



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
and
Senate Committee on Human Services
Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 10:15 a.m.

By
Jerris Hedges, MD, Dean
John A. Burns School of Medicine
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 197/SR 155 – REQUESTING THE PREVENT SUICIDE HAWAII TASK FORCE
TO RECOMMEND A STRATEGIC PLAN TO REDUCE YOUTH SUICIDES IN HAWAII

Chairs Baker and Ruderman, Vice Chairs Chang and Rhoads, and members of the
committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SCR 197/SR 155, which request
the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force to recommend a strategic plan to reduce youth
suicides in Hawai'i.

A teen in Hawai'i is nearly twice as likely to attempt suicide as compared to a teen
elsewhere in the United States. Roughly, 2,280 teens reported having attempted
suicide here in 2007, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
survey in Hawai'i'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.

In 2017, the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force released the Hawai'i Suicide
Prevention Strategy establishing the goal of reducing Hawai'i suicides by 25% by 2025.
Collaboration between the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force and Youth Suicide
Prevention Leadership Council would prove beneficial in evaluating and determining
methods to improve education, awareness, support services and outreach, along with
recommending a strategic plan to reduce youth suicides in Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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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

March 13, 2020

To: Senator Roslyn Baker, Chair
And members of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 197/SR 155 REQUESTING THE PREVENT SUICIDE HAWAII TASK FORCE TO RECOMMEND A STRATEGIC PLAN TO REDUCE YOUTH SUICIDES IN HAWAII.

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SCR 197/SR 155 Requesting the Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force to Recommend a Strategic Plan to Reduce Youth Suicides in Hawaii.

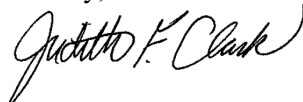
Suicide prevention was one of the top priorities that youth who attended the Children and Youth Summit in 2018 felt the Hawaii Legislature needs to address.

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.

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

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

SCR-197

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 8:37:30 PM

Testimony for CPH on 3/17/2020 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katrina Obleada	Testifying for Hawaii Psychological Association	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-197

Submitted on: 3/15/2020 11:03:14 PM

Testimony for CPH on 3/17/2020 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: