



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/28/2019  
**Time:** 10:20 AM  
**Location:** 211  
**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 0330, HD1, SD1 RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates moneys for youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education initiatives in Kauai, Hawaii, and Maui counties. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports HB 330, HD1, SD1, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOE approved budget.

The Department recognizes a need for increased interventions to address the higher rates of suicide among youth on the Neighbor Islands in comparison to Honolulu County. This bill would help to address and prevent youth suicide in Kauai, Hawaii, and Maui Counties, and sustain and fully implement plans for youth suicide prevention projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



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Vice President

Logan Okita  
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Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: HB 330, HD1, SD1 - RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports HB 330, HD1, SD1**, relating to suicide prevention. This measure would appropriate funds to support youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education initiatives in Kauai, Hawaii. Maui counties.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death nationwide for youth age 15-24; in Hawaii, the data on youth suicide attempts is especially concerning. According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 10% of high school students in Hawaii reported attempting suicide in the previous year compared to 7% nationwide. To make matters worse, our neighbor island youth are especially at risk of attempting suicide; the 2017 YRBS found that 12% of youth in Hawaii County and 11% of youth in Maui County have attempted suicide.

Suicide rates vary by area, with neighbor islands and rural communities seeing higher rates than urban areas. For the period from 2013 to 2015, the statewide suicide rate was 12.9 deaths for every one hundred thousand individuals (not only youth). For the same time period, for every one hundred thousand people, the counties of Hawai'i, Maui, and Kaua'i had 20.4, 15.9, and 14.6 deaths, respectively. The city and county of Honolulu's suicide rate, at 10.3 deaths for every one hundred thousand people, was slightly lower than the state average.

To address the mental health crisis, especially among our youth, we must act now to implement best-practice suicide prevention programs in our schools; these programs should be rolled out in our neighbor island schools first considering the high rate of suicide attempts among youth in these communities.

To reduce the risk of suicide among Hawaii's youth, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** HB 330, HD1, SD1.

# 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

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

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 Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems

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

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

March 26, 2019

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 330 HD 1 SD 1 RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB330 HD 1 SD 1 Relating to Suicide Prevention.

Suicide prevention was one of the top priorities that youth who attended the Children and Youth Summit last October felt the Hawaii Legislature needs to address.

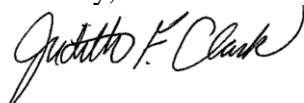
Nearly a quarter of Hawaii's middle school students and sixteen percent (16%) of Hawaii high school students seriously considered suicide in the last 12 months. Twelve percent (12%) of middle school students and ten percent (10%) of high school students have made a suicide attempt according to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Kauai and Hawaii island residents have survived serious natural disasters in the past year, including flooding, hurricanes, and a volcanic eruption. Many are experiencing post-traumatic stress that can lead to suicidal thoughts and actions, making those areas a priority for mental health and suicide prevention services.

Early intervention, education, and prevention efforts can save lives.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



**TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)**

**DATE/LOCATION: March 28, 2019; 10:20 a.m., Conference Room 211**

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 330 HB1 SD1– RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**We ask you to support HB 330 which appropriates money for youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education initiatives in Kauai, Hawaii and Maui counties.**

We support this bill which will appropriate funding to the Department of Health to support our youth particularly on Kauai and Hawaii Island, which have been hardest hit by natural disasters during 2018. As a provider of services on both Kauai and Hawaii Island, we saw firsthand how lives were upended during the extreme flooding and lava disasters causing stress and trauma for many local residents.

There is a growing need to address our youth’s social, emotional and mental health needs.

- Suicide awareness and prevention was a top priority voiced by Hawaii’s youth at the 2018 Hawaii Children’s and Youth Summit held at the Capitol.
- Suicide rates in Hawaii have increased nearly 20% since 1999 with an annual average of about 170 deaths.
- In Hawaii, suicide (as well as non-fatal injury) rates tend to be higher on neighbor islands where there is greater difficulty in accessing mental health or other medical care.
- Nationally, nearly 45,000 lives were lost to suicide in 2016 according to CDC.

It is imperative that we put in place preventative measures that connect youth with resources BEFORE it’s too late. Suicide intervention, prevention and education initiatives for youth can be life saving. It also raises the awareness of caring for one’s mental health and can help to reduce the negative stigma associated with mental health related issues. These initiatives can allow for open conversations about the importance of one’s whole health, create safe opportunities for youth to reach out for help when they need and enable the community to be equipped with connecting our youth to appropriate supportive resources.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 330 HB1 SD1**. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 10:20 AM  
Conference Room 211

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **Testimony in Support of HB 330, HD1, SD1  
Relating to Suicide Prevention**

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My name is Michael Robinson, Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

**I write in support of HB 330, HD1, SD1** which appropriates funds for youth suicide early intervention, prevention and education initiatives in Kauai, Hawaii and Maui counties.

A teen in Hawai'i is nearly twice as likely to attempt suicide as a teen elsewhere in the United States, with 2,280 reporting having attempted suicide here in 2007, according to a Centers for Disease Control survey in Hawaii's schools. This data has been confirmed by the Department of Health which found that Hawai'i has the highest attempted suicide rate in the country for youth ages 10 to 24. For every suicide death in the islands, there are 25 attempted suicides. The neighbor islands have a higher suicide attempt rate among the youth than Oahu. While suicide or suicide attempt is troubling at any age, youth suicide has unique challenges.

Funding for youth-focused outreach programs through early intervention, prevention, and education would bring community awareness to the problem of youth suicide. This effort would stem the tide of the alarming frequency of youth suicide attempts and help our youths in leading less troubled lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



ONLINE SUBMITTAL  
Submitted: March 27, 2019

**HEARING:** March 28, 2018 10:20 a.m. in room #211

**TO:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Eva Andrade, President

**RE:** **Strong Support for HB 330 HD1 SD1 to Suicide Prevention**

Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening life, family and religious freedom in Hawaii. We support this bill that provides necessary funding for youth suicide early prevention, intervention and education in Kauai, Hawaii and Maui counties.

We are committed to defending the sanctity of human life from conception until natural death, and everything that comes between. Many people in our community are concerned about suicide, because it affects the vulnerable people in our community, especially our youth and elderly. In fact, several of our pastors have dealt with this very issue just within the past few months.

In Hawaii, suicide was the most common cause of fatal injuries among Hawaii residents between 2010 and 2014, accounting for one-quarter of all fatal injuries and experts point out that one person dies by suicide in Hawaii every two days. This is heartbreaking and something we absolutely need to change!

Experts rightly point out that suicidal behaviors, for people of any age, are usually rooted in many different factors, with mental health issues playing an important role in the overall mix. It is a "perfect storm" of emotional issues and the only way to begin making a difference, is by identifying and treating each person. And the good news, is that it is fixable by awareness and treatment.

If this bill is passed with the appropriate funds necessary, Kauai, Hawaii and Maui County youth will have resources that may very well save their life. Protecting these precious lives are an outcome that is one upon which everyone in the community will agree. Funding for these types of services, we hope, will go a long way towards helping Hawaii's keiki thrive.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

**HB-330-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 1:44:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/28/2019 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rainbow	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Yes

Comments:

Thank you for hearing this bill. This is an important bill for the minors. Many times they feel like they are alone and have no one to turn to. May this bill be fruitful for the safety, support and education of our minors!



**HB-330-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 10:10:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/28/2019 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

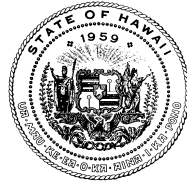
Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support HB330. Youth suicide is not only high on the mainland but also in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 330 H.D.1 S.D.1  
RELATING TO SUICIDE PREVENTION**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: 03/28/2019

Room Number: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** H.B. 330 H.D.1 S.D.1 requests funding for fiscal years 2019-2020 and  
2 2020-2021 for youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education programs in the  
3 County of Kauai, the County of Maui, and the County of Hawaii. The Department of Health  
4 defers to the priorities set forth in the Governor's Executive Biennium Budget request.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports H.B. 330 H.D.1 S.D.1 as long as  
6 it does not negatively impact the priorities set forth in the Governor's Executive Biennium  
7 Budget request.

8 Between 2013 - 2017, there were 153 suicides among all residents aged 15 to 24 years, making  
9 suicide the leading cause of injury related deaths for this age group. For every child age 15 to 24  
10 who dies from suicide in Hawaii, there are an estimated 57 more youth per year who are  
11 hospitalized, and another 181 youth per year who are treated in emergency departments (ED) for  
12 nonfatal self- inflicted injury.

13 Youth suicide rates are significantly higher for all Neighbor Islands in comparison to the City  
14 and County of Honolulu. From 2012 to 2016, the overall age adjusted rate for youth suicide on  
15 Oahu was 66 suicides per 100,000. In Kauai County, the rate was 92 per 100,000, in Hawaii  
16 County 117 per 100,000, and in Maui County 86 per 100,000.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

**HB-330-SD-1**

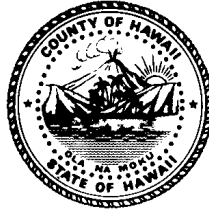
Submitted on: 3/27/2019 10:23:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/28/2019 10:20:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Democrats Legislative Priorities Committee	Support	No

Comments:

Harry Kim  
Mayor



Wil Okabe  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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**LATE**

March 27, 2019

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

**RE: HB 330, HD1, SD1 Relating to Suicide Prevention**

HB 330, HD1, SD1 sent me researching to better understand the need for youth suicide early intervention, prevention, and education programs. The statistics are enough to explain the importance of this bill.

Suicide deaths in Hawai'i County, according to our Hawai'i State Department of Health, average 20.4 deaths per 100,000 population, compared to a national average of about 13 deaths per 100,000. When it comes to youth age 15-19, the number is even higher—26.4 per 100,000; and for young adults aged 20-24, higher still—37.9 per 100,000.

My understanding is that statistics for Kauai and Maui are similarly disturbing.

Every one of these deaths is preventable, and if we have the expertise to offer programs that can reach these young people and suggest different paths forward for them, it seems we owe it to them, and to their families, friends, and loved ones, to make the effort. In fact, we owe it to ourselves as a just and caring society.

I hope you will act favorably on HB 330, HD1, SD1, including Kauai and Maui in the proposed programs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR