "The Internal Revenue Service requires all taxpayers, regardless of age, to file a tax return and pay the appropriate income tax in any year their gross income exceeds certain levels. This requirement extends to the children you claim as dependents. However, unlike adult taxpayers, children have more flexibility in choosing how to comply" (<https://turbotax.intuit.com/tax-tips/family/tax-filing-requirements-for-children/L8ice6z0K>).

With these individuals already living as unofficial adults or having the potential to access these rights and responsibilities, is it not right to allow them to have a voice on the issues that will affect them and the families that they may have already started, such as a affordable housing, homelessness, tax reform, healthcare costs, paid family leave, etc? We have immense voter apathy and so that is why through this bill, we have the ability to personally engage the next generation of voters. We can help them to see how important politics is in their lives. By allowing young people access to government, allowing them personal interaction with our decision makers, and sending them out to the community to form connections and to hear the voices of their peers, we have the potential to immensely transform Hawaii for generations to come.

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

Jun Shin,
Board Member At-Large
YPDA Hawaii
1561 Kanunu St. Honolulu, HI 96814
Cell: 8082556663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

SB-2089

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 7:12:36 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/5/2018 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
E. Ileina Funakoshi		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2089

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 1:03:56 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/5/2018 3:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William Caron		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang and members of the HMS committee,

I am a community organizer, a journalist and editor, a member of the Palolo neighborhood board, a board member and action committee chair for the Young Progressives Demanding Action - Hawaii, and a millennial. I strongly support this bill, and believe that establishing a Youth Commission would go a long way toward engaging young people in their democracy, empowering them to become the leaders of tomorrow that we need. Adding a young person's perspective to governance will go a long way toward moving our state in a sustainable direction: millennials overwhelmingly support divestment from fossil fuels, universal human rights, including to healthcare and education, labor rights, food and water security and climate chaos mitigation. We care about these things because we know that, without reforms along these lines, there won't be a suitable planet left for us to inherit or pass on to our own children. We care deeply about the future, because the future belongs to us. It only makes sense to include our perspective when planning for this future. Please support this bill.

Mahalo,

Will Caron
Social Justice Action Committee Chair
Young Progressives Demanding Action - Hawaii
8083874920