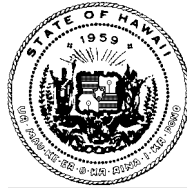


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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 Ruderman, Chair
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2334 - 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 provides comments. As this and other measures move through the committees, DHS is open to discussing possible immediate and longer-term options with legislators, stakeholders, providers, and youth. In the short term, DHS will look at possible options through amending administrative rules.

PURPOSE: This bill expands conditions for a minor to consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include a minimum age of sixteen years and certain requirements by a shelter.

DHS supports minors having greater access to shelter and the ability to independently consent to shelter. The Street Youth Study done by UH Center on the Family, Waikiki Health, and Hale Kipa in 2017 showed that "*...youth aged 12-17 are at higher risk than adults of becoming homeless,*" and that the "*average age of the first homeless episode was 14.1 years*".

http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/brochures/3ff7d_street%20youth%20study-013118_final.pdf

Safety of Hawaii's minors is a priority. DHS is interested in working with the Legislature, stakeholders, and community to develop appropriate shelter, housing programs

and related services for unaccompanied youth under 18 who are experiencing homelessness. Currently, there are no emergency shelters specifically to serve minors under 18¹ or independent living programs for minors not involved with Child Welfare Services (CWS). As a result, some minors seek shelter with older adults and leave themselves vulnerable to being victimized. With improved homeless data and shelter services available at Kawaiiloa Health & Wellness Center available to young adults, 18-24, we recognize the need to develop additional youth drop in and shelter services for unaccompanied minors, including pregnant or parenting minors, whether they are involved with child welfare services or not, as many of the minors encountered are not involved with CWS.

We learn from advocates that emergency shelter that meet basic needs and other supported housing options with some flexibility are needed; however, reducing the number of transitions and finding a stable permanent housing solution should be the goals. New York State has developed three kinds of shelter and residence options for homeless youth: Runaway & Youth Homeless Shelter, Interim Family Homes, and Transitional Independent Living Support Program residences. See <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/youth/rhy/program-descriptions.asp>. Host homes are used in other communities. <https://www.pointsourceyouth.org/host-homes>. Once sheltered, access to health care, mental health, substance abuse, and other services, such as G.E.D. classes, are necessary.

Additionally, DHS Child Welfare Services has difficulty recruiting and retaining resource homes for older youth, especially those who have been trafficked; so, developing additional shelter and transitional independent living support programs would increase capacity to assist unsheltered youth.

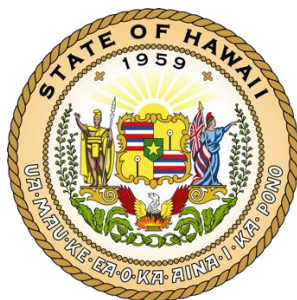
With due respect to the drafters the proposed amendments to section 346-17.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, will not accomplish the goal of providing shelter and housing options to minors under 18. For example, instead of expanding conditions, the proposed (b)(4) limits access to minors who may consent to those older than 16 years; this creates confusion with the first sentence of (b) as the age of a minor was not previously limited. This proposed provision would exclude homeless or other youth younger than 16 years old in need of shelter and basic needs from accessing shelter. This would create another gap in service for youth under 16.

¹Note: current DHS service provider does hold a limited number of beds available for homeless minors who are not CWS involved – with notice to the agency.

The subparagraphs (A) through (B) of proposed (b)(4) requires shelters to meet criterion that do not ensure that the provider are the most appropriate settings for the minors. Additionally, reference to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code §501(c)(3), that grants tax exempt status for charitable organizations, is not relevant. This reference would also exclude organizations who are not tax exempt, such as a public accommodation who may provide periodic shelter through a domestic violence or other advocacy organization, or organizations that have tax exemption granted through a different regulation of the IRS code.

The proposed amendment to (b)(4)(D), "Shall contact child welfare services within three days of housing the minor" 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.

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 SB2344
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 SB2344, which expands conditions for a minor to consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include a minimum age of sixteen years and certain requirements by a shelter.

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 SB2344.

Sincerely,

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.

Khara Jabola-Carolus



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 2344 with Requested Amendments

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

I am writing in SUPPORT for Senate Bill 2344 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 2344 would expand conditions for a minor to consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include a minimum age of sixteen years and certain requirements by a shelter.

The reason an unaccompanied minor is homeless is for the following 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.

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. RYSE serves 18 – 24 years old and they have 30 beds, 20 for males & 10 for female. Even with RYSE there about 125 minors that sleep on the streets on O'ahu with no support from the government. There is very little reliable data about homeless unaccompanied minors for the other islands.

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

To help address all of these needs for homeless unaccompanied minors we are asking for the following amendments:

Page 2 Line 11 Lower the age for shelters from sixteen (16) to twelve (12) years old. So that line would read as follows:

“The minor is at least twelve years of age and the...”

Page 2 Line 18 Insert “begin to” in front of evaluate so that line would read as follows:

“Shall have a licensed professional begin to evaluate the...”

Page 3 Line 3 – Insert the following language:

LGBT Caucus Testimony is Support of Senate Bill 2344 with Requested Amendments

(5) The Department of Human Services will make every effort to ensure that every island has a shelter for unaccompanied minors.

We are requesting these amendments to ensure that homeless unaccompanied minors have a safe space because homeless unaccompanied minors face the following:

- Have an elevated risk of mental health problems, including anxiety disorders, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide due to increased exposure to violence while living on the street;
- Experience chronic health conditions, including asthma, other lung problems, tuberculosis, diabetes, hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS are prevalent among homeless youth. These youth are also at high risk for sexually transmitted diseases;
- Are far more likely to be physically or sexually victimized than their peers who are not homeless, and many homeless youths are victimized repeatedly;
- Engage in the following activities just to survive sex for shelter and/or food, dealing drugs, and getting involved in gangs. All of which can lead to criminal records and making viable employment later in life very difficult; and
- High rates of substance abuse compared to their housed peers. Up to 40% report alcohol abuse and up to 50% report drug abuse problems.

10% of the population identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, while 40% homeless unaccompanied minors identify as member of the LGBTQIA+ community.

For these reasons the LGBT Caucus fully supports SB 2220 with the requested amendments.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

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

PRIDE AT WORK – HAWAII

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 2344 with Requested Amendments**

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.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i is proud to stand in solidarity with Hawaii's Labor 'ohana in calling for low-barrier shelters for Hawaii's homeless unaccompanied minors across the state of Hawai'i. We know that you have received the resolution that was passed unanimously at Hawaii State's AFL-CIO convention that was held on November 22, 2019 but we wanted to make sure that it was part of the public record for SB 2344.

The main reasons that unaccompanied minors are homeless are as follows:

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

We are asking for the following amendments to help protect homeless unaccompanied minors:

Page 2 Line 11 Lower the age for shelters from sixteen (16) to twelve (12) years old. So that line would read as follows:

“The minor is at least twelve years of age and the...”

Page 2 Line 18 Insert “begin to” in front of evaluate so that line would read as follows:

“Shall have a licensed professional begin to evaluate the...”

Page 3 Line 3 – Insert the following language:

(5) The Department of Human Services will make every effort to ensure that every island has a shelter for unaccompanied minors.

We believe that with these amendments it will ensure that there will be more than just one full service shelter for all homeless unaccompanied minors across the Aloha State.

When homeless unaccompanied minors remain unsheltered they are at greater risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases; being sex-trafficked; becoming victims of mental,

Pride at Work – Hawaii’s Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2344 with Requested Amendments

physical and/or sexual abuse; developing severe health problems both physical and mental; becoming entrenched in the justice system; and getting involved with gangs.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i supports SB 2344 with the requested amendments to help ensure that no keiki faces these struggles.

In solidarity,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i

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

Whereas, Homelessness is rampant in the State of Hawai‘i and 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 unaccompanied minors have few legal means by which they can earn enough money to meet their basic needs, many homeless minors turn to 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 unaccompanied 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 unaccompanied 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, family members, or non-profits and there is no data for homeless minors on the neighbor islands; and

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

Whereas, Youth Outreach (YO) is the only service available to homeless unaccompanied minors under the age of 18 and it is a drop-in center that is open 3 hours a day, 4 times a week and it is located in Waikiki; and

Whereas, Homeless unaccompanied 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

Pride at Work – Hawaii's Testimony is Support of Senate Bill 2344 with Requested Amendments

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon the Hawai'i State Legislature to secure resources and pass legislation to establish low barrier shelters for homeless unaccompanied 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 shelters for homeless minors in their respective counties; and be it further

Resolved, The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO calls upon the Hawai'i State Legislature to increase 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 as one of the ways to help homeless unaccompanied minors; 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.

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:04:52 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:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Part of the reason the tragedy of leaving children to sleep on the streets, are because of concerns about liability. From a purely legal standpoint, the bill can be amended for the State to assert sovereign immunity with respect to this program. From a moral point of view, liability concerns are insignificant compared with permitting this outrage to continue.

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 2344 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.

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.

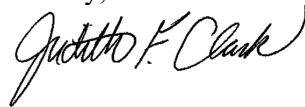
There is no doubt that more youth shelter beds are needed. Youth homelessness providers encounter more than 400 youth on the streets annually.

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 would be suitable for 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

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 1:33:59 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.

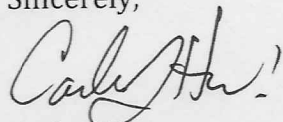
In 2019, our outreach team had multiple encounters with 21 unaccompanied minors living on our streets of Oahu. None of those youth were identified on the Department of Human Services Missing Children's website and they often live in or around homeless encampments with older chronically homeless individuals. 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-2344

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:37:47 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 | No |

Comments:

No one should ever have to pay to feel safe especially a minor. im really grateful that these bills are being passed because it always helps and changes the future for generations.

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 10:49:41 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-2344

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 8:57:22 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 SB2344. Please pass this measure.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., LT Col, USAF (Ret)

Secretary, Rainbow Family 808

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:02:36 AM

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

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

Comments:

My opinions are formed based on work I have done recently with child custody cases.

If the facility is licensed by the State, the child should be safe in that facility. Therefore, as long as it is in the best interests of the child to be admitted to a State-licensed facility rather than returned home, the child should be able to enter the facility.

We have to keep chipping away at the antiquated notions of children as property of the parents. There are some home situations in which a child would be much safer in a state-licensed facility. In such cases, age should not be a barrier to entry.

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:10:49 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 2344.

Eileen McKee

279 Alaume Street

Kihei 96753

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:15:33 AM

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

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Barbara Barry | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha,

Please approve emergency shelters for our vulnerable homeless youth.

This program can make all the difference for them to stay in school and be safe.

Mahalo,

Ms. Barbara Barry

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:07:40 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:

SB-2344

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 10:12:29 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-2344

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 12:46:13 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-2344

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 7:04:19 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-2344

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 1:23:41 PM

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

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Susan Palmore | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

SB2344 is a critical bill enabling RYSE and other certified organizations to help our homeless youth 16 and older have a safe place to become healthy and learn the skills needed to safely reunite with their families or live independently should they so choose. I strongly support this bill..

Susan Palmore

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



FROM: Kathryn Boyer, citizen of Honolulu

SUBJECT: **SB 2334 - Relating to Minors**

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

As a citizen who lives and works in the downtown Honolulu area, I often come across chronically homeless individuals who are in such poor shape physically and emotionally that people pass them by without making eye contact or just cross the street to avoid them altogether. Many of these adults are a look at the future for our current homeless young people. The other future for our current homeless youth is incarceration. Sit down with any homeless young person and you can trace their story to slipping through the cracks in the fabric of our society at some point. The young people I hope you hear testify Friday, February 7th, will tell you this in the most honest and poignant way.

State foster care cannot be the answer for youth experiencing homelessness and neither can incarceration. It is inherently unjust that an 18-year-old can access a homeless shelter and expect to be safe at night while a 17-year-old or younger person cannot. A 14 year old in our state can access mental health treatment, medical care, all manner of resources without their parent's consent, yet they cannot consent to a roof over their head for longer than a few weeks without the fear of repercussions that could impact their family and themselves for many years to come through state system involvement. Minors experiencing homelessness must sleep outdoors and partner up with an adult or group of other people experiencing homelessness for protection which often leads to engaging in illegal activities, survival sex, drug dealing, etc. to "pay for" that protection while on the streets.

Homeless youth and law enforcement also struggle to interact in a positive way. Ho`opono Mamo is a program in Kalihi's district 5 addressing youth in trouble, but it is intended to be a juvenile justice diversion program and it covers a small area of this island. There must be a more diverse response to homeless young people and young families that meets their varied needs and the bill proposed here is an attempt to broaden our State's response system and make that happen without the prerequisite of system-involvement to be safe.

Young people become alienated from their homes for a variety of reasons. In Hawaii, if a family is in rental housing and a family is too large for their home, the oldest child is often expected to vacate so that the younger siblings who are more vulnerable may have the space and resources. When a youth identifies as anything other than heterosexual, they are often

rejected by their families who do not support their norm and their reality. These youth may not be abused to the degree that the state child welfare system would interfere or to a criminal degree, but these youth know they are not accepted or welcome and may seek acceptance on the streets. Young people who become pregnant often have the experience of being shunned or shamed by their family or caregivers. These youth need a safe place to lay their heads and the assistance of a qualified youth services provider to work with them and their families to come to an understanding and reunify whenever possible; to access other resources to become self-sufficient as they become adults, and to have a reliable adult and community of safety which withholds judgement while offering safe respite until they can sort out what it is that they need to move forward.

Through either their own experience or their families or friends' stories of what they have been through, many homeless youth have developed a mistrust of the current service response system. They often fear state agency notification or legal repercussions. The youth providers we have now and will have in the future know what mandated reporting is and there should not be a hesitation around that mandate continuing.

While a young person may feel conflicted about their relationship with their family, they still do not want to have their family suffer because of becoming engaged in the state legal system or child welfare system. Each of these state systems have their place in our society, but they do not meet the needs of this particular demographic and we need more. We need a continuum of services to address and help our young people and families from falling through the cracks.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Boyer



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. 2344 – RELATING TO MINORS

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO stands in strong support of the passage of S.B. 2344, which protects the interests of homeless minors that seek no cost emergency shelter.

This bill will provide needed safeguards to ensure that providers are legitimate and act with the best interest of the minor child by providing that a licensed professional evaluates the child's needs, and contacts child welfare services soon after the child is provided shelter.

We view these additions to statute as necessary steps to address the growing epidemic of minor homelessness in Hawaii.

Your favorable consideration of this measure is strongly encouraged.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 2344.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President