



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
1010 Richards Street, Suite 314
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

March 21, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Executive Director

SUBJECT: **HCR 72 / HR 73 – URGING THE OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES AND DISTRICT FAMILY COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT TO COLLABORATE IN IDENTIFYING PROCESSES, PROCEDURES, AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO MAXIMIZE REHABILITATION AND MINIMIZE RECIDIVISM FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS.**

Hearing: March 23, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Office of Youth Services (OYS) supports the intent of these house resolutions and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of these resolutions is to urge the Office of Youth Services and First Judicial Circuit Family Court to collaborate on strategies to increase rehabilitation and reduce recidivism of juvenile offenders and consider best practices and lessons from other nations and United States jurisdictions that have successful programs.

The OYS appreciates the Legislature's commitment to providing resources for Hawaii's youth at risk and recognizing the over-representation of Pacific Islander youth in our juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

The OYS and Family Court have collaborated for many years to facilitate juvenile justice reform strategies and implement programs and services that reduce the over-representation of Pacific Islander and other marginalized youth within our juvenile justice system. One of these successful collaborative efforts includes the establishment of the Kawailoa Youth and Family

Wellness Center (HRS 352D-7.5, SLH 2018), with a vision to create a pu'uhonua and support at risk youth through Native Hawaiian cultural practices.

The OYS annually [reports](#) to the Legislature on the programs it currently provides and agency collaboration projects it currently participates in. The OYS will continue to collaborate with the Family Court on how to best meet the needs of our youth to prevent juvenile justice system involvement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-Second State Legislature, 2023 Regular Session

House Committee on Human Services
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

by:

Matthew J. Viola
Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge
Family Court of the First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Resolution No. and Title: House Concurrent Resolution No. 72 / House Resolution No. 73, Urging the Office of Youth Services and District Family Court of the First Judicial Circuit to Collaborate in Identifying Processes, Procedures, and Strategies for Partnering with Community Organizations to Maximize Rehabilitation and Minimize Recidivism for Juvenile Offenders.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of House Concurrent Resolution No. 72 and House Resolution No. 73, but we request amendments.

The resolutions' recognition of the over-representation of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander youth in the juvenile justice system is an important one. It has been an enduring problem that the community and the juvenile justice system have not yet been able to address effectively. The resolutions also correctly point to the need for both the community and the juvenile justice system to learn from and collaborate with community organizations and other nations and jurisdictions that have developed or are developing programs based on the wisdom of indigenous peoples, including the Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islander cultures.



House Concurrent Resolution No.72 / House Resolution No. 73
House Committee on Human Services
Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.
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We also respectfully request the correction of all references to the “District Family Court of the First Judicial Circuit.” Hawai‘i Revised Statutes Section 571-3 establishes the family courts as divisions of the circuit courts of the State. The word “district” should be deleted from both resolutions’ titles; page 1, line 28, and page 2, lines 7 and 13 of HCR No. 72; and, page 1, line 27, and page 2, lines 5 and 11 of HR No. 73.

We respectfully suggest the following amended language for the penultimate paragraph on page 2:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Youth Services and [~~District~~] Family Court of the First Judicial Circuit are requested to jointly submit a report of their findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2024; and”

The Office of Youth Services (OYS) and the Judiciary have been close collaborators over the years, seeking to implement effective rehabilitation services and programs for our youth. While we have not been successful at “cracking” the problem of over-representation, we have been successful at dramatically decreasing the number of youth committed and detained. We look forward to further collaborating with OYS as requested by these resolutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this resolution.



HAWAI`I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Network Membership

Bay Clinic
Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai`i
Big Island Substance Abuse
Council
Bobby Benson Center
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai`i
Collins Consulting, LLC
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC `Ohana, Inc.
Family Programs Hawai`i
Family Support Hawai`i
Friends of the Children's Justice
Center of Maui
Get Ready Hawai`i
Hale Kipa, Inc.
Hale `Opio Kaua`i, Inc.
Hawai`i Children's Action
Network
Hawai`i Health & Harm
Reduction Center
Ho`ola Na Pua
Ho`okele Coalition of Kaua`i
Ka Hale Pomaika`i
Kahi Mohala
Kokua Kalihi Valley
Kaua`i Planning and Action
Alliance
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
PHOCUSED
PFLAG - Kona, Big Island
Planned Parenthood of the
Great Northwest, Hawaii
Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana
Residential Youth Services
& Empowerment (RYSE)
Salvation Army Family
Intervention Services
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community
Center
The Catalyst Group

March 20, 2023

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 72//HR 73 URGING THE OFFICE OF
YOUTH SERVICES AND DISTRICT FAMILY COURT OF THE FIRST
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT TO COLLABORATE IN IDENTIFYING PROCESSES,
PROCEDURES, AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTNERING WITH
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO MAXIMIZE REHABILITATION AND
MINIMIZE RECIDIVISM FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations supports HCR 71/HR 72 Urging the Office of Youth Services and District Family Court of the First Judicial Circuit to Collaborate in Identifying Processes, Procedures, and Strategies for Partnering With Community Organizations to Maximize Rehabilitation and Minimize Recidivism for Juvenile Offenders.

It takes a village to raise a child. The only way we can effectively address the issues that lead to disproportionate engagement with the juvenile justice system is to involve stakeholders at all levels within the government, non-profit, faith-based and business sectors and members of the affected communities and populations.

There are multiple existing initiatives that have already reduced the number of incarcerated youth by 82% since 2010. A local multi-agency partnership has recently received a \$10 million dollar Kellogg Foundation grant to continue efforts to create culturally appropriate prevention and early intervention programs. Hawaii Youth Services Network is currently working with Office of Youth Services and multiple organizations statewide on the start-up of the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Project, established by the legislature in 2022.

We hope that the Hawaii Legislature will continue to provide financial and other support for these important and effective efforts.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director