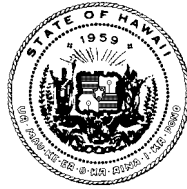


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

February 4, 2020

TO: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2220 - Relating to Minors**

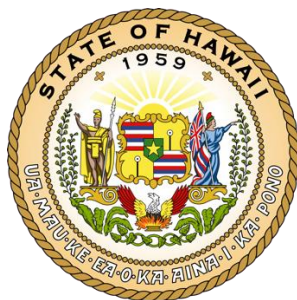
Hearing: February 7, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

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.



‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke
Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine

Testimony on behalf of the
Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Human Services

In Support of SB2220
Friday, February 7, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 016

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women writes in **support** of SB2220, which expands the circumstances where a minor may consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services.

No youth should be alone and without shelter. This measure is urgently needed because houseless youth experience a high rate of sexual exploitation. Generally, sex trafficking can be attributed to prior sexual abuse, which can lead children to running away from home. Regardless of the age of consent in a state, any runaway under 18 who exchanges sex for shelter or food is by federal definition “trafficked,” even if no trafficker is involved. Access to shelter with wraparound care can prevent child sex trafficking, and break the cycle of intergenerational sex trafficking.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1 in 6 runaways are likely sex trafficking victims—most solicited for sex within 72 hours on the street.¹ The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women recently found that nearly one in four sex trafficking victims surveyed by Child and Family Service were first victimized as minors.² For participants initially trafficked as minors, the average age of entry was 11 years old.

This measure represents an important reform to prevent not only houselessness but child sex trafficking.

Accordingly, the Commission respectfully urges the Committee to pass SB2220.

Sincerely,

Khara Jabola-Carolus

¹Kessler, G. Fact Checker, Washington Post, Jul. 1, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/02/are-there-hundreds-of-thousands-of-sex-trafficked-runaways-in-the-united-states/>.

² Jabola-Carolus, K. & Roe-Sepowitz, D., *Sex Trafficking Experiences Across Hawai‘i*, Arizona State University, Feb. 2020.



February 3, 2020

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

Hearing: Friday, February 7, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.

RE: **SUPPORT for Senate Bill 2220**

Aloha Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and fellow committee members,

I am writing in SUPPORT for Senate Bill 2220 on behalf of the LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization. SB 2220 would 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.

There is currently only one full service shelter in the entire state for homeless unaccompanied minors. It is RYSE (Residential Youth Services and Empowerment) located on the Windward side of O'ahu and RYSE serves 18 – 24 years old and they have 30 beds, 20 male & 10 female.

Hawai'i need to be expand circumstances in which a minor can consent to entering a no-cost shelter and have the Department of Human Services work to make sure we have such shelters for unaccompanied minors on every island across the state.

For these reasons the LGBT Caucus fully supports SB 2220.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair
LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:15:37 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Goodman	Testifying for Partners In Care & Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

As is the case with SB2344, for too long, concerns about liability have been more important to some government officials than children sleeping on the streets. This has to stop. Moreover, the bill can be written so the State re-establishes sovereign immunity, which would eliminate liability for this program.

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

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

February 4, 2020

To: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

Testimony in Support of and Comments on SB 2430 Relating to Minors

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 2430 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.

The intent of this bill is to allow an unaccompanied minor to be admitted to a shelter that houses adults when no beds are available in youth shelters.

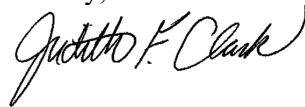
There is no doubt that more youth shelter beds are needed. Youth homelessness providers encounter more than 400 youth on the streets annually.

Housing a minor in a shelter designed to serve young adults up to age 24 who have similar developmental, educational, and workforce preparation needs is reasonable. Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE) is an example of a shelter program that could be suitable for some sixteen and seventeen year old minors.

Hawaii Youth Services Network has concerns, however, about placing a minor in a facility that are geared to serve chronically homeless adults, especially those with large numbers of residents with mental health and substance abuse concerns. Services and staffing in such facilities are not designed for unaccompanied minors and cannot meet their unique needs. We feel that there is risk of abuse and exploitation in such facilities.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

PRIDE AT WORK – HAWAI‘I

Where LGBTQIA+ Rights Meet Labor Movement
A constituency group of the Hawai‘i State AFL-CIO

February 4, 2020

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

Hearing: Friday, February 7, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.

RE: **SUPPORT for Senate Bill 2220**

Aloha Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and fellow committee members,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of Pride At Work which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

[National Center for Homeless Education has issued a new report this week and there has been a sharp rise in homeless students.](#) They report a 15% increase in the number of public-school students who were homeless at some point in the past three school years (1.3 million in the 2015-2016 to 1.5 million in the 2017-2018 school year).

We here at Pride at Work – Hawai‘i are concerned about the data that Hawai‘i reported because as we know we have seen an increase in our homeless crisis over the last three years but the number of homeless students reported does not reflect that reality. Here is what Hawai‘i reported:

3,790 for SY 2015-16;
2,958 for SY 2016-17; and
3,101 for SY 2017-18
for a net change of a **-18.2%** in homeless students.

We bring this up because it is clear that there is a disconnect somewhere along the way and we believe that by expanding the circumstances where a minor may consent to no cost emergency shelters will not only help homeless unaccompanied minors but also provide actual data for the homeless minors across the state.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i humbly asks that you support SB 2220 to help the homeless unaccompanied minors.

In solidarity,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 1:33:04 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Miyashiro	Testifying for RYSE HAWAII	Support	Yes

Comments:

My name is Lee Miyashiro and I am the Outreach Lead for RYSE Hawaii. I have been in homeless youth services for 10 years. I am writing in support of this bill because I think it is vital that we give this marginalized population more options. Currently, its either apprehension and incarceration (DH, HYCF) or entrance into the foster care system. These youth cannot obtain employment or go to school for fear of being thrust into a system that will compound the trauma that they already experience from break down of the family unit through drugs, abuse, and mental illness. Not to mention having to survive on the streets always hiding, having to depend on older homeless people, drug dealers, and pimps. Due to the fact that the system is how it is, they are unable to earn legal money to meet their daily needs. So in many cases they have to resort to trading the 1 thing that they have of value for food, temporary shelter, and drugs to self-medicate. That 1 thing is their bodies. Whether it be holding drugs for older folks, running errands for drug dealers or outright prostitution.

Last year there were 21 unaccompanied minors I saw on outreach. It is the most frustrating thing in the world when I see a 14 year old girl by herself sleeping at Waimanalo Beach Park and she begs me to let her stay at RYSE for Christmas and I can't do it. When I see a client of mine who I've worked with since they were 13 years old on Hawaii's Most Wanted. You won't see these kids on the street or in the point in time count. They hide in plain sight and don't trust most grownups. I saw 21 last year and that's only the tip of the iceberg. If this bill becomes law it allows these kids to come out of the crackhouses and gamerooms. It gives this generation and the next a chance at a life.

Some people would say that I am good at my job. I guess I'm ok. I could be even better if I had the proper tools. When it comes to unaccompanied minors I am a mechanic who has to take apart an engine with a Philips screwdriver. This bill will not fix everything but it is a good start to building programming around these kids and maybe one day I can work myself out of a job.



Residential Youth Services & Empowerment

February 5, 2020

TO: The Honorable Sn Russell E Ruderman, Chair.
Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Sn Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Carla Houser, Executive Director
Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE)

SUBJECT: SB2220/SB2344 Relating to Minor Consent to No Cost Emergency Shelter

Hearing: Friday, February 7, 2020
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

POSITION: RYSE strongly supports this measure.

As a homeless youth service provider, I have watched a growing number of unaccompanied youth take care of themselves on the street at a very young age for far too long. The 2018 UH Center on Family *Street Youth Survey* found the average age a young person first experiences homelessness on Oahu is 14 years old and over 77% of these youth had experience physical, mental and sexual abuse. It is time we step up our efforts to deal with this issue and capitalize on the strengths and resilience of our young people.

We continue to criminalize minors who run away from abusive homes as status offenders and their only path to shelter currently is to reunite with family or to enter the foster care system. Hawaii also has no emancipation path for unaccompanied youth. Many unaccompanied homeless youth have developed a mistrust of services following negative experiences with adults and/or fear social service agency notification or legal intervention. So they stay hidden in plain sight, utilizing trusted, low barrier drop in centers and street outreach workers to meet their basic needs of food and clothing. At night, they often partner up with older adults and often find themselves forced to engage in unlawful, exploitative activities just to sleep safely.

Our current model of allowing these unaccompanied minors to linger on the streets and not providing the necessary resources to address the trauma they've faced is not working. The recently released Child & Family Service report *Sex Trafficking*

Experiences Across Hawaii shows that 23% of the sex trafficking victims were first sex trafficked before they turned 18 years old. Of the participants that were first sex trafficked as children: 39% had experienced homelessness, 44% reported addiction to drugs and 70% reported having a mental health diagnosis. 24.7% of the victims said they were forced to exchange sex for a place to stay.

By the time these youth turn 18 and are allowed to enter a shelter catering to adolescent specific needs, it's often too late. The trauma of living on the streets has compounded. Their substance use, mental health and sexual exploitation has been exacerbated because of a need to survive.

This bill is the first step in creating a mechanism to shelter these unaccompanied minors, giving them respite from the streets and time to make choices that improve their current situation with the appropriate safeguards and staffing in place.

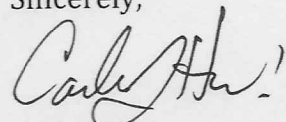
In 2019, our outreach team had multiple encounters with 21 unaccompanied minors living on our streets of Oahu. None of those youth were identified on the Department of Human Services Missing Children's website and they often live in or around homeless encampments with older chronically homeless individuals. These unaccompanied minors want to go back to school, they want help with their substance use, and they want mental health services. They may not trust the child welfare system to resolve their situation and they need a different approach.

I find it alarming that any state agency would not want assistance from homeless youth providers to identify these unaccompanied youth and assist with providing the appropriate wrap around services to address the trauma before and during street life. The intent for homeless youth providers to coordinate with child welfare services to ensure these youth have a fighting chance. We want the ability to notify CWS without, necessarily, a removal process. We want to better partner with CWS intake so we have better communication and have eyes on these kids as they navigate their way out of homelessness. The idea should be to intervene early, with services targeted toward the particular needs of young people — before homelessness becomes chronic, and it's much harder to move them off the street.

Through a collaboration of both state agencies and private organizations and a coordinated system of care, this measure will provide temporary stable housing as well as supportive connections to caring adults and services that can guide at risk youth from the streets towards a productive life and brighter future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,



Carla Houser
Executive Director, RYSE

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 11:41:41 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana K. Anderson	Testifying for Residential Youth Services and Empowerment	Support	No

Comments:

As a board member if RYSE (formerly Friends of Youth Outreach) I see the urgency of providing safe shelter to unaccompanied minors. Please pass this bill. We need to provide these services for at risk youth younger than 18 years old.

thank you.

Dana K. Anderson

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 1:17:30 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jane Anderson	Testifying for RYSE	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2220 relating to adolescent shelter and services. Shelter and services need to be available to youth to keep them safe and off the dangers of living on the streets. We need to provide no cost emergency shelter to youth at an earlier age before they become firmly entrenched in negative lifestyles.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:17:20 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aponi	Testifying for H.I Hopes initiative	Support	No

Comments:

This bill is so important to have due to having trouble finding placement for foster youth are under care . Back when I was in foster care, I wished we had this due to going back to a home that was not mentally, emotionally good for me . So I 100% support this bill!

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:34:21 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kholby Akuna	Testifying for Hi hopes Maui	Support	Yes

Comments:

Yes youth should have an emergency housing because a child should always feel safe no matter what. i never felt safe in care, ive always wanted to feel safe. But its unfortunate that i never had that in my time in care so i definitely support this bill.

February 6, 2020

TO: The Hon. Senator Russell E Ruderman, Chair
Committee on Human Services

TO: The Hon. Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

From: Deborah Smith, Outreach Supervisor
Hale Kipa, YO! (Youth Outreach)

RE: SB2220/SB2344 Relating to Minor Consent to No Cost Emergency Shelter

Position: YO! strongly supports this measure

As a street outreach worker who has worked with homeless youth for over 10 years I can attest to the fact that there are unaccompanied youth who must fend for themselves on the streets. The data for the 2018 UH Center on the Family's *Street Youth Survey* was collected by YO! staff members working directly with youth on the streets. The findings verify what we see daily: youth are dealing with physical, mental and sexual abuse while trying to survive on the streets. Many are on the streets because they feel it is safer than their home environments.

As there is currently no emancipation law for minors in the state of Hawaii, other paths to safety need to be created. SB2220 will allow a young person to access a safe place to stay without fearing negative consequences. Anything that gives a youth safety off the streets reduces the trauma of homelessness. And it will give a new tool to those of us working with these youth on the streets daily.

I strongly encourage you to pass SB2220/SB2344. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

Sincerely,

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 10:48:07 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rainbow	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Yes

Comments:

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 8:44:55 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Golojuch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB2220. Please pass this measure.

Mike Golojuch, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

Secretary, Rainbow Family 808

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 11:54:03 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jo-Ann M Adams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Being homeless is risky! Being a homeless youth is ever riskier!

We should support every effort to shelter homeless youth. Many homeless youth have been ejected from their homes by their parent(s). It makes no sense to require parental permission when parents are the cause of the child's homelessness.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:09:45 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eileen McKee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support Senate Bill 2220.

Eileen McKee

279 Alaume St.

Kihei 96753

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:07:09 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sherry Alu Campagna	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a former foster mother who recognizes the right and urgent need for minor children to seek immediate, emergency shelter from abuse, I strongly support this bill.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:12:04 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Younghi Overly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 12:40:13 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jose Strauch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill because when i was young some of my friends told me that they got kick out of the house from family, friends, foster care, and adoption for dumb reasons. Or they have been abused, sexual assaulted, and neglected. When i was 15 years old i had run away from home because i have experienced negative things so i ran away from home and if i have known theres a place like ryse that help young men and women to stand up on there two feet i would ask them help me at young age.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 4:45:55 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Delia Ulma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is critical for minors who are on the street or in crisis and need the support to have access to shelters and services when they need them.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 7:03:35 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 11:19:33 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heather Lusk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center strongly supports SB 2220.

Unaccompanied minors who struggle with homelessness have few options for shelter. SB 2220 would allow minors as young as 16 to access no-cost shelter so that they do not remain on the street. We would respectfully suggest for you to also consider lower this to 14 which would be aligned with the consent for behavioral health, sexual health and other special services.

Thank you for supporting our house less youth.

SB-2220

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 12:58:46 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/7/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
skip Adams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a supporter and volunteer with our islands youth Homelessness issue I have seen numerous number of our unaccompanied minors living on the street. Our current system is not providing the support to effectively impact this problem. Mental and physical abuse have plagued this population and the current structure in place is not working. This bill will initiate new systems to effectively provide the support this population requires. Providing them a place off the streets to start working through their issues is what we need. The passage of this bill is the right step in making this happen.



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

345 Queen Street, Suite 500 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE

Telephone: (808) 597-1441
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Thirtieth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Human Services

Testimony By
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

February 7, 2020

S.B. 2220 - RELATING TO MINORS

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO stands in strong support of S.B. 2220, which expands the rights of minor children who are homeless to consent to no cost emergency shelter where the provider is coordinating with child welfare services.

As noted in the attached resolution, which was unanimously adopted by the affiliate unions of the Hawaii State AFL-CIO in our 28th Biennial Convention on November 22, 2019 the issue of child homelessness is a growing epidemic in our community. Providing greater access to no cost emergency shelters is a great step forward in addressing this challenge and providing for our most vulnerable youth in need of emergency services.

We strongly urge passage of this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

Establishing Shelters for Homeless Minors in the State of Hawai'i

Whereas, Homelessness is rampant in the State of Hawai'i and unaccompanied minors are not immune to this growing epidemic; and

Whereas, A minor becomes homeless for the following main reasons: experiencing financial hardship; being kicked out of their homes because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy; running away from sexual, mental or physical abuse; aging out of foster care; substance abuse; or experiencing the death of a family member/guardian; and

Whereas, Because of their age, homeless minors have few legal means by which they can earn enough money to meet their basic needs, many homeless minors turn to survival sex to secure food, clothing, and shelter therefor putting them at greater risk of contracting AIDS, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases or worse becoming victims of sex-trafficking; and

Whereas, Homeless minors that are able to find legal employment struggle to make enough to secure food, clothing, and shelter given that Hawaii's minimum wage is not a living wage, and

Whereas, Homeless minors often suffer from severe anxiety and depression, poor health and nutrition, and low self-esteem and are 3 times more likely to experience major depression, conduct disorder, and post-traumatic stress syndrome than their housed peers; and

Whereas, A homeless minor is 4 times more likely to being homeless as an adult than their housed peers; and

Whereas, There are about 125 minors sleeping on the streets of Honolulu without any support from the government, or family members, and limited support from non-profits and there is very limited data for homeless minors on the neighbor islands; and

Whereas, Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE) is the only emergency shelter for minors, 18 - 24 years, in the state of Hawai'i and it is located on the windward side of 'Oahu and they only have beds for 10 females and 20 males; and

Whereas, Homeless minors face extreme difficulties attending school because of legal guardianship requirements, residency requirements, improper records, and lack of transportation and they face severe challenges in obtaining an education and supporting themselves emotionally and financially; and now therefor be it

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon the Hawai'i State Legislature to secure resources and pass legislation to establish low barrier homeless shelters for minors across the state of Hawai'i; and be it further

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon all the mayors and council members in the state of Hawai'i to work with the State of Hawai'i to establish low barrier homeless shelters for minors, in their respective counties, that provide wrap around services that are appropriate for minors who can't return to their home and don't want to enter Child Welfare Services system; and be it further

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon the Hawai'i State Legislature to increase Imua Kakou, the grants for foster kids that age out of the foster care system; and be it further

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon the Hawai'i State Legislature to increase the minimum wage to a living wage; and finally be it

Ordered, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor and Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai'i, all members of the Hawai'i State Legislature, the Mayors and all members of the County Councils of Kaua'i, Maui and Hawai'i counties and the Mayor and all members of City Council for the City and County of Honolulu.

***Adopted by the Delegates to the
Twenty-Eight Biennial Convention
of the Hawaii State AFL-CIO at the
Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki
Beach Resort on November 22, 2019***