



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

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The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i State Senate
Committee on Judiciary

Testimony by
Hawai'i State AFL-CIO
April 1, 2021

H.B. 282 H.D. 1 S.D. 1 – RELATING TO
MINORS

The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO is a state federation of 74 affiliate local unions and councils with over 68,000 members across both public and private sectors. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of H.B. 282 H.D. 1 S.D. 1.

In Hawai'i, it is not uncommon to have “hanai” or extended family. The sad reality is that not all minors who face homelessness are fortunate enough to be taken in. Reasons for becoming homeless are complex, and homeless minors face a myriad of challenges that their housed peers are less likely to experience. Minors who become homeless can avoid further harm if they know they can seek refuge at an emergency shelter without parental consent.

Homeless unaccompanied minors need a safe place to go, and H.B. 282 H.D. 1 S.D. 1 minimizes harm to minors by allowing a minor's consent to be sufficient to receive no cost emergency shelter and related services.

We appreciate your consideration of our testimony and strongly encourage passage of H.B. 282 H.D. 1 S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President



March 29, 2021

Senate's Committee on Judiciary
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 282 - RELATING TO MINORS – Support with Requested Amendments

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Committee Members,

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT for House Bill 282 HD 1 SD 1 with requested amendments on behalf of the LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization. HB 282 HD 1 SD 1 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 (1) 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 for males & 10 for females.

Hawai'i needs 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.

The LGBT Caucus is requesting following three (3) amendments to HB 282 HD 1 SD 1:

1. Page 4, Strike Line 8 which currently limits shelters to five (5) minors;
2. Page 4, Strike Lines 15 – 18 which is the June 30, 2023 sunset provision; and
3. Add a reporting requirement for Dept. of Human Services.

The reasons the LGBT Caucus is requesting these three (3) amendments are as follows:

1. Limiting a shelter to serving no more than five (5) minor children per day is troublesome because:
 - Fact is there are on any given night 125 unhoused minors sleep on the streets of the City and County of Honolulu, unfortunately there is no current estimates for homeless unaccompanied minors for the other counties;
 - DHS would have to license 25 separate facilities, just to cover C&C of Honolulu; &
 - Each facility would have to have a client to staff ratio of 1 to 1 and before the pandemic that would have been a struggle to find funding for one (1) shelter let alone 25 and now it is almost an impossibility.
2. Automatically repealing this proposed law in 2 short years is problematic in that:
 - It automatically removes the other sensible and needed amendments that should be in statute i.e. that these shelters are “not a child placing organization or child caring

LGBT Caucus Testimony is Support of House Bill 282 with Requested Amendments

institution”; requiring background checks for staff; separate sleeping area for minors (ideally, they should have separate facilities) etc.; and

- DHS should have to make the affirmative steps to repeal these provisions so they can prove to the Legislature that these amendments are no longer needed because the HARs have been amended.
3. A reporting requirement from DHS to the Legislature is necessary so that DHS can show to the Legislature and general public that they have:
- Continued to “dialogue with youth service providers and solicit input on longer term changes to its administrative rules regarding Child Caring Institutions”;
 - Show what progress has been made to amend their Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR) to address the needs of Hawaii's homeless unaccompanied minors (Departments have testified that amending HARs can take up to 3 years);
 - Licensed any shelters for homeless unaccompanied minors, why or why not; &
 - Document how many homeless unaccompanied minors have sought shelter at the licensed shelters.

Given this information the LGBT Caucus hopes that you will support these amendments to help make sure that Hawaii's homeless unaccompanied minors have access to shelters all across the state.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

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

HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 6:03:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	No

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 definitely supports HB282 and has done so in the past. Our youth, especially those under 18, who need to leave their unsuitable family setting, sometimes including foster care, only have one option in Hawaii, live on the streets since they cannot sign themselves into a shelter. Currently, we have one shelter that partially helps homeless unaccompanied minors. This is Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE). There is a need for no-cost shelters on the various Hawaiian Islands to meet the needs of unaccompanied minors.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808

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

Carole Gruskin, 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

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

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 29, 2021

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Human Services

Testimony in Support of HB 282 HD 1 Relating to Minors

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 282 HD 1 SD 1 Relating to Minors

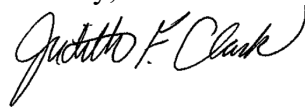
Enabling minors to consent for admission to an emergency youth shelter ensures that they are able to escape the dangers of living on the streets in those rare situations in which consent from a parent or guardian cannot be obtained.

In some circumstances, notifying parents or guardians of the minor's location could increase risk of harm by family members or guardians. 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.

HYSN concurs with the amendments as added in SD 1.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Continuum of Care

Our mission is to eliminate homelessness through open and inclusive participation and the coordination of integrated responses.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB282, HD1,SD1 Relating to Minors Consent to No Cost Shelter

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Partners In Care (PIC)
Hearing: Thursday, 4/1/2021; 9:35am; via videoconference
Position: **Support**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Partners In Care, Oahu's Continuum of Care, stands in **Supports HB282, HD1, SD1**:Relating to Minors Consent to No Cost Shelter. Youth experiencing homelessness in Hawaii is a growing issue that needs to be addressed separately from adult and family homelessness. For those adults and families experiencing homelessness, they often have a head of household who is at least 18 and can give legal consent to enter a shelter. For those younger than 18, their options are extremely limited. Programs that provide services to youth are currently not allowed to shelter youth under 18. This puts these youth, who are already very vulnerable, in an impossible situation. Even if they are willing to ask for help, we must close the door on them when it's time to sleep. They are left to fend for themselves on the streets when they need help the most. We have qualified and dedicated providers in our community who currently work with the hundreds of youth throughout the year. They are ready to make sure that those doors are no longer closed to those in need.

PIC is in support of amendments made to this measure that address the definition of "provider" as well as the the effective date being upon approval with a sunset date of June 30,2023. Stakeholders concerned with this issue have been working together on this measure and have agreed with the amendments made during the prior committee hearings. The need to monitor the impacts of these amendments will enable DHS to review outcomes and ensure that health and safety concerns are addressed. Youth Service Providers and DHS will continue to work on issues moving forward. We need to continue to work on balancing the needs of the youth and the responsibility of the system.

The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project was awarded to the Oahu CoC in 2019 and addresses many of the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. Allowing these same youth entrance into youth specific shleters will further the assistance that our system can provide to youth in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration of this measure. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Aloha.

Connie Mitchell, Advocacy Chair, PARTNERS IN CARE, OAHU'S CONTINUUM OF CARE
200 North Vineyard Boulevard • Suite 210 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 • (808) 380-9444 •
PICadvocate@gmail.com

HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:01:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pride at Work - Hawaii	Testifying for Pride @ Work - Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Pride at Work - Hawai'i, the state-wide chapter of Pride At Work (a constituency group of the national AFL-CIO) and an affiliate of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO, fully supports HB 282 HD 1 SD 1.

Though we do have concerns about limiting all shelters for minors to only 5 keiki and the automatic repeal of the this law.

We hope that you will take these concerns under consideration while making your decisions.

Mahalo nui loa,

Pride at Work - Hawai'i



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 282, HD1, SD1: RELATNG TO MINORS

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Hearing: **Thursday, 4/1/21; 9:35 am; via videoconference**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Members, Committee on Judicirary:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to support the intent of HB 282, HD1, SD1, which expands 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. I am Rob Van Tassell, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 70 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless, and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i supports the intent of this bill. We need to find solutions to safely serve minors who are living on the streets. The *2018 Street Youth Survey* paints a grim picture of the vulnerability of minors living on the streets of Oahu. The average when they became homeless was just 14 years old. Almost 60% were homeless for a year or more. These unaccompanied minors faced high rates of violence, sexual assault and sexual exploitation. These minors live a dangerous existence where 58% have tried to kill themselves while others were forced to perform "survival sex".

Catholic Charities Hawai'i supports the amendments included in SD1, which had been suggested by youth advocates and the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, including: Change the definition of "provider" in section 346-17.6(h), HRS to expand the definition to include providers that are not Child Caring Institutions, provided that the provider:

1. Conducts background checks on its staff.
2. Maintains separate sleeping areas for unrelated adults and children.
3. Serves no more than five minor children a day.
4. Keeps a current list of all minor children admitted.
5. Coordinates with CWS to provide shelter or other services for the minor child.

We appreciate the intent of this bill and your focus on minors living on the streets who are at high risk for abuse, physical attacks, exploitation and mental illness. The two year timeframe would give DHS and youth service providers time to evaluate and to make sure this is effective, or propose other measures to meet this urgent need for these homeless youth.

Please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson at (808) 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 8:17:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Robinson-Onderko	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB282 HD1 SD1. I ask that you please move this measure forward. We need unobstructed access to safe shelter and related services for our unaccompanied homeless young people.

Mahalo nui,

Lynn Robinson-Onderko, Ewa Beach

HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 8:39:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Leo Braulick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

March 30, 2021

Members of the Committee:

I support HB282 HD1 SD1 enabling minors to consent for admission to an emergency youth shelter to ensure that they can avoid living on the streets, even if consent from a parent or guardian cannot be obtained.

Especially for some LGBTQIA+ youth, notifying parents or guardians of the minor's location increases the risk of harm by abusive family members or guardians. I personally knew several LGBTQIA+ people who were harmed as youth by family members, and their only recourse was to leave home, and sometimes, risk the dangers of living on the streets.

I also support adding provider coordination with Child Welfare Services as a reason to allow minor consent for shelter, which will increase the safety of these vulnerable youth.

Sincerely,

Nathan Leo Braulick

2333 Kapiolani Blvd.

Honolulu, HI 96826

HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 10:11:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB282 HD1 SD1.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Eileen McKee

Kihei

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

RE: Support for House Bill 282 SD1

Thursday, April 1, 2021, 9:35AM via Video Conference

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 282 SD1, which expands the circumstances where a minor, below the age of eighteen (18), may consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include cases where the provider is coordinating with child welfare services.

For the past 5 years that I have been residing on O‘ahu, there has evidently been an essential need to address the issue of homeless unaccompanied minors. Studies have shown that the average unaccompanied minor experiences homelessness at the age of fourteen (14). Additionally, more than half of homeless minors have experienced mental, physical and sexual abuse by their caregiver.

Seeing that there is currently only one homeless shelter service that serves unaccompanied minors in Hawai‘i, I believe we should work together and expand the opportunities to homeless minors, allowing them to better access shelters and the power to independently consent shelters and related services. By passing House Bill 282 SD1, this would be an important step towards creating a safe space for many homeless minors, further expanding the access to urgent assistance for homeless unaccompanied minors.

Thank you again for your consideration on this measure.

Amalia L. Pangelinan
2724 Kahoaloha Lane #1601
Honolulu, HI 96826

HB-282-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 5:01:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 4/1/2021 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Alec Cornejo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee of Judiciary, Chair Karl Rhoads,

My name is Alec Cornejo. I am in support of HB282, which is being heard on Thursday, April 1st 2021, at 9:35am

I am a student at the University of Hawai'i pursuing my masters degree in Social Work. I am looking to eventually work in a hospital setting in palliative care, where I can help to treat terminally ill and end of life patients as a medical health social worker.

During my undergraduate experience I had the chance to work with at-risk and homeless youth. This was done in both an outreach and drop-in center setting. Outreach consisted of going during the night and/or day time to provide food, water and information regarding the drop-in center for at-risk and homeless youth in the Waikiki area. During a drop-in center setting, youth would come into the drop-in center and had options to receive food, education (via a GED program), shower, locker (to secure belongings), receive mail, counseling services and nurse services.

I am in support of this bill because as stated in the bills description, it creates opportunities for youth to get out of situations at home that may be a risk to your physical and mental health and wellbeing. This bill would also allow for youth (under the age of 18) to give consent at no cost for emergency shelters that include meals and basic living needs. Providing this for youth is a large step in the right direction as these needs are often immediate or overlooked.

Individuals with these needs, may have to experience neglect and abuse on a daily basis and can become normalized to this type of abuse and trauma. My main concern is how this bill and information of emergency shelters will be utilized in practice. As many youth individuals may not know these services exist, the responsibility to relay this information will fall on any one who interacts with youth on a daily basis. I believe further investigation into this matter in future bills could provide useful, as now more than ever

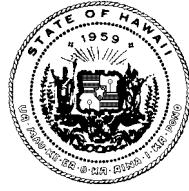
with online classrooms becoming normalized, this matter of neglect and abuse should be addressed.

Lastly, the use of the word minor could be expanded to “youth” in order to encompass a larger population of individuals that have this need of no cost emergency shelter for 30 days. I suggest adding this explanation to 22 years of age.

Mahalo,

Alec Cornejo

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LATE

CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 31, 2021

TO: The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 282 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO MINORS**

Hearing: Thursday, April 1, 2021, 9:35 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill as amended by the Senate Committee on Human Services, which expanded the definition of “provider” in section 346-17.6(h), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and making this change effective upon approval, provided there is a sunset date of June 20, 2023, as recommended by the Governor’s Coordinator on Homelessness. That amendment will allow time for DHS to monitor the impact of the expanded definition of “provider” and determine its effectiveness to expand access to shelter while still addressing health and safety concerns of unaccompanied minors.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill expands 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. (SD1)

DHS recognizes that there is a population of unaccompanied youth who avoid shelter services for fear of being placed into the foster care system or into a placement they do not want to be in. Allowing greater access to shelter by amending the definition of "provider" will

allow unaccompanied youth access to social services that will stabilize their living situation and enhance their future.

DHS is in the process of reviewing its current policies, procedures, and administrative rules to update them, as necessary, to better serve this population of youth.

Additionally, DHS child welfare services will continue the dialogue with youth service providers on how to best serve the population of unaccompanied youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

April 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **HB 282 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO MINORS**

Hearing: Thursday, April 1, 2021, 9:35 a.m.
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports this bill as amended by the Senate Committee on Human Services.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to expand circumstances where a minor may consent to no cost emergency shelter and related services to include cases where the provider is coordinating with Department of Human Services (DHS) child welfare services.

The prior committee amended this measure by expanding the definition of "provider" in section 346-17.6(h), Hawaii Revised Statutes, and making this change effective upon approval, provided there is a sunset date of June 30, 2023. The amendments were the result of ongoing dialogue between DHS child welfare services staff and youth service providers and are intended to increase access to emergency shelter for homeless minors. Increasing access to shelter aligns with the goals of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) strategic plan, which includes a specific focus on improving access to services addressing homeless youth.

As amended, this bill provides time for DHS to monitor the impact of the expanded definition of "provider" to determine if this amendment is effective in expanding access to shelter, while still addressing health and safety concerns. While the amended definition is in effect, DHS will continue dialogue with youth service providers and solicit input on longer term changes to its administrative rules regarding Child Caring Institutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.