



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 20, 2022

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Coleen Momohara, Interim Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 2482 – RELATING TO WELLNESS
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 24, 2022
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Videoconference

Bill Description: Establishes a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor. Authorizes the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force. Appropriates moneys. Sunsets on an unspecified date.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

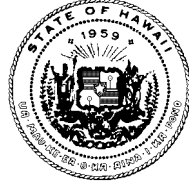
Aloha. I am Coleen Momohara, Interim Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports S.B. No. 2482 and defers to the Department of Health (DOH).

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences that occur during childhood and include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; chronic neglect; caregiver and household substance abuse; incarceration of a household member; domestic violence; and burdens of economic hardship. ACEs impact lifelong health and learning opportunities and can contribute to toxic stress for young children, severely impacting brain development, learning, and overall well-being. Research has identified critical factors that predispose young children to positive outcomes in the face of such adversities and the capabilities that promote the development of resilience. Integrating strategies that enhance the capacities of children and adults are further supported when embedded within efforts that collectively work towards lowering the burden of stress on families.

EOEL is a member of the trauma informed care taskforce, established through Act 209, SLH 2021. As such, we support the intent of this bill and look forward to working with other workforce members to promote wellness and resiliency for Hawaii's youngest children and their families. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

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

February 22, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2482 – RELATING TO WELLNESS.**

Hearing: February 24, 2022, 10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: The purpose of this bill is to establish a temporary Office of Wellness and Resiliency within the Office of the Governor, authorizes the office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force.

Act 209, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, established a Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Task Force within the Department of Health to create recommendations on how the State could become trauma-informed. Embedding trauma-informed care (TIC) response throughout government is necessary to bolster resilience and well-being, particularly now as we continue to see the pandemic's lasting mental, physical, and social-emotional impacts.

The TIC task force is tasked with: creating and adopting a statewide framework for trauma-informed and responsive practice; identifying best practices, including those from native Hawaiian cultural practices with respect to children and youth who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing trauma and their families; providing a trauma-informed care

inventory and assessment of public and private agencies and departments; and identifying various cultural practices that build wellness and resilience in communities.

This work must be collaborative, cross-sector, and multigenerational. Most notably, it requires vested interest and commitment from all branches of government, private sector stakeholders, and community members to create and sustain needed change. Creating an Office on Wellness and Resiliency will assist with creating and embedding TIC across State government and could have a positive lifetime impact on Hawaii's residents and future generations.

The shift to become a TIC State is necessary. National reports document the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income families, children, and youth.¹ When schools and child care facilities closed, women with less than college degrees, especially mothers with children under five, left the workforce to provide child care, reducing family resources and increasing household stress. The impacts are startling for youth and young adults: global and national reports of increased anxiety and depression amongst youth, in the U.S., increased emergency department visits for pediatric mental health patients,² and continuing decreases in college enrollment, especially in public colleges and universities, since the fall of 2019.³ In addition, due to school closures, shift to distance learning, youth social and emotional development are not being met during the critical child and adolescent development phases in addition to unmet academic needs.

COVID-19 amplified the need for coordinated service delivery so residents could access benefits and services quickly and efficiently, and government processes did not create further stress and anxiety. While many new relationships and processes developed during the pandemic, departments need additional resources to lead and continue to make needed changes so that our systems and processes provide services mindful of "what happened" to a

¹ See, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/low-income-covid-19-impacts.pdf>

² See, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2779380>

³ See, <https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/>

person. Negative and traumatizing experiences trying to access government services leads to a loss of faith in government and less citizen engagement.⁴

As part of the Wellness and Resiliency Office, DHS emphasizes the need to include employee mental health as part of the trauma-informed strategies. In a department like the DHS, the human services workforce has experienced significant and long-lasting stressors during the pandemic. The number of residents that need assistance for their basic needs dramatically increased and remains at all-time highs. COVID-19 highlighted a need to create an open and safe space for employees to address their anxieties, stresses, and grief while balancing the numerous programmatic changes, new technology, and changed working conditions while managing their family needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

⁴ Watch, Jamila Michener, Ph.D., Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid Federalism and Unequal Politics, September 19, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gye6y1U3GUJ>.

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 8:27:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Noel Richardson	Testifying for Hawaii DOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am the principal of Waimanalo Elementary and Intermediate School and I'm proud to support **SB2482**.

An Office of Wellness and Resilience is more needed than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many of our community members. Kids have lost parents and grandparents, have faced stressors due to financial hardship at home, and have become deeply disengaged from their schools, peers, and teachers. Of course, children faced abuse and trauma even before the pandemic, and these cycles can be incredibly difficult to break.

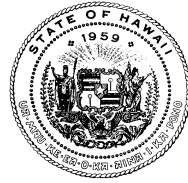
This important bill would bring much-needed coherence and leadership to a critical cross-sector issue that impacts Hawaii at many levels: trauma. Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector.

This work can't wait, and nothing less than the health and sustainability of our Hawaii community depends on it.

Mahalo,

Noel Richardson

Principal



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2482
RELATING TO WELLNESS**

SENATOR DONAVAN DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATOR GILBERT KEITH-AGARAN, VICE CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: 2/24/2022

Room Number: VIA

VIDEOCONFERENCE

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health **supports** this bill provided that its passage
2 does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Governor's Executive Budget.

3 **Department Testimony:** Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill.
4 Complex and prolonged trauma can have overwhelming effects on a person's physical, mental
5 and behavioral health outcomes throughout their lifespan. Research on adverse childhood events
6 known as ACEs, beginning in the late '90s, first brought the impact of early childhood trauma
7 into public awareness. This resulted in more attention to support services needed by young
8 children who have experienced traumatic events.

9 The good news is, more and more, promising practices are emerging that can shield children,
10 adults and families from the effects of adverse experiences and to prevent the worst of
11 consequences. And in Hawai'i, we have an incredible foundation of cultural wisdom and
12 practices to build upon that connect families back to themselves and their culture, which we
13 already know positively impacts their lives and communities. Culture is health.

14 While there have been siloed efforts on behalf of state agencies and departments to train up the
15 family-serving workforce in trauma-informed care, the Trauma-Informed Task Force is the first
16 step we have taken as a state in our mission to make our trauma work more collaborative and
17 strategic. We have exceptional challenges in the islands when it comes to trauma-informed care
18 because many of our populations suffer from complex trauma involving intergenerational

1 historical, cultural and/or racial trauma. This also presents an exceptional opportunity. We can
2 lead the nation, as well as those serving Indigenous populations, in sharing our mana‘o and what
3 we learn as the proposed Office of Wellness and Resilience implements the task force’s
4 framework. The ability for our workforce to provide the services children, youth and families
5 deserve has been severely hindered by the collective trauma of the pandemic and its effects. As
6 just one example, we experienced a whopping 25% increase in teachers leaving our public
7 schools during the 2020-2021 over the previous school year, and we were already in a teacher
8 shortage.

9 As a semi-autonomous unit, the Office of Wellness and Resilience would be able to more
10 quickly respond to the ever-changing needs of our communities, both now and into the future, as
11 we anticipate upcoming challenges such as new pandemics, immigration and the effects of
12 climate change. We urge you to create the Office of Wellness and Resilience to provide this
13 preventive and trauma-responsive care to Hawai‘i’s children and families, and stand in strong
14 support of this bill to create it.

15 **Offered Amendments for SB2482:** The Department of Health respectfully requests the Executive
16 Director possess the necessary qualifications to lead this office, and are willing to assist the committee in
17 determining those pre-requisites.

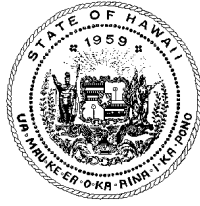
18 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure impacts the priorities identified in the Governor’s Executive Budget
19 Request for the Department of Health’s appropriations and personnel priorities.

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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
1177 Alakea Street, 6th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

MAX N. OTANI
DIRECTOR

Maria C. Cook
Deputy Director
Administration

Tommy Johnson
Deputy Director
Corrections

Jordan Lowe
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2482
RELATING TO WELLNESS.**

by

Max N. Otani, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Friday, February 24, 2022; 10:00 a.m.
CR 211 and Via Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports Senate Bill (SB) 2482, which seeks to establish a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor, authorizes the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force, and appropriates an unspecified amount of funding to accomplish the purposes of the bill.

PSD has been a participating member of the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force since it was established in 2021 by Act 209, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021. The Task Force has focused on various efforts, including creating and adopting a statewide framework for trauma-informed and responsive practices, identifying best practices, and identifying cultural practices to help build wellness and resilience.

Over the years, the Department has experienced increasing rates of incarceration among people with substance use disorders and mental illnesses. This experience has helped to inform the measure's impetus to address the underlying trauma that can have lifelong consequences, particularly resulting in the preventable occupation of our jails and prisons. In addition, SB 2482 meaningfully provides an opportunity to coordinate our efforts to improve wellness and resilience in a systemic fashion between state departments and the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2482.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

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 WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2482

**February 24, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Room 211 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO WELLNESS

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

Senate Bill No. 2482 amends Chapter 27, HRS, and does the following:

- 1) establish a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience (Office) as a semi-autonomous authority within the Office of the Governor (GOV);
- 2) authorize the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force established pursuant to Act 209, SLH 2021;
- 3) require the Office to submit an annual report to the Legislature that contains a summary of activities during the preceding year;
- 4) appropriate an unspecified amount of general revenues to GOV for FY 23 for the establishment and operations of the Office; and
- 5) provide an unspecified sunset date for the bill.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, 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

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

February 20, 2022

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2482 RELATING TO WELLNESS

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, strongly supports SB 2482 Relating to Wellness.

I serve as the non-profit representative on the Hawaii Trauma-Informed Care Task Force.

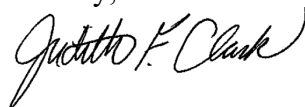
Formed in response to legislation passed by this body in 2021, the Task Force is currently collecting data on models of cross-agency collaboration to provide trauma-informed services. We recognize the need address trauma-related needs in ways that respect and honor cultural diversity. We are identifying assessment tools and government, non-profit, and faith-based providers can use to identify ways they can make their programs and services more trauma-informed. And we are working on plans to help organizations use those tools.

We know that the effort to help children and families avoid adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and provide comprehensive, coordinated, culturally sensitive services to survivors of trauma will require a long-term commitment as well as human and fiscal resources.

The proposed office of wellness and resilience is needed to help our children grow up safe, healthy, and ready to succeed.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



Hawaii
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health

Re: **SB 2482-relating to wellness**
10:00 AM, February 24, 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!, we are writing to support in support SB 2482, relating to wellness.

The importance and value of trauma-informed care is recognized at both the national and state level. Over 26 states have passed legislation to address childhood trauma, child adversity, toxic stress or adverse childhood experiences¹. Understanding adverse childhood experiences and trauma effect a person and how they in turn effect the community and state can help inform changes needed to create a more responsive, cost-effective system.

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. SDOH are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems. The COVID-19 pandemic has showcased the resilience of the State's communities, but it also shows gaps in how social services and health care needs are addressed for different communities.

Cultural practices that provide asset-based approaches involving the stabilizing influence of an unrelated adult can provide a child with the resilience needed to mitigate a high number of adverse childhood experiences.

An established Office of Wellness will be ready to implement the recommendations of the statewide Trauma Informed Care Taskforce. For these reasons, **HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.**

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director Early Learning and Healthy Policy

¹ National Conference of State Legislatures, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/reducing-the-effects-of-adverse-childhood-experiences.aspx>
850 Richards Street, Suite 201 • Honolulu, HI 96813 • 808-531-5502 www.hawaii-can.org • info@hawaii-can.org

Date: February 22, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
And members of the Committee

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: **Support for SB2482**, Relating to Wellness

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector partnership designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners are working to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS supports passage of SB2482 which would establish an Office of Wellness and Resilience in order to coordinate a statewide response to the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide a strong buffer against the trauma and toxic stress experienced by our families.

A half century of careful research shows that there is a direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative outcomes later in life, including chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the justice system, and family violence. We do not yet know the degree to which pandemic-related isolation and persistent stress will affect the brain architecture of our young keiki. We already know that many children in families facing financial hardship are exhibiting signs of emotional distress.

There is urgent need to take action. The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:

- Since the start of the pandemic, Hawai'i Department of Health Early Intervention Services report a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development
- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents
- 41% of Hawaii residents reported having suicidal thoughts on a recent online depression screening

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of this important measure.



Maui Family Support Services, Inc.

Strengthening Children and Families in Maui County since 1980!

Chief Executive Officer:
Edeluisa Bagoio-Larena

Board of Directors:

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Giulietta Swenson, PsyD

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Michael E. Connor, PhD

Administrative Office & Early Head Start Kupukupu Child Development Center:
1844 Wili Pa Loop
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 242-0900 Fax: (808) 249-2800

Quality Care for Hawaiian Keiki Office:
95 Mahalani Street Suite 27
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 793-2816 Fax: (808) 868-4113

EHS Child Development Center: - Lahaina
15 Ipu Aumakua Lane
Lahaina, HI 96761
Phone: (808) 661-1170 Fax: (808) 661-1198

EHS Child Development Center: - Waiale
67 Waiale Road
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 242-7849

Hale Hi'ipoi - Hana Infant and Toddler Center:
4111 Hana Hwy/P.O. Box 938
Hana, HI 96713
Phone: (808) 248-7609

Maui County Early Childhood Resource Center:
2099 Wells Street
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 242-1608 Fax: (808) 270-5556

Moloka'i Office:
107 B Ala Malama Ave./P.O. Box 1658
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Phone: (808) 553-5114 Fax: (808) 553-8115

Lana'i Office:
730 Lana'i Ave. #109
P.O. Box 631043
Lana'i City, HI 96763
Phone: (808) 565-7484 Fax: (808) 565-7484*15

February 22, 2022

Re: Testimony In Support of SB 2482

I am respectfully submitting this testimony in support SB2482, relating to wellness.

I believe Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress. The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels: Since the pandemic started, State of Hawai'i Early Intervention Services has seen a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development. Children under age six have a similar rate of mental illness as older children and youth. Seventy-five percent of adults with serious mental illness are parents. Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is to help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawaii's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. I urge you to move this bill onward.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

E. Bagoio-Larena
Edeluisa Bagoio-Larena, MA
317A2DC635B04B0...
Chief Executive Officer





Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: February 24, 2022

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference

TESTIMONY

By Kau‘i Burgess

Director of Community & Government Relations

RE: **SB 2482 - Relating to Wellness**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalu Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalu Keith-Agaran, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike, aloha!

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS SB 2482**, which establishes a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor to address related issues and implement solutions, including those identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force.

Hānai i ke keiki, ola ka lāhui – When the child is nurtured, the people thrive. Kamehameha Schools believes that when we all focus on the well-being of our keiki, everyone will thrive.

The environment that surrounds our keiki impacts their ability to realize their potential in education and life. Unfortunately, the environment of many Native Hawaiian keiki places them disproportionately at risk to suffer from social, cultural, ‘āina and historical trauma, often carried from one generation to the next. Trauma-informed care aims to improve children’s environments and transform sources of distress to anchors of resilience as a key strategy to better life outcomes.

As a member of the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force, we believe that Native Hawaiian culture-based approaches will serve as prudent and sensible solutions, along with other recommendations of the Task Force, and will positively influence the support and development of all vulnerable youth, resulting in greater educational, social, health and overall life outcomes.

We further believe that the establishment of a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience, as soon as possible, is critical in ensuring that recommendations from the Trauma Informed Care Task Force, including Native Hawaiian-culture based solutions, are top of mind and implemented to ensure our keiki are given the best chance of moving from trauma to resilience with the urgency it deserves.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to **pass SB 2482**.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

February 24, 2022

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports SB2482, which establishes a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor; authorizes the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force; and appropriates moneys.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

This important bill would bring much-needed coherence and leadership to a critical cross-sector issue that impacts Hawaii at many levels: trauma. An Office of Wellness and Resilience is more needed than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many of our community members. Kids have lost parents and grandparents, have faced stressors due to financial hardship at home, and have become deeply disengaged from their schools, peers, and teachers. Of course, children faced abuse and trauma even before the pandemic, and these cycles can be incredibly difficult to break.

Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector. While there is tremendous work happening at

the community level, this Office of Wellness and Resilience would connect the dots between these place-based innovations, policy barriers and opportunities, and help braid funding streams.

This work can't wait, and nothing less than the health and sustainability of our Hawaii community depends on it.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S. C.Keith-Agaran Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee On Ways and Means

From: Robert G. Peters, Chair
Early Learning Board

Subject: **Measure:** SB 2482, Relating to Wellness
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 24, 2022
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Location: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Description: Establishes a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor. Authorizes the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force. Appropriates moneys. Sunsets on an unspecified date.

Early Learning Board Position: Support the Intent

Aloha. I am Robert G. Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Board (ELB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony about SB 2482 on behalf of the ELB.

Through Act 202, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, ELB transitioned from an advisory to a governing board for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and is charged with formulating statewide policy relating to early learning. The ELB is composed of 17 representatives from across the early childhood field, in both the public and private sectors.

Research has concluded that there is a direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Additionally, children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school. Poor mental health affects entire families; if it is addressed, it will reduce overall family stress and increase wellbeing. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help coordinate social services and allow for more resources to flow into Hawaii for needed resources and especially support our children who have experienced adversity.

In 2018, the ELB and the EOEL (Executive Office on Early Learning) completed a multi-stakeholder planning process resulting in the production of the Hawaii Early Childhood State Plan, 2019 – 2024, which was signed by the Governor and affected State Department Heads. The Plan posits that children's health and their families' wellbeing are foundational for optimal child development and learning. The creation of an Office of Wellness and Resilience would enhance the opportunity to build that foundation for Hawaii's children. Our recent experience of the impact of the Pandemic on young children and families reinforced the need for offering trauma-informed care services in our communities, something an Office of Wellness and Resilience could provide.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer supportive testimony of SB 2482.



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

To: SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran , Vice Chair
And Members of the WAM Committee

From: Micah Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President - Hawai'i Community Foundation

Re: Testimony in Support of SB2482 Relating to Wellness
Thursday, February 24, 2022, 10:00 A.M.

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) strongly supports Senate Bill 2482 (SB2482). SB 2482 will help create a dynamic, coordinated effort across public agencies and community organizations to address early adversity, trauma and toxic stress—from keiki to kupuna. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has added stress to Hawai'i's families. Nonprofit social service, health, and early childhood providers have been shouldering much of the burden to support families. Now is the opportunity to step up support and increase collaboration to ensure that all families have access to the support they need. The proposed Office of Wellness and Resilience is an important part of supporting families with better access to preventative supports and needed services across the state.

At the Hawaii Community Foundation, our CHANGE Framework focuses on six sectors of the community. The "H" sector is Health and Wellness, and HCF's [Promising Minds](#) Initiative focused on keiki ages 0-5 and their families. The outcomes of SB2482 strongly align with this initiative work and brings needed focus and resources for preventative mental health efforts in our community.

In 2019, HCF launched Promising Minds, a three-year initiative dedicated to improving early childhood behavioral health in Hawai'i by investing in the future of our keiki, especially those at-risk of trauma, abuse and neglect, or dealing with their aftereffects. Promising Minds helps to strengthen early relationships and healthy development to set the foundations for long-term benefits to individual children, parents and caregivers. Over the last three years Promising Minds has worked with over 100 early childhood providers and nearly 50 health care professionals/clinicians. The collective work has identified some key learnings:

- Practitioners from a variety of early childhood settings (child care, home visiting, early intervention, early Head Start) recognized the need for more practitioners within the system that are trained or specialize in trauma-informed care.

*Relating to addressing vicarious trauma of staff: "...so many of our staff are just overwhelmed and at their wit's end but just giving their all to the families they serve and not having enough to give to their families in their home. Then the impacts on their children become negative. So we're really trying to help them find that balance so that that doesn't become an issue."
– Hawai'i early childhood provider*

"I think it's also important to talk a little bit about historical trauma, because it's important for [service providers and to have a common ground and to understand that a lot of Pacific, Micronesian, Islanders all share this history. Oftentimes, when we show them the commonality they have or even just the joys in their culture that they share, the singing, the dancing, when we start off with something that bridges them together first, it helps and allows them to be open and understanding that we are the same and we are here for the same reason, because our people have faced oppression and historical trauma. We are here to learn to heal together."

- Practitioners shared that an increase in trained, trauma-informed care professionals would ensure that children and families do not get lost when navigating systems.

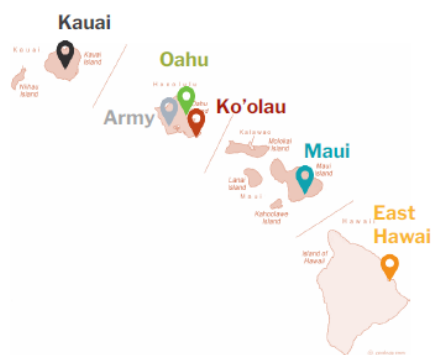
"We need more trauma-informed care resources like people who are specialized in that so when you have a really severe case you have somewhere to go." – Hawai'i early childhood provider

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, early childhood mental health was already a silent crisis—one in six U.S. children ages 2 to 8 years-old (17.4%) had a diagnosed mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder.¹ Research has concluded the direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school.

We believe this bill is a way to address the urgent needs caused by trauma and toxic stress that increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill creates a way to strengthen the supports available to families and make smart system improvements. It is accelerant for the change we are trying to make around health and wellbeing in Hawai'i.

Most early childhood providers that were Promising Minds participants work with families and children that have experienced exposure to domestic violence and emotional abuse.

The prevalence of certain types of trauma vary by region.



*"Families don't always realize the traumatic events can be anything. Depending on the community and the demographics, families do not realize that it is trauma."
- Promising Minds Grantee*

Trauma	Overall
Exposure to domestic violence	51.9%
Emotional abuse*	48.1%
Homelessness***	44.4%
Historical Trauma**	42.6%
Neglect*	42.6%
Death or displacement of a family member	40.7%
Neighborhood violence	44%
Physical abuse or assault	37%
Sexual abuse	29.6%
Unsure	29.6%
Neighborhood violence	27.8%
Serious illness	27.8%
Serious accident	25.9%
Other**	18.5%

Based on survey data (n=54)

¹ Centers for Disease Control, Children's Mental Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>



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February 22, 2022

To: Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: Bobbie-Jo Moniz-Tadeo, Managing Director of Clinical Services
Re: SUPPORT – S.B.2482 (Office of Wellness & Resilience)
Hearing Date/Time/Location: 2/24/2022 at 10:00am, Video Conference

Imua Family Services strongly supports SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is to help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for families; everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawai'i's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

Imua Family Services, established in 1947, is a non-profit organization that services Maui County and provides programming that exemplifies its mission to provide comprehensive early childhood development services to children and their families with the support and resources needed to achieve their full potential in life. Our community based programs are comprehensive, family-centered, culturally appropriate, and focuses on all aspects of the child/family.

As an Infant & Early Childhood Service provider, we work with many families in need of support with mental health. Research has concluded the direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Additionally, children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school. Poor mental health affects entire families; if it is addressed, it will reduce overall family stress and increase wellbeing.

Imua Family Services believes Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families and offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress. **The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:**

- Since the pandemic started, State of Hawai'i Early Intervention Services has seen a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development
- Children under age six have a similar rate of mental illness as older children and youth
- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents
- Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

Thank you for allowing Imua Family Services the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. We urge you to move this bill onward.



Date: 23 February 2022

To: Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: The Association for Infant Mental Health in Hawaii, dba AIMH HI

RE: Support for SB2482, Relating to Wellness

Dear Chairperson Dela Cruz and Committee Members,

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawai'i's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

As someone who has worked in the field of human services here in Hawaii for thirty-five years we have too often found ourselves in the position of not being able to qualify for federally funded grants because we have not had a coordinated data base across departments. There are many collaborative efforts across both government and non-government agencies that are hampered in their ability to track outcomes of their work across departments and divisions of departments. As well as make the case for needed services. The Office of Wellness and Resilience will address this gap.

Research has concluded the direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Additionally, children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school. Poor mental health affects entire families; if it is addressed, it will reduce overall family stress and increase wellbeing.

I believe Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional



distress. **The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:**

- Since the pandemic started, State of Hawai'i Early Intervention Services has seen a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development
- Children under age six have a similar rate of mental illness as older children and youth
- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents
- Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. I urge you to move this bill onward.

Sincerely,
JoAnn Farnsworth, M.S., IMH-E®
Association for Infant Mental Health in Hawaii, President
email: joann@AIMHHI.org
website: AIMHHI.org

Early relational health is the foundation of all systems work with young children and their families

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 9:52:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
jayne arasaki	Testifying for Rainbow Schools	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is to help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawaii's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

Research has concluded the direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Additionally, children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school. Poor mental health affects entire families; if it is addressed, it will reduce overall family stress and increase wellbeing.

I believe Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress. **The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:**

- Since the pandemic started, State of Hawai'i Early Intervention Services has seen a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development
- Children under age six have a similar rate of mental illness as older children and youth
- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents
- Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. I urge you to move this bill onward.



Chaminade
University
OF HONOLULU

LATE

Testimony Presented to the
Senate Ways and Means Committee

Thursday, February 23, 2022 at 10:00 AM

by
Chaminade University of Honolulu President
Dr. Lynn Babington.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dr. Lynn Babington, President of Chaminade University. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB2482**.

An Office of Wellness and Resilience will help to create a coordinated effort across public agencies and community organizations to address early adversity, trauma and toxic stress for our most vulnerable populations, our kupuna and keiki. Trauma is a complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. It will ensure that all families will have access to the support they need.

An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector. Chaminade University as an institution that educates students at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels to work as nurses, community health workers and mental health practitioners, as therapists, counselors and clinical psychologists, recognizes the importance of providing high quality, coordinated care to the most vulnerable in our community. The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated that need. We are only one part of a vast network of community organizations attempting to address their concerns. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would connect the dots between our separate organizations, and coordinate a response to the mental health crisis brought on by COVID.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

Mahalo,

Lynn Babington, PhD
President

Office of the President

Chaminade University of Honolulu Clarence T.C. Ching Hall 210, 3140 Wai'aleae Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816

(808) 735-4741 | president@chaminade.edu | chaminade.edu

LATE

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 4:00:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Steve Sue	Testifying for Bizgenics	Support	No

Comments:

February 22, 2022

Committee on Ways and Means, Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am a community member from Bizgenics and I'm proud to **support SB2482**.

This important bill would bring much-needed coherence and leadership to a critical cross-sector issue that impacts Hawaii at many levels: trauma. An Office of Wellness and Resilience is needed more than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many of our community members. Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector.

A more trauma-informed, culturally responsive model, focused on the needs of the whole person, aligns with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) vision of increasing access to employment and related supports for individuals facing significant barriers due to trauma. State policymakers and workforce systems have a unique opportunity to leverage the present-day challenges as a catalyst to reimagine service delivery through developing a more unified and collaborative cross-system network model, simultaneously supporting employment and mental wellness for survivors of trauma. The results could be individuals who are healthier emotionally and able to engage in work; a more robust workforce; and better long-term employment outcomes.

This work can't wait, and nothing less than the health and sustainability of our Hawaii community depends on it.

Mahalo,

Steve Sue, Chairman

Bizgenics 501C3

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/19/2022 1:05:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Who are you trying to Pay off Now!!!

Senate Ways and Means Committee
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert, Keith-Aragan, Vice Chair
Feb. 24 , 2022 10:00 a.m.

Aloha Committee members,

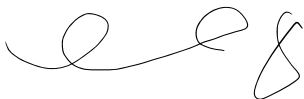
SB2482, Relating to Wellness is an important bill relating to trauma-informed care. It will create an office that will carry on the suggested work of the ACT 209 TIC Task Force that will improve the lives of many who have suffered from trauma and stress before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in the State of Hawai‘i.

Aloha, my name is Danny Goya, I work in the field of trauma-informed care throughout the state along the state. I am submitting this testimony to express my very strong support for SB2482 as I have seen first hand how adverse childhood experiences have negatively impacted the children and families I work with throughout the State of Hawai‘i. I have seen first-hand how COVID-19 has lead to so much trauma in our community. I’ve worked with rural and remote schools and have seen the toll it has taken on students, teachers, staff and parents.

Research has indicated that an adult who has experienced 4 or more ACEs has an increased risk in preventable health diseases, greater chances at falling behind or dropping out of school, higher chance of using drugs and early death. The key to solving toxic stress and adverse experiences is a COMPREHENSIVE approach and trauma-informed strategies that build wellness and resilience. Our current strategy is often a “silo” approach to solutions. Each state department has different and specific charges, funding and strategies, that may or may not work in cooperation with other agencies, non-profits and community providers. SB2482, will allow various departments to work along side each other and in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors.

Mahalo for your time and consideration and please support SB2482.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Goya', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel Goya

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 8:51:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
cybil moran	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Our community desperately needs more resources for health and wellness. Particularly for trauma informed care. With so much violence in our world today, the more informed we can be the better we can serve our community. Especially our front line workers, responders and police force. By getting a manager, it will help get us moving in the right direction.

Mahalo nui loa,

Cybil

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 12:51:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Catherine Abellera	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2482 relating to wellness. COVID-19 pandemic has been revealing to us regarding the need to address our current mental health needs/deficits. I am hopeful that with better coordinated trauma-informed social services, we will have more resources for all in need.

An Office of Wellness and Resilience would be so helpful for so many families who are experiencing high levels of stress to all islands (especially rural areas) who are already underserved. With this much needed support/resource, it will benefit our youngest keiki to our eldest kupuna.

Thank you for the opportunity to support and provide testimony in favor of SB2482. This is a giant step in the right direction, please move this bill forward. Thank you

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 12:56:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lauren Whittemore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness.

To: COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: Mari Uehara, M.D.
Developmental-behavioral pediatrics
Kapiolani Medical Center Women and Children
Clinical assistant professor, Department of Pediatrics, JABSOM

Subject measure: SB 2482 RELATING TO WELLNESS

Hearing date: Thursday, February 24, 2022

Time: 10:00am

Place: video conference

Position: support

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony as a developmental-behavioral pediatrician. I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness.

I am a pediatrician by discipline who is specialized in children's development and learning. I work with children who have developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities, as well as with their families.

Some children who are referred to me were born healthy without medical problems. Medical problems, of course, can show up later in their lives. However, there are other children who sustained significant trauma in their short lives physically and/or psychologically. After their lives are saved in critical care units, we as adults need to gain their trust back.

These children may be placed in foster homes that is often not permanent. Caregivers and teachers in childcare and preschools may be the constant in their lives. Or children may find hope in interacting with other children in a nurturing environment to gain strength to carry on their lives. Current COVID-19 pandemic also adds another layer of challenge in caring for these children who experienced trauma.

Research has concluded the direct relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes. The more people who interact with children have knowledge and skills to address needs of children who experienced trauma, the more children have chances to grow resilient who then be able to support others as they grow up.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony. I urge you to move this bill onward.

Mari Uehara, M.D.
Developmental-behavioral pediatrics

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 4:31:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Olivia Wilson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Olivia Wilson and I am an undergraduate student of social work at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am submitting testimony in full support of Senate Bill 2482. Throughout my educational experience at the Thompson School of Social Work, I have been fortunate enough to learn about a wide range of social issues. I am most grateful for the knowledge I have gained about the unique and diverse population in the state of Hawai'i, including Native Hawaiians; who face many disparities in everyday society, which includes being disproportionately more likely to endure trauma at some point in their life. This knowledge opened up my eyes and inspired me to enforce change within the system that is currently in place to benefit the individuals it affects. Additionally, the Covid-19 Pandemic has brought on unexpected third and fourth order affects and adversely impacted mental health for everyone. We need a statewide system of trauma support now more than ever. I believe that establishing an Office of Wellness and Resilience is a necessary step to healing the people of Hawai'i and maintaining their wellbeing.

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 4:36:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joshua Brown	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Decoite, and Members of the Committee:

Committee of Ways and Means

I, Joshua Brown, support SB 2482. I am an MSW candidate and will be entering the field in the next couple of months. The knowledge about trauma and its adverse effects on health outcomes cannot be ignored. As a student of social work, I am aware of the implications of the lack of trauma-informed care, and I support this bill as a step towards implementing overdue change in public health policy. I appreciate your attention to this bill and my testimony.

Aloha

Joshua Brown

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 4:38:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Joshua Brown	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Decoite, and Members of the Committee:

Committee of Ways and Means

I, Joshua Brown, support SB 2482. I am an MSW candidate and will be entering the field in the next couple of months. The knowledge about trauma and its adverse effects on health outcomes cannot be ignored. As a student of social work, I am aware of the implications of the lack of trauma-informed care, and I support this bill as a step towards implementing overdue change in public health policy. I appreciate your attention to this bill and my testimony.

Aloha

Joshua Brown

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 4:40:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
aimee chung	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for hearing and for your support of this bill. As a social worker and educator, I see the impact of trauma on our communities and the people of Hawai‘i. This bill would provide for much needed attention for our systems of care.

Aimee Chung, MSW, LSW

Licensed Social Worker

University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Faculty

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 4:51:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lokelani L Cameros	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Lokelani Cameros a student of UH Manoa in the Social work program. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for this bill. I strongly support this bill because of the importance of wellness and resilience. The people of Hawaii have endured so much trauma throughout this pandemic. The need for addressing the many barriers that impact the social and emotional well-being of the people is enormous.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HONOLULU, HI

February 22, 2022

To: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair Senate Committee on Health

From: Yvonne Morin, BSW Student

Subject: **SB2482 Relating to Wellness**

Hearing: Thursday, February 24, 2022, 10:00 A.M.
Conference Room 211, STATE CAPITAL & VIA VIDEO
CONFERENCE

POSITION: My name is Yvonne Morin, I am a BSW student.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to support individuals by protecting their mental health by providing clients with trauma-informed care and systems of care to address their needs of services mindfully to prevent any other traumatic experiences.

This bill shall support individuals by protecting overall well-being regarding mental, physical, and psychological health.

Public health services such as advocates and social workers work closely with survivors who have undergone traumatic experiences such as domestic violence, childhood trauma, sexual trauma, and other events.

Honolulu, HI is currently attempting to assure that the attention of service providers is trauma-informed when working with survivors with traumatic experiences. Suppose this bill is passed and moves forward to become a law. In that case, it will also contribute to training that

will take place within many organizations that address the mental health of children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Yvonne Morin

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 8:52:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erika Warner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, thank you for taking the time to view thi testimony in support of SB2482.

My name is Erika Warner. I write to you as a mental health professional who provides direct services to familes with infants and young children. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and an Endorsed Infant Mental Health practioner. I directly support the infant and early childhood work force through providing Reflective Superivision, trainings and consultation to agencies, programs, staff and families.

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawaii's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

Research has concluded the direct relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and negative life outcomes for children ranging from chronic disease, drug abuse, depression, involvement with the juvenile justice system, family violence, and early death. Additionally, children with higher ACE scores are more likely to be disengaged from school. Poor mental health affects entire families; if it is addressed, it will reduce overall family stress and increase wellbeing.

I believe Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress. The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:

- Since the pandemic started, State of Hawai‘i Early Intervention Services has seen a dramatic decline in infant and toddler social and emotional development
- Children under age six have a similar rate of mental illness as older children and youth
- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents
- Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. I urge you to move this bill onward.

Mahalo,

Erika Warner, LCSW, CSAC, IMH-E®

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 9:32:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Momi Akana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha to the Ways and Means Committee,

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is to help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawaii's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

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Mahalo,

Momi Akana

Keiki O Ka Aina Family Learning Centers

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 7:26:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ian Kitajima	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

IN SUPPORT OF SB2482

The majority of the organizations who are on the the State's Workforce Development Council Youth Service Committee work with youth who have experienced trauma. I serve as the co-chair of the youth committee, and was not aware of the effects of childhood trauma and how those who are here to help our youth must be aware and trained on trauma informed care to effective and compassionate. This act will operationalize this critical work statewide. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support. Mahalo, Ian Kitajima. Co-chair Youth Services Committee, State of Hawaii, Workforce Development Council.

February 23, 2022

Committee on Ways and Means, Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am a community member from District 9 and I'm proud to **support SB2482.**

This important bill would bring much-needed coherence and leadership to a critical cross-sector issue that impacts Hawaii at many levels: trauma. An Office of Wellness and Resilience is needed more than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many of our community members. Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector.

A more trauma-informed, culturally responsive model, focused on the needs of the whole person, aligns with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) vision of increasing access to employment and related supports for individuals facing significant barriers due to trauma. State policymakers and workforce systems have a unique opportunity to leverage the present-day challenges as a catalyst to reimagine service delivery through developing a more unified and collaborative cross-system network model, simultaneously supporting employment and mental wellness for survivors of trauma. The results could be individuals who are healthier emotionally and able to engage in work; a more robust workforce; and better long-term employment outcomes.

This work can't wait, and nothing less than the health and sustainability of our Hawaii community depends on it.

Mahalo,

Meli James

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 9:02:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Makana Craig	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2022

Committee on Ways and Means, Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am a community member from Kane'ohe and I'm proud to **support SB2482**.

This important bill would bring much-needed coherence and leadership to a critical cross-sector issue that impacts Hawaii at many levels: trauma. An Office of Wellness and Resilience is needed more than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many of our community members. Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, requiring holistic strategies that draw upon trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help to break down silos and increase cross-sector collaboration and alignment, including between government, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, philanthropic funders, faith groups, and the broader business sector.

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This work can't wait, and nothing less than the health and sustainability of our Hawaii community depends on it.

Mahalo,

Makana

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 9:51:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Feb. 23, 2022

Committee on Ways and Means

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of **SB2482, relating to wellness.**

An Office of Wellness and Resilience is more needed than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic has been directly or indirectly devastating to many in our community and compounds the issues around mental health and its impacts on overall health we were already struggling with.

This critical bill would bring much-needed leadership to an issue that impacts Hawai'i on so many levels and severely impacts community health: trauma. Trauma is an immense, complex challenge, and we need strategies that are holistic and strengths-based in their approach, as well as take into account our unique history and cultures here in Hawai'i.

It's time to change the conversation from "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" with a trauma-informed perspective. I'm excited to see our state lead the nation with compassion by creating this Office for the challenges we face not only now, but into the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise

LATE

SB-2482

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 10:03:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Germaine Kaleilehua Tauati	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2482, relating to wellness. One of the most important things we can do to remedy the mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is to help to buffer against trauma and toxic stress for our families--everyone from babies through kupuna. A great starting point would be better coordinated trauma-informed social services. An Office of Wellness and Resilience would help with that coordination and allow for more resources to flow into Hawai'i for needed services. When supportive environments serve Hawaii's people, especially our children, who have experienced early adversity, they are better set up to turn those stumbling blocks into steppingstones.

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I believe Hawai'i can ensure all services for children and families offer a place where those who have experienced early adversity are set-up to become resilient adults. We do not fully know the extent that isolation and persistent stress will have on the brain architecture of young children. Research shows that 52% of children in families with financial hardship are facing emotional distress. **The prevalence of childhood and family trauma and stress in Hawaii has reached crisis levels:**

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- 75% of adults with serious mental illness are parents

- Hawaii has the largest percentage (41%) of self-reported suicide thoughts among people who took an online depression screening during the pandemic.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. If SB2482 passes, it will be a great step towards supporting our families and creating more resources for positive mental health. I urge you to move this bill onward.

Mahalo,

Germaine Kaleilehua Tauati

922 Ahuna Rd, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

808-936-3296

**TO: Senate Committee on Health
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair**

LATE

SUBJECT: SB 2482: RELATING TO WELLNESS

**HEARING: Thursday, February 24, 2022, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

Aloha, my name is Angelica Palmer, and I am a University of Hawaii Manoa Bachelor of Social Work student. I am testifying in strong support of Senate Bill 2482: Relating to Wellness.

There is a growing body of research that shows the impact and prevalence of trauma exposure among children and families as well as how these experiences influence a person's lifelong health outcomes. Studies on the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood – reveal that ACEs are linked to chronic health problems including mental illness and substance abuse. Other negative outcomes in adulthood resulting from high exposure to ACEs also include health and behavioral risks such as smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol, as well as unpredictable socioeconomic challenges. The passage of SB 2482 would provide our community with the proper resources to address and find solutions for individuals who have experienced high doses of toxic stress and trauma exposure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify my strong support for SB 2482.

Submitted by: Angelica Palmer

Organization: Individual

Testifier Position: Support

Chair: Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Vice Chair: Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Senate Committee of Ways and Means



RE: SB 2482: Relating to Wellness

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Committee of Ways and Means,

My name Jaylin Kanani Afia, I am a self representing UH Mānoa student in the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am writing this testimony in strong support of Bill SB 2482 Relating to Wellness. Having a temporary Office of Wellness and Resilience within the Office of the Governor, authorizes the Office to address issues and implement solutions to improve wellness and resilience, including issues and solutions identified by the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force is most needed.

This implementation of such an office will help overcome trauma and toxic stress for all ages, keiki to kupuna. It will assist those that are internally dealing with trauma, past and present, to recover. As well as prevent prevailing consequences of such toxic trauma. Research has indicated that an adult who has experienced 4 or more ACEs has an increased risk in preventable health diseases, greater chances at falling behind or dropping out of school, higher chance of using drugs, higher chances of depression and/or suicided, and early death. Given that there are many different approaches to help recover from such toxicity, a designated department that works with many different organizations is extremely beneficial. This gives a person access to what type of treat works best for them.

From my personal experience of dealing with childhood sexual, physical, emtional, and mental abuse; I can say that I dealt with much toxic stress as a child. Instead of being taught how to work through my hardships, I was forced to learn how to deal with trauma on my own. There were no resources displayed at my disposal, nor were there any given adults who could read my signs of need. For many years I have suffered with major depression and suicidal ideation.

Given that I am older, and did not have to spend my K-12 grade career in a pandemic, I was able to find social outputs to help me along with my stressors and trauma. But as Covid-19 hit all of us, it has hit this younger generation the hardest. They have been dealing with the toxic stress of a lacking social environment for their development. Some may also be going through multiple types of abuse that I have previously stated, as well as facing other hardships due to Covid-19.

In conclusion, this bill is the first step of normalizing the term of trauma and showing many that trauma is real and can come in many different forms. It will also help us, as a society, to move forward with the current healthcare system. I strongly support bill SB 2482 because it will help those recover from past trauma and prevent further consequences for future generations.

Mahalo for your time,
Jaylin Kanani Afia
91-1185 Kupipi Pl.
808-589-8214