



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-First State Legislature, 2021 Regular Session

House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

by

Judge Christine E. Kuriyama
Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge
Family Court of the First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 835, H.D.1 Relating to the National Guard Youth Challenge Academy.

Purpose: Appropriates funds to support the ongoing operations of the Hawai‘i National Guard Youth Challenge Program. Effective 7/1/3050 (HD1)

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary offers the following testimony in support of the bill:

1. The Hawai‘i National Guard Youth Challenge Academy (“Youth Challenge”) is a community-based program that provides and teaches life changing structure, education, values, and skills for “at promise” youth throughout the state of Hawai‘i.
2. Youth Challenge has been a valuable partner of the Family Court across all islands. It provides the necessary services to divert “at promise” youth from the juvenile justice system and also serves as a much needed alternative to detention.



House Bill No. 835, H.D.1, Relating to the National Guard Youth Challenge Academy

House Committee on Finance

Tuesday, February 23, 2021 2:00 p.m.

Page 2

3. Based upon the foregoing, the Judiciary respectfully requests that the Legislature appropriate the necessary funds to support this essential program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
COLONEL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 835-HD1
RELATING TO THE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

BG BRUCE E. OLIVEIRA, USA, RETIRED
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS DIRECTOR
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

FEBRUARY 22, 2021

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Finance

I am BG (R) Bruce Oliveira, Community Programs Director, State of Hawaii Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides written **comments** for testimony of HB 835-HD1.

This measure, if passed would, appropriate funds to support the ongoing operations of the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Program. The U.S. Department of Education data details a domino effect of negative consequences for students who drop out of high school; one out of four high school students do not graduate and those who drop out will be unemployed at a rate of 15% in comparison of 9% of high school graduates. Additionally, dropouts engage in criminal behavior at a higher rate and are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested and comprise up to 80% of the U.S. prison population. In Hawaii, there are 6,000 teens ages 16 to 19 not attending school and not working. The Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy provides prevention and early intervention as the core correctional goal for these adolescents. Each year the Hawaii Youth Challenge Program graduates approximately 300 of Hawaii's youth into productive and professional lives.

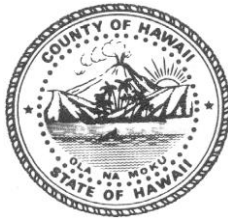
Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in Support of HB 835.

The DOD does not support this measure if it impacts or replaces the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Director Bruce Oliveira, bruce.e.oliveira@hawaii.gov; 808-672-1260

KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

STEPHEN L. FRYE
FIRST DEPUTY
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 835 HD1

A BILL RELATING TO THE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair
Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Honorable Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee on Finance. The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i submits the following testimony in support of House Bill No. 835 HD1.

The Hawai'i National Guard Youth Challenge Academy Hilo Campus (Youth Challenge) is the only public residential educational institution on the island of Hawai'i for youth (ages 16-18). The mission of Youth Challenge is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of "at promise" youth, producing program graduates with the values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens. In addition to getting a diploma, youth are educated and trained in the Eight Core Components of the academy's foundation including Academic Excellence, Life Coping Skills, Job Skills, Health & Hygiene, Responsible Citizenship, Service to Community, Leadership, and Physical Fitness. These components help mold these young men and women to be successful and contributing members to society.

Youth Challenge benefits our community in many ways. This award-winning program has been recognized as one of the nation's most effective and cost-efficient programs for targeting youth who are at the greatest risk for substance abuse, teen pregnancy, delinquency, and criminal activity. Youth Challenge performs tens of thousands of volunteer work hours to benefit communities around the island providing the youth the opportunity to learn the value of public service and become stewards of their community. Youth Challenge is a key supporter and participates alongside numerous other organizations, non-profit partners, and labor unions in the semi-annual Nā Leo O Nā 'Ōpio Career Opportunities Expo, which is one of the longest running and largest career fairs on the island, supporting over two thousand youth grades 5-12 from across the island.

Continued funding for this program is necessary. Hundreds of youth who did not succeed in traditional forms of education succeeded with the help of Youth Challenge. The County of Hawai'i Office of the Prosecuting Attorney supports the passage of House Bill No. 835 HD1 and the ongoing operations of Youth Challenge. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2021 9:42:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Myron Brumaghim	Hawaii Youth Challenge Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern: I am in full support of HB835. I am one of many Hawaii National Guard members and DOE Administrators that created the Hawaii Youth Challenge Program many years ago. It was a groundbreaking program at the time that continues to be very beneficial to the cadets, their families and respective communities in Hawaii.

Hello. My name is Myron Brumaghim and am the President of the Hawaii Youth Challenge Foundation, whose primary mission is to support the Youth Challenge Academy graduates, during their Post residential phase. Our Foundation was formed 26 years ago. Our Board members consist of three former Adjutant Generals, many retired National Guard members, several former Principals/Acting Complex Area Superintendent and private businessmen. All of our members know what it takes to be successful in life and have a passion to support these cadets.

As a former Public school teacher and administrator, 35+ years of service to students in Wahiawa and Nanakuli, I have first hand experience of kids that faced various personal challenges, too many to enumerate. In the Youth Challenge Program, these cadets bloomed through lift-changing pathways offered through their curriculum. For some, this is their last hope.

Additionally, this program is supported in a \$3 to \$1 match of Federal to State funds. In essence, the cost is comparatively little to the State of Hawaii but valuable to the communities, families and especially the cadets.

In closing, this program is powerful. Let's not abandon them at this important time in their lives.

Thank you in advance for your support. Aloha. Myron K. Brumaghim

LATE

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 10:30:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leslie Bise	Military Order of World Wars	Oppose	No

Comments:

Although the MOWW supports the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy (YCA) Program, it is our understanding that HB835 seeks to close the Hilo YCA program. Where the State of Hawaii currently provides 25% financial support to the program, the federal government grant is at 75% matching fund. The benefit of the YCA program is a long term investment by way of intervention. The State of Hawaii gets 100% with the 25% investment. It was not too long ago that the initial program shared cost was 75% State and 25% Federal contribution. Based on current effects of the pandemic on our education system, can we expect a surge in our high school dropout rate? Cutting the Hilo YCA program doesn't seem logical especially if there will be a need to expand the intervention program. The MOWW submits this testimony with respect for your decision and understanding the needed support of the YCA program in Hawaii.



1730 Kamehameha Ave. Hilo, Hawaii 96720 Phone: 1-808-935-8711 Fax: 1-808-961-5124

"Jammin' Since 1971"

Feb.22,2021

On behalf of the various Boards that I participate with, I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT for the CONTINUATION of Hawaii Island's YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY in HILO.

Having employed several young persons who have graduated from the Youth Challenge Academy, I can attest To the Huge Value and Positive Impact that the Academy has had on So Many Young People, who, without the Training from Youth Challenge Academy, would not have the Education, the Discipline, the Motivation and the Hope to Live their Lives with Promise, into Adulthood.

The Academy works with the Youth, and in actuality, Benefits the Families of these Youth. We all know the difficulties families can have with their children who can be negatively influenced by drugs, school absenteeism, predators, etc. Parents can oftentimes be at a Loss on how to manage, discipline and relate to their children. The Youth Challenge Academy Positively Affects BOTH the Child and the Families.

Put together, we have a Better Chance toward a Healthier Community!

Thank You for Your Time!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debbie Ching Maiava".

Debbie Ching Maiava

Ken's House of Pancakes, Manager - 32 years

Ponds Hilo, Owner - 12 years

February 22, 2021

Aloha, Decision Makers of the FUTURE of THE YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY of HILO,

The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy has two campuses, one in Kalaeloa on Oahu and another in Hilo on Hawaii Island. Both campuses are funded 75% Federal funds and 25% State funds. It has been proposed that the Hilo Campus be defunded in the state budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Should the Hilo Campus be defunded, the Youth Challenge Hilo Campus will conduct its final class and will close in June 2021. I implore you to advocate in finding a means to fund this preventative program in the new fiscal budget.

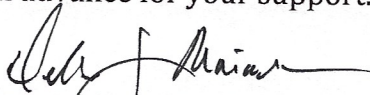
The Youth Challenge Academy Hilo Campus has been servicing At-Promise Youth ages 16-18 years old for the past 10 years and have graduated a total of 1,122 youth. Majority of the Hilo Campus participants are from Hawaii Island, Maui, Molokai, Lanai and Kauai with a minimal amount from Oahu. Ma'am/Sir, the Cadets of the Youth Challenge Hilo Campus are residents of the communities you represent. Your constituents will be directly affected by this proposed closure of the Hilo Campus.

Both Kalaeloa and Hilo campuses provide a quasi-military program grounded in discipline, structure and teamwork. Outer island participants prefer the rural Hilo campus because of its natural and culturally diverse environment. At the Hilo campus, the youth also engage in sustainable outdoor activities that promote cultural connectedness to our mauka and makai healthy lifestyles. These are characteristics that make the Youth Challenge Hilo Campus unique. If the Hilo campus is closed, these characteristics may not easily be replicated at the Kalaeloa Campus on Oahu. The closure of the Hilo campus will leave many young adults without an opportunity for a second chance as they may not want to participate in the program on Oahu.

I fervently request that you and your colleagues ensure the 2022-2023 Fiscal Budget is re-evaluated so the Youth Challenge Hilo Campus can be funded. Its benefits and positive impact among our young adults and our communities will far outweigh the current financial costs. The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Hilo Campus builds productive contributors. Without this preventative program, potential participants may become criminal offenders in our community, especially during these trying situations that occur as a by-product of COVID-19. Hence, they are prime candidates for future incarceration in our prisons which holds a much larger price tag. Please advocate for the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy Hilo Campus so they will be funded in the new fiscal year. Act now on behalf of ALL of the At-Promise Youth in your respective communities; THEY NEED YOUR SUPPORT NOW MORE THAN EVER!

Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,



Debra Ching Maiava, Board Member

CRIME STOPPERS HAWAII

OUR ORGANIZATION ENCOURAGES CITIZENS IN THE COMMUNITY TO VOLUNTEER VITAL INFORMATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO SOLVE / PREVENT CRIMES.

February 22, 2021

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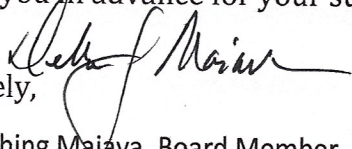
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Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,



Debra Ching Maiava, Board Member

HAWAII ISLAND - GOING HOME HAWAII (GHH)

Our Efforts: To Reintegrate Former Offenders into the Community and into the Workplace

February 22, 2021

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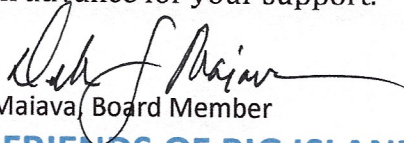
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Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,



Debra Ching Maiava Board Member

FOBIDC - FRIENDS OF BIG ISLAND DRUG COURT

THIS ORGANIZATION ASSISTS INDIVIDUALS TO BREAK AWAY FROM ADDICTION AND ACQUIRE NEW SKILLS TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES. THE PROGRAM PROVIDES ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION, HELPS REDUCE RECIDIVISM, AND SAVES TAX-PAYER DOLLARS.

LATE

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:38:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keku DePonte	WIOA Youth Services Program Maui	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Keku DePonte and I am the WIOA Maui Youth Services Program Manager providing written testimony to support continued funding towards Youth Challenge Hilo Campus. WIOA Youth Program supports Youth between the ages of 14 and 24 towards obtaining livable wage employment. Criteria for enrollment in the WIOA Youth Program to name a few are high school dropouts, formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, and foster youth (or aged-out). Youth Challenge Hilo has been the primary Youth Challenge site that most of the neighbor islands would be referred to for enrollment and has been instrumental as a restorative justice alternative to our Youth that have lived a hard life and have experienced various forms of adverse childhood experiences. I've had the opportunity to enroll transitioning Youth Challenge Participants in maintaining their pathway towards obtaining a high school equivalency or connecting them to Post-Secondary Education or Industry-Recognized Training and see the change of the Youth's perspectives towards wanting to find better employment, get more education, and seek resources to help themselves and their families live a better life.

I urge the Committee to continue supporting the Youth Challenge Hilo Program as an invaluable resource continuing to help our Youth turn over a new leaf in life and in turn give back to the community by pursuing enlistment with the military or returning as structured, more disciplined citizens.

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2021 4:57:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

OPPOSE

While this effort probably would benefit from \$\$, it is way past time to eliminate the military in our schools and around our youth. Our youth have so many other pathways these days to continue to encourage military is not healthy.

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2021 6:01:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carlos A. Santana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is an investment in our future.

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2021 7:58:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support HB835. This program helps at-risk youth to become productive citizens. Even during these budget-constrained times, this program is well worth the cost. Please pass this bill.

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

Secretary, Rainbow Family 808

HB-835-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 8:56:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Lee	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Why is the Hilo Youth Challenge Program shutting down?

Facing the financial crises of 2008/2009, I obtain National Guard approval for a second campus because a Federal match of \$3 was available for every \$1 from the State. We were looking for matching funds even at the dollar for dollar level. Gov Lingle and Gov Abercrombie approved the expansion of Youth Challenge to Hilo and asked if we could increase enrollment. Unfortunately, lack of qualified instructors was the limiting factor. You have much testimony from the Hilo community how this program have turned at risk kids around. We need to save more of these kids, not less.

Thanks,

Robert G.F. Lee

Major General (US Army Retired)

Adjutant General 2003-2011

From: JOSHUA ANTHONY <continentaldividehuts@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 6:34 AM
To: Rep. Gregg Ilagan <repilagan@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Subject: HB835

PO Box 827, Pepe'ekeo, Hi 96783
February 21, 2021

Aloha kakou House Finance Chair Luke and Committee Members:

I'm writing as a kama'aina Democratic political activist and retired DOE HS Counselor to advocate for retaining the Hawaii Army National Guard Youth Challenge program in Hilo intact, and not let it be sacrificed for a minimal savings in order to meet the governor's mandate to reduce operating expenses. When an analysis of what the actual savings to be gained would be to non-reimbursed state funds from eliminating this valuable program, compared to what benefits this model program brings to youth at risk here on island and to our overall community in general, it makes the argument to do this totally specious. My own experience as 'a rascal kid' who straightened up from my formative years in the Marine Corps following high school that imbued the attitude, character, and basic skills that guided me through life and led to a succession of rewarding and successful careers. These included 22 years as a regular Army officer followed by another 14 years "in the trenches" (by choice) as a DOE HS counselor here on the Big Island after taking an early retirement from the military rather than leave Hawaii again. My last 10 years in the DOE were spent at Pahoa HS from 1990-2001 during the time the lava took Kaimu and Kalapana, destroying long standing homesteads, and severely disrupting families, causing turmoil in their home life that often manifested itself with their kids as disruptive behavior in the class rooms, including frequent fights and other anti-social behavior. It took several of our faculty that had military experience to quell the disruptive behavior, and the success that we were able to achieve in turning things around, led to our importing a JROTC program and ultimately led to the creation of the Youth Challenge Academy (YCA) program. Once established, my skeptical DOE colleagues quickly came to realize that the order and discipline this program imbued in our most troubled kids was invaluable as a highly successful alternative school that has made a critical difference in shaping its students' lives and putting them on a path to a successful future- as the past 10 years has clearly demonstrated. Moreover our Hilo-based program typically includes about 50% of the kids from the sprawling Big Island district of Puna, where kids are most under-served and at risk of stumbling into criminal behavior so we as residents in the East Hawaii communities are also beneficiaries of maintaining a YCA here. I urge you to save this valuable program. Malama pono,

R. N. Williams, Lt. Col., USA, ret.
<bobwilliams63@msn.com>
964-5764/238-8498