

**STATE OF HAWAI‘I**  
**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER**

**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,  
State of Hawai‘i to the Senate Committee on Human Services**

January 27, 2022

S.B. No. 2481: RELATING TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS

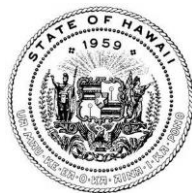
Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender supports the intent of S.B. 2481.

This measure would create a Youth Crisis Center Branch with the Office of Youth Services. Youth at risk and youth in need of services require safe and supportive emergency housing and shelters. These services are desperately needed to help quell the growing needs of our youth who are living in poverty, who are houseless (some who may have become houseless together with their parents and to no fault of their own), and who are in need of mental health services and treatment. Youth at risk and youth in need of services are also at risk of being victims of crime (i.e. property crimes, assaults, sexual assaults, and/or human trafficking). These youth are often preyed upon and become involved in criminal activity.

The creation of a Youth Crisis Center Branch with the Office of Youth Services will help prevent at risk youth from becoming involved in criminal activity and can help the youth in need obtain access to vital services like mental health treatment and substance abuse treatment and access to safe and supportive housing and educational services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

January 27, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

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

SUBJECT: **SB 2481 – RELATING TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS.**

Hearing: Thursday, January 27, 2022, 3:10 p.m.  
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE  
Conference Room 225, State Capitol

**POSITION:** The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports the intent of this measure and respectfully offers comments.

The Coordinator defers to the Office of Youth Services (OYS) regarding the positions and funds needed to implement youth crisis centers and expand services for youth statewide.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to establish the Youth Crisis Center Branch of the Office of Youth Services and the position of Administrator of the Youth Crisis Branch of the Office of Youth Services. The bill also makes an appropriation.

In December 2021, the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) adopted policy priorities for the 2022 legislative session, including a specific focus on supporting programs that assist key homeless sub-populations (e.g., transition-age youth) with transitioning to stable, long-term settings. The purpose of this bill aligns with the 2022 priorities adopted by the HICH.

There are a limited number of emergency shelter beds specifically for youth and young adults not actively engaged with the child welfare or criminal justice systems. In 2021, the Coordinator worked with DHS and youth homeless providers to support passage of [Act 23](#) that expanded the conditions under which unaccompanied minors may consent to no cost

emergency shelter. SB 2481 would further expand access to shelter for youth by enabling the Office of Youth Services to establish crisis centers that provide temporary shelter. However, as currently drafted, the “provision of temporary shelter shall not exceed thirty days per person.”

If this bill moves forward, the Coordinator recommends providing more flexibility regarding the length of stay in the youth crisis centers. If providers enforce the 30-day time limit for shelter due to a lack of available shelter or housing inventory, there may be the unintended consequence of providers discharging youth to homelessness.

To avoid time limits that result in a return to homelessness, the Department of Human Services (DHS) Homeless Programs Office (HPO) includes performance targets in its emergency shelter contracts that track the percentage of individuals who exit in less than 90-days. Notably, the contracts do not establish a maximum time limit for shelter stay. The youth crisis centers could implement a similar model that targets the percentage of youth exiting within 30-days instead of a 30-day maximum. Flexibility on the stay in the shelter would provide the crisis centers more time to locate a suitable placement for these youth.

The Coordinator notes that the HICH prioritized low-income housing development for individuals transitioning from homelessness, including homeless youth. HB 2140 and SB 3108 are administrative bills that facilitate the development of low-income housing options by expanding the Ohana Zones pilot program. The Corporation for Supportive Housing estimates Hawaii needs 42,944 supportive housing units for transition-age youth - including 28,698 for unaccompanied youth ages 18-24; 5,133 for youth exiting the child welfare system; and 9,113 for justice-involved youth.<sup>1</sup>

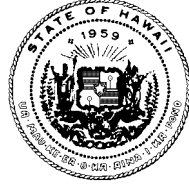
To comprehensively address housing needs statewide, other priorities adopted by the HICH for 2022 include providing shallow rental subsidies and reducing upfront barriers to rental housing by adopting ‘source of income’ discrimination policies and providing landlord incentives. For more information about the 2022 HICH policy priorities, please visit <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/GCH-Legislative-Priorities-2022-Overview.pdf>.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from the Corporation Supportive Housing: <https://www.csh.org/supportive-housing-101/data/>

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

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

January 26, 2022

TO: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2481 – RELATING TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS.**

HEARING: Thursday, January 27, 2022, 3:10 pm  
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this measure and offers comments. Child Welfare Services (CWS) defers to the Office of Youth Services (OYS) and the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) regarding the positions and funds needed to expand the capacity and array of comprehensive services available for vulnerable youth statewide. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not replace or reduce budget priorities identified in the executive budget.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this measure is to establish the youth crisis center branch of the office of youth services, to be headed by the youth crisis center branch administrator. This bill appropriates an amount out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii for State Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and establishes three full-time positions.

DHS agrees that more human resources and funds be directed to OYS to restore funds for community-based services to address the growing needs of Hawaii's youth. The pandemic has significantly impacted youth during vital stages of their development into adulthood. Several studies discuss how "youth disconnection rates" have increased across the country since the pandemic. "Youth disconnection" refers to youth who are neither in school nor

participating in work. Additionally, Hawaii families continue to struggle with the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 and are experiencing higher housing and job instability that limit available resources and increase familial stress.

OYS and HYCF have an array of existing services that may need additional resources to increase capacity. In addition, OYS and HYCF need additional personnel to provide oversight and facilitate communication between family members and community providers.

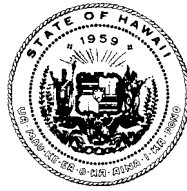
Additionally, per Act 23, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, DHS Child Welfare Services (CWS) Branch is drafting new administrative rules to clarify how shelter providers can provide no-cost shelter for unaccompanied youth. With clarification and potentially more funds, shelter providers will be better able to provide no-cost shelter services to unaccompanied youth and their families.

During the pandemic, DHS, OYS, HYCF, the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, and the Departments of Education and Health have been working collaboratively to address the needs of youth and their families. For example, DOH, HYCF, the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, and DHS worked together to open a small quarantine program at HYCF to support youth who needed quarantine. The program remains open with continued funding from the City & County of Honolulu.

In addition, on a case-by-case basis, multi-agency staff has discussed available resources and ways to maximize existing services and resources for youth in crisis. In one particular case, community members provided the needed support to a youth and his family when no government shelter resources were available, underscoring that more shelter and housing options for youth and families are needed.

Also, in partnership with DOE, DOH, OYS, HYCF, and community providers, DHS proposed administration measures HB2143 and SB3111 Relating to Family Resources Centers to enhance and develop a network of school-based and community-based family resources centers. Family resource centers aim to assist families in finding resources and services to support children's ability to continue in school and prevent involvement with child welfare services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

January 26, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Acting Executive Director

**SUBJECT: SB 2481, RELATING TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS**

Hearing: Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 3:10 p.m.  
State Capitol Room 225 & Videoconference

**OFFICE'S POSITION:** Office of Youth Services (OYS) supports the intent of this measure and respectfully makes recommendations for program and youth success.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the measure is to focus on issues affecting youth at-risk by providing proactive preventative services to youth that mitigate the effects of trauma and abuse and directly meets a multitude of needs through the establishment of youth crisis centers. The bill establishes three full-time positions.

The Office of Youth Services currently has both the operational structure and programs to expand services to at-risk youth. Adding a branch will duplicate the current statutory authority of the Office of Youth Services and may not result in achieving the intended purpose of this bill. Instead of creating an additional organization structure with a similar mandate, OYS respectfully recommends that positions and funding be restored so that services for at-risk youth statewide may be expanded.

Under Hawaii Revised Statutes Section §352D-6 Organizational structure, the Office of Youth Services has the authority to compose divisions necessary to provide: (1) diagnostic evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation, (2) supervision and counseling to youth in shelter, (3) educational, vocational-educational, and other programs, (4) prevention services, (5)

continuous program planning, development and coordination of youth services, and (6) a case management system based on individual needs of youth.

Additionally, the Office of Youth Services, Hawaii Revised Statutes Section §352-2 Contracting with private agencies for residential youth facilities, has the authority to contract with private agencies to provide residential youth facilities. The Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility’s (HYCF) Kawaioloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC) was established within the Office of Youth Services, Hawaii Revised Statutes Section §352D-7.5 Kawaioloa youth and family wellness center, as a central youth services center to provide the services outlined in the proposed bill at page 4, line 4, paragraph (f).

Under this authority, the Office of Youth Services currently has the following contract services available to youth, as it relates specifically to community-based residential housing options: (1) through (10).

Contract Number	Provider	Target Group	Geographic Area	Overall Capacity	Referral Source	OYS Contract Funding
<b>Emergency Shelter: Short-term shelter</b>						
DHS-20-OYS-007	Hale Opio	Male & Female ages 12-18 yrs.	Kauai	9	HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self-referred.	\$20,000-(100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-008	Hale Kipa	Male & Female ages 12-18 yrs.	Oahu	28	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self-referred.	\$130,000-(100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-009	Maui Youth & Family Services	Male & Female ages 12-18 yrs.	Maui	4	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self-referred.	\$30,000-(100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-010	The Salvation Army	Male & Female ages 12-18 yrs.	Hilo, Hawaii	11	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self-referred.	\$60,000-(100% State funds)
Location: HYCF/KYFWC	RYSE	Male & Female ages 13-17 yrs.	Oahu	5	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self-referred.	Private Funds

Location: HYCF/KYFWC	RYSE	Male & Female ages 18-24 yrs.	Oahu	20	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, DHS, Family or Self- referred.	Private Funds
<b>Safe House:</b>						
DHS-19-OYS-938	The Salvation Army	Male, Low-risk adjudicated, 13-17 yrs.	Maui	8	Referred by Family Court, OYS or DHS	\$540,000 - (100% State funds)
DHS-19-OYS-939	The Salvation Army	Male, Low-risk adjudicated, 13-17 yrs.	Kona, Hawaii	8	Referred by Family Court, OYS or DHS	\$540,000 - (100% State Funds)
DHS-19-OYS-940	Partners in Development Foundation	Male, Low-risk adjudicated, 13-17 yrs.	Oahu	12	Referred by Family Court, OYS or DHS	\$832,000- (100% State funds)
DHS-21-OYS-104	The Salvation Army	Female, Low-risk adjudicated, 13-17 yrs.	Hilo, Hawaii	6	Referred by Family Court or OYS	\$420,000 - (100% State funds)
<b>Residential Intensive Independent Living Programs: Long-term community-based</b>						
DHS-20-OYS-011	Hale Opio	Male & Female 17-22 yrs.	Kauai	9	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$120,000- (100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-012	Catholic Charities	Male & Female 17-22 yrs.	Oahu	6	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$200,000- (100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-013	Catholic Charities	Male & Female 17-22 yrs.	Hilo, Hawaii	2	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$20,000- (100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-014	Maui Youth & Family Services	Male & Female 10-20 yrs.	Maui	6	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$90,000- (100% Federal funds)
<b>Residential Independent Living Programs: Long-term shelter</b>						
DHS-20-OYS-015	Hale Kipa	Male 17-22 yrs.	Oahu	4	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$95,000- (100% Federal funds)
DHS-20-OYS-017	The Salvation Army	Male 17.5-22 yrs.	Hilo, Hawaii	2	Referred by HYCF, County Police, Family Court, or DHS.	\$60,000-(100% Federal funds)



In addition to the community-based residential contract services, the Office of Youth Services contracts for a variety of front-end prevention, diversion, and intervention services that aim at decreasing risk and increasing protective factors in order to move youth away from the juvenile justice system. These include, but are not limited to:

PROGRAM AREA (# CONTRACTS)	SERVICE AREA	FY21 YOUTH SERVED	ANNUAL BUDGET	DESCRIPTION
POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (11)	HAWAII, KAUAI, MAUI AND OAHU	1000	\$405,000	PROVIDES POSITIVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS EDUCATION AND ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH AT HIGH RISK FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
PROJECT-BASED CULTURAL (11)	HAWAII, KAUAI, MAUI AND OAHU	1800	\$992,000	PROMOTES POSITIVE SENSE OF SELF AND IDENTITY TO INCREASE RESILIENCY AND DECREASE RISKY BEHAVIORS
OUTREACH & ADVOCACY (5)	HAWAII, KAUAI, MAUI AND OAHU	90	\$405,000	ENGAGES AT-RISK YOUTH AND FAMILIES, CREATES A FAMILY-DRIVEN SERVICE PLAN AND CASE MANAGEMENT
TRUANCY PREVENTION (6)	HAWAII, KAUAI, MAUI AND OAHU	230	\$405,000	IN COLLABORATION WITH DOE, PROVIDES SERVICES TO ENHANCE SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES
INTENSIVE MONITORING (4)	HAWAII, MAUI AND OAHU	135	\$1,125,000	PROVIDES INTENSIVE SUPERVISION FOR YOUTH ON PROBATION, ENGAGES WHOLE FAMILY.
JUVENILE ASSESSMENT CENTERS (4) (DIVERSION)	HAWAII AND OAHU	474	\$1,106,500	REDIRECT STATUS OFFENSE AND 1ST TIME MISDEMEANOR YOUTH AWAY FROM THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
WRAPAROUND (1)	OAHU	28 Families	\$600,000	JUVENILE JUSTICE INVOLVED YOUTH. PROVIDES INTENSIVE MULTI-AGENCY INTENSIVE SERVICES
PARENT PARTNERSHIPS (1)	STATEWIDE	471 Families	\$278,000	JUVENILE JUSTICE INVOLVED YOUTH. PROVIDES PEER-PARENT SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

The Kawaiiloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC), established by Act 208 in 2018, continues to move towards transforming juvenile justice in Hawaii from a punitive system

to one that heals youth of the trauma and abuse they often suffer. Over the past several years, KYFWC has developed a campus with the following operating programs:

KAWAIILOA YOUTH & FAMILY CENTER PROGRAMS	
Hale Lanipolua (Hale Kipa)	CSEC Residential Assessment Center
Hale Olomana (DOE)	Education for At-Risk Youth
Hale Mololani (Kinai Eha)	Vocational Program 15-25 year olds
Hale Apuakea (RYSE)	Homeless Shelter 13-24 year olds

Over the years, the Office of Youth Services (HMS 501) has experienced a reduction in funding and positions. Funding has also decreased from \$6.6 million in FY2017 to \$5.8 million in FY21 to an estimated \$5.7 million for FY22. In FY 2008-2009, OYS had 24 permanent and 3 temporary positions, which was cut to 12 permanent positions by FY2012. Currently, OYS has 15 permanent and 0.5 temporary positions, of which 3 permanent and the 0.5 temporary positions are dedicated to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention federal grant program and one permanent position coordinating the Hawaii State Youth Commission. This results in four permanent Program Specialists procuring and managing approximately 80 program service contracts. Below are positions abolished since FY2008.

Position Title	Salary
Accountant IV	SR22
Clerical Supervisor II	SR11
Administrative Tech Svcs Ofcr	SRNA
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt IV	SR22
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt IV	SR22
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt IV	SR22
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt IV	SR22
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt V	SR24
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt V	SR24
Children & Yuth Prgm Spclt V	SR24
Office Assistant III	SR08
Account clerk III	SR11

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

The Honorable Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

January 26, 2022

Page **6** of **6**

OYS and HYCF would appreciate additional funding and positions in addition to budget requests identified in the executive budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

**LATE**

**SB-2481**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 5:36:15 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Elladine U.A.Olevao	Testifying for Child Welfare Services	Comments	No

Comments:

DHS submitted written testimony and I will be testifying on behalf of DHS at the hearing and will be available for questions.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2481

**January 27, 2022**  
**3:10 p.m.**  
**Room 225 & Videoconference**

RELATING TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2481 amends Chapter 352D, HRS, to: 1) establish the Youth Crisis Center Branch (YCCB) within the Office of Youth Services (OYS); 2) set the objectives of YCCB; 3) provide authority to YCCB to establish regional youth crisis centers and to provide services and programs to youth at risk; 4) authorize the Governor to appoint the YCCB administrator without regard to Chapter 76, HRS; 5) set annual reporting requirements for the administrator; 6) authorize the administrator to appoint staff without regard to Chapter 76, HRS; and 7) add new definitions for "administrator" and "branch." The bill also appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 23 to OYS to establish YCCB and authorizes 3.00 full-time equivalents to establish the administrator position and two program specialist positions.

B&F notes that the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

# 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](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters 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's Justice Center of Maui

Get Ready Hawai'i

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

January 24, 2022

To: Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Human Services

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2481 RELATED TO YOUTH CRISIS CENTERS

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, support SB 2481 Related to Youth Crisis Centers..

Youth are the most vulnerable and often overlooked segment of our homeless population. They are children who have not yet completed their education, lack employment experience and skills, and need to learn the skills for adult living.

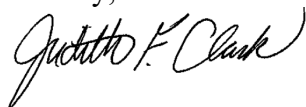
Since 1981, Hawaii Youth Services Network has coordinated a statewide partnership to address youth homelessness. Here are some of the facts about Hawaii's homeless youth.

- The average age when youth first become homeless is 14.
- More than 3/4 have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused.
- 41% were forced to leave home by their families.
- Nine out of ten (90%) have slept outdoors in a park, beach, sidewalk or car.
- Two-fifths have been beaten or assaulted while on the streets.

Additional resources for shelter for the homeless and services for at-risk youth are much needed.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director

**OPPORTUNITY  
YOUTH  
ACTION HUI**

27 January 2022

Senate Committee on Human Services

Hearing Time: 03:10 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 225 & Virtual

Re: SB 2481, Relating to Youth Crisis Centers

Aloha mai e Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Ihara and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **strong support** of SB 2481, relating to youth crisis centers. This measure would establish the Youth Crisis Center Branch of the Office of Youth Services and the position of Administrator of the Youth Crisis Branch of the Office of Youth Services.

This bill would address and offer aid to the youth of Hawai'i who struggle with mental health and abuse. Research shows that Native Hawaiians suffer from alarming rates of negative mental health associated risk factors and outcomes. Youth suicide ideation, attempt and death rates are highest among Native Hawaiians. Furthermore, Native Hawaiian keiki are over-represented as victims of abuse and neglect (OHA). We believe this measure is a pivotal step in the effort to advance mental health and abuse victim support for Native Hawaiian youth.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hui is a collaboration of organizations and individual committed to reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system for youth; promoting equity in the justice system; and improving and increasing resources to address adolescent and young adult mental health needs.

We seek to improve the continuity of programs and services for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult status; eliminate youth houselessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally-informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.

**Please support SB 2481.**



**SB-2481**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 10:03:20 AM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Ann S. Yabusaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB 2481. As a psychologist, I encounter youth in need of emergency shelter. A coordinated effort of providing temporary shelter to youth with an ability to assess the needs and bring resources to the youth and their family is sorely needed.

**SB-2481**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:24:50 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ashley Barley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 26, 2022

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura

415 S Beretania St.

Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator San Buenaventura,

My name is Ashley Barley and I am a resident of O’ahu and a medical student at the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

I wanted to provide my support for a bill (**SB 2481**) that involves establishing a Youth Crisis Center Branch of the Office of Youth Services, the position of Administrator for the previously mentioned branch, and allocating money for the crisis centers and the departments that oversee them.

Personally, I have worked with disadvantaged and at-risk communities for years now, and intend to continue this work as a future physician. Recently, I became apart of a community health group called “HYPE” which advocates for homeless youth and provides them with mentorship opportunities with the intent of empowering them to achieve higher education. A big theme of HYPE is the social and behavioral impacts that poverty has on homeless youth, along with the long-term repercussions that it can have on development. Homeless and at-risk youth populations may be exposed to more dangerous and traumatic experiences and therefore, should have access to state services and resources that can help them in the event of a crisis.

If this bill passes, there would be more money, resources, and attention towards providing these vulnerable populations with social programs that address behavioral health, substance abuse,

family counseling, etc. For the homeless and at-risk youth populations, the passing of this bill will not only attend to but also prevent many of the traumatic social issues and experiences that they are often exposed to.

I appreciate your time and I hope that you consider this testimony when overseeing the hearings for this bill.

Sincerely,

Ashley Barley

**SB-2481**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 7:26:58 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ashley Barley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

January 26, 2022

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura

415 S Beretania St.

Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator San Buenaventura,

My name is Ashley Barley and I am a resident of O’ahu and a medical student at the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

I wanted to provide my support for a bill (**SB 2481**) that involves establishing a Youth Crisis Center Branch of the Office of Youth Services, the position of Administrator for the previously mentioned branch, and allocating money for the crisis centers and the departments that oversee them.

Personally, I have worked with disadvantaged and at-risk communities for years now, and intend to continue this work as a future physician. Recently, I became apart of a community health group called “HYPE” which advocates for homeless youth and provides them with mentorship opportunities with the intent of empowering them to achieve higher education. A big theme of HYPE is the social and behavioral impacts that poverty has on homeless youth, along with the long-term repercussions that it can have on development. Homeless and at-risk youth populations may be exposed to more dangerous and traumatic experiences and therefore, should have access to state services and resources that can help them in the event of a crisis.

If this bill passes, there would be more money, resources, and attention towards providing these vulnerable populations with social programs that address behavioral health, substance abuse,

family counseling, etc. For the homeless and at-risk youth populations, the passing of this bill will not only attend to but also prevent many of the traumatic social issues and experiences that they are often exposed to.

I appreciate your time and I hope that you consider this testimony when overseeing the hearings for this bill.

Sincerely,

Ashley Barley