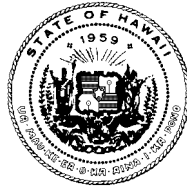


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96808

January 28, 2020

TO: The Honorable Representative San Buenaventura, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2024 - Relating to Minors**

Hearing: January 31, 2020, 8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and provide comments. The Department supports minors having greater access to shelter and the ability to independently consent to shelter services.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to expand the circumstances where a minor may consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include cases where the provider is coordinating with child welfare services.

The department supports broadening the access of young people to shelter services without fear of further system involvement where possible. The proposed amendment to add "(4) The provider is coordinating with child welfare services" may have the unintended effect to inhibit youth-at-risk from seeking services and impede those wishing to shelter minors in good faith. Sections 350-1, et seq., Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect, currently mandate shelter staff to report concerns to Child Welfare Services or the police. We respectfully request section 346-17.6(b), HRS, remain as is.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

# 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

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

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

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

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

January 27, 2020

To: Representative Joy San Bueanventure  
And members of the Committee on Human Services

## Testimony in Support of HB 2025 Relating to Minors

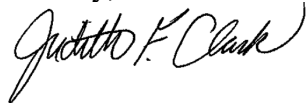
Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 2024 Relating to Minors

Enabling minors to consent for admission to an emergency youth shelter ensures that they are able to escape the dangers of living on the streets in those rare circumstances in which consent from a parent or guardian cannot be obtained.

In some circumstances, notifying parents or guardians of the minors location could increase risk of harm by family members or gurardians. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse committed by a family member or guardian is often the reason why the minor is seeking a safe shelter. Adding provider coordination with Child Welfare Services as a reason to allow minor consent for shelter will increase the safety of these vulnerable youth.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



**HB-2024**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 10:37:34 PM

Testimony for HSH on 1/31/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Goodman	Partners In Care & Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force	Support	No

Comments:

My understanding is that youth go unsheltered because of concerns about liability. A poor excuse for allowing a child to sleep on the streets. Either defend the suits, attempt to have them thrown out if frivolous, or the State should re-assert sovereign immunity for this.

**HB-2024**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 10:47:11 PM

Testimony for HSH on 1/31/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonathan Boyne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a child and adolescent community mental health professional, I support HB2024.

**HB-2024**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 7:54:52 PM

Testimony for HSH on 1/31/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Carmie Spellman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-2024**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 3:50:54 PM

Testimony for HSH on 1/31/2020 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Vickie Parker Kam	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Vickie Kam and I support HB2024 Relating to Minors, report title Emergency Shelter; Minors; Consent; Providers; Child Welfare Services. As an educator I have seen more than my fair share of children and teens that are in need of shelter and support, yet there is no where to place them or they are returned to situations that are intorerable. Our runaway/throwaway population grows due a variety of stresses on family systems. We need to be cognazant that it is not always in the best interest of either the minor or the family to force immediate notification. Allowing minors the opportunity for safe shelter, a time to think and learn about their options, as well as protecting those that are willing to take in a child in need is a powerful step to supporting this most vulnerable population.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2024

**HB-2024**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 9:18:55 PM

Testimony for HSH on 1/31/2020 8:30:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Algire	Hawai`i Children's Action Network Speaks!	Support	No

Comments: