

STATE OF HAWAI‘I
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawai‘i to the House Committee on Health,
Human Services, & Homelessness**

March 18, 2022

S.B. No. 3235 SD1: RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender supports the intent of S.B. 3235 SD1.

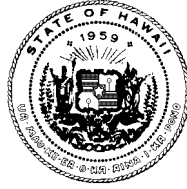
This measure would create a Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program. Youth at risk and youth in need of services require safe and supportive emergency housing and shelters. These services are desperately needed to help quell the growing needs of our youth who are living in poverty, who are houseless (some 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 (e.g., property crimes, assaults, sexual assaults, and/or human trafficking). They are often preyed upon.

The creation of a Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program will also 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.

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

March 16, 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 3235 SD1 – RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM.**

Hearing: March 18, 2022, 9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the measure's intent and provides comments. The Department respectfully requests that one-time funding be available to add capacity to existing services and that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this measure establishes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program within the Department of Human Services. Requires the program to collaborate with all state and county departments that offer services to ensure the well-being of youth in Hawaii to coordinate the identification of youth who are experiencing homelessness and placement of these youth at a shelter for homeless youth. Requires the Department of Human Services to contract with nonprofit organizations to provide shelters for homeless youth. Requires the Department of Human Services to submit a report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2025. Appropriates moneys. Effective 7/1/2050. Repeals 6/30/2025. (SD1) The SD1 defected the effective date and made technical amendments.

The safety of Hawaii's minors is a priority. DHS will continue to work with the Legislature, stakeholders, and community to develop appropriate shelter, housing programs, and related services for unaccompanied youth under 18 who are experiencing homelessness.

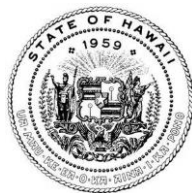
Currently, there are limited emergency shelters specifically to serve minors under 18 or independent living programs for minors not involved with Child Welfare Services (CWS). As a result, some minors seek shelter with older adults and become vulnerable to victimization.

With improved homeless data and limited shelter services available at Kawaiiloa Health & Wellness Center available to young adults, 18-24, we recognize the need to develop additional youth outreach, drop-in, and shelter services across the State for unaccompanied minors, including pregnant or parenting minors, whether they are involved with CWS or not. Many unaccompanied minors encountered are not involved with CWS.

As defined in this bill, youth focuses on age, not circumstances. The definition of homeless youth and runaway youth can vary; see the federal definition; <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/runaway-and-homeless-youth/federal-definitions>. A safe space for youth may result in unintended consequences of increased runaways.

Concerning family-based strategies, CWS has difficulty recruiting and retaining resource homes for older youth, especially those who have been trafficked. Additional resources are needed to coordinate behavioral health training and strategies so that youth will meet knowledgeable peers or staff on their first encounters. Developing peer-based outreach programs and additional transitional independent living programs will help stabilize more youth and reconnect them with school, their families, pro-social friends, job training, and employment. These efforts will give youth the opportunities to gain the skills and resources to become successful adults. As the measure advances, we will update the Legislature with resource needs.

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



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

March 18, 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness

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

SUBJECT: **SB 3235 SD1 – RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM.**

Hearing: Friday, March 18, 2022, 9:30 a.m.
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of this measure and respectfully offers comments. The Coordinator defers to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Office of Youth Services regarding the continuum of current programs to serve homeless youth and young adults.

If this measure proceeds, the Coordinator requests that its passage not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget request.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the Safe Spaces for Youth pilot program within DHS. The bill requires the program to collaborate with all State departments that offer services to ensure the well-being of youth in Hawaii to coordinate the identification of youth experiencing homelessness and placement of homeless youth with a shelter for homeless youth. In addition, the bill allows DHS to contract with a nonprofit organization to provide a shelter for homeless youth, appropriates funds, and requires DHS to report to the Legislature.

The Coordinator acknowledges the need to increase services for youth experiencing homelessness. Currently, 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 the passage of Act 23 that expanded the conditions under which unaccompanied minors may

consent to a no-cost emergency shelter. The expanded conditions implemented under Act 23 will sunset next year on June 30, 2023. Act 23, SLH 2021 enabled organizations, such as RYSE, to provide limited bed space for homeless minors.

Additionally, the Oahu Continuum of Care (CoC), also known as Partners in Care, recently implemented a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), which offers a wide range of federally-funded services for youth experiencing homelessness. Partners in Care was recently awarded over \$1.8 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for YHDP in the upcoming federal fiscal year. An online dashboard for the YHDP is available at: <https://partnersincareoahu.org/yhdp-dashboard>.

If the intent is to establish safe spaces and housing options for youth experiencing homelessness, another potential vehicle to achieve this goal is the Ohana Zones pilot program. The Ohana Zone pilot program provides flexible funding for homeless services administered in partnership with the counties to address local needs. The Coordinator notes there are different measures to extend and expand the Ohana Zones pilot program, including HB2512 and SB3168. Examples of Ohana Zones projects include the [Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered \(HONU\)](#) program on Oahu and permanent housing projects such as [Kamaoku Kauhale](#), [Huliau](#), [Kealaula at Pua Loke](#), [Kumuwai](#), and [Hale Maluhia](#). The [Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness annual legislative report](#)¹ provides a detailed overview and evaluation of the Ohana Zones pilot program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹ Report available at: <https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/HICH-Report-to-2022-Legislature-FINAL.pdf>

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
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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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, &
HOMELESSNESS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 3235, S.D. 1

March 18, 2022
9:30 a.m.
Room 329 and Videoconference

RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM

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

Senate Bill No. 3235, S.D. 1: 1) establishes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program (SSYPP) within the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a period of three years; 2) requires SSYPP to coordinate with State and county agencies to identify youth experiencing homelessness in each county; 3) requires DHS to contract with nonprofit organizations to provide shelter for homeless youth; 4) authorizes the shelters to provide services to admitted youth for up to 90 days without a parent's or guardian's consent; 5) sets reporting requirements for DHS; 6) provides definitions for clarity; and 7) appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to DHS in FY 23 to fund SSYPP.

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

March 16, 2022

To: Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Health, Human Services
and Homelessness

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3235 SD 1 RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, support SB 3235 SD 1 Relating to Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program.

The proposed network of safe places for youth was first conceived by the youth who attended the Children and Youth Summit at the Capitol several years ago. It was voted the top priority for legislative action for 3 years in a row indicating its importance to Hawaii's youth.

Nearly half of Hawaii's juvenile arrests are for status offenses such as running away from home or being truant from school. They run away or skip school because they have untreated mental health and substance abuse needs; experience abuse, violence or bullying; or other issues that are not best resolved by a law enforcement approach. Our youth want and need safe places in the community where youth can seek help before they get in trouble with the law.

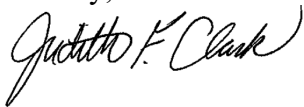
It takes a community to raise a child. The Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program will facilitate coordination and collaboration by government, non-profit, and faith-based organizations and caring community members to increase the safety and well-being of our children and youth. It will provide safe environments where adolescents can safely address such issues as peer pressure, unplanned pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, and substance abuse. It will provide young people with ways to deal with problems before they get into trouble and avoid unnecessary arrests for status offenses.

Emergency shelter is a key component providing safe, appropriate living conditions for youth who cannot safely return home. The 24-hour crisis response system will follow the National Safe Place model, in which community partners, such as fire stations and public bus systems are recruited as places where young people can go in an emergency.

While much of the network resources are already in place, funding is needed to ensure 24-hour crisis response capability and an adequate supply of emergency shelter beds; conduct outreach so that youth, families, and service providers are aware of the program and know how to use it; provide training of youth workers; and ensure coordination of services among the various providers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

SB-3235-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2022 12:14:51 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/18/2022 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------|
| Michael Golojuch Jr | Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii | Support | In Person |

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i (formerly the LGBT Caucus) Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization fully supports SB 3235 SD 1.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

SB-3235-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2022 5:44:44 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/18/2022 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mike Golojuch, Sr. | Rainbow Family 808 | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 is in strong support of SB3235. Please pass this important bill for youth. Thank you.

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

**OPPORTUNITY
YOUTH
ACTION HUI**

18 March 2022

House Committee on Health, Human Services & Homelessness

Hearing Time: 09:30 AM

Location: Virtual

Re: SB 3235 SD 1, Relating to Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program

Aloha e Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Tam, and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **strong support** of SB 3235 SD 1, relating to Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program. This bill would establish the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program within the Department of Human Services. It would require the program to collaborate with all state departments that offer services to ensure the well-being of youth in Hawai'i to coordinate the identification of youth who are experiencing homeless and placement of homeless youth with a shelter for homeless youth. It would allow the Department of Human Services to contract with a nonprofit organization to provide a shelter for homeless youth.

This bill would contribute to the efforts of mitigating the overrepresentation of Native Hawaiian, especially youth, individuals in disadvantageous and dangerous situations, such as homelessness. According to the Partners in Care 2020 O'ahu Point In Time Count (PIT), an annual street and shelter count, about **16%** of Hawai'i's homeless population were children. Furthermore, **51%** of the overall PIT Count identified Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander as either their only race or part of their multiracial background. We believe this measure is a pivotal step in providing helpful and necessary resources to the Native Hawaiian community. In addition, this will help youth that are in stressful home or social situations by providing a place to feel safe, and away from trauma.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hui is a collaboration of organizations and individuals 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 3235 SD 1.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

SB3235 SD1

RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM.

Ke Kōmike Hale o ke Olakino, ka Lawelawe Kānaka, a me ka Pilikia Ho‘okuewa
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

Malaki 18, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Hālāwai Keleka‘a‘ike / Lumi 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB3235 SD1** which establishes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program within the Department of Human Services. Coordinated approaches in policy and programs is invaluable for addressing houselessness for youth, because it is caused and perpetuated by a myriad of issues, which are often prevalent for Native Hawaiians, such as involvement with the juvenile justice system, history of houselessness and experience in foster care.

In 2017, Hawai‘i’s circuit courts reported half of all juvenile arrests were for status offenses.¹ According the county police departments, statewide juvenile arrests for running away totaled over 2,400 in 2018 and nearly 2,000 in 2019. For the 2019 runaway arrests, 409 cases involved Native Hawaiian juveniles and 605 involved juveniles of an unknown race or ethnicity.²

The 2020 O‘ahu Point in Time Count survey identified 30 unaccompanied homeless minors (children under age 18) and 222 unaccompanied homeless youth (persons under age 25). The survey found that overall, 31% of people counted were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.³

In 2021, 45% of children in Hawai‘i’s foster care system were Native Hawaiian, and a total of 315 youth exited foster care because of emancipation since 2018.⁴ For young adults who experienced foster care in Hawai‘i, only 56% had stable housing, only 44% were employed, and 44% were parents by age 21.⁵

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges the Committee members to **SUPPORTS SB3235, SD1**. Mahalo piha for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹ Juvenile Justice System Crime Analysis State of Hawaii Fiscal Year 2015-2017. Meripa T. Godinet and the Aloha Data under contract of Hawaii Office of Youth Services. 2020. <https://ag.hawaii.gov/cpja/files/2020/09/Juvenile-Justice-System-Crime-Analysis-State-of-Hawaii-FY-2015-2017.pdf>

² Crime in Hawaii, A Review of Uniform Crime Reports. Hawaii Department of the Attorney General. 2019. <https://ag.hawaii.gov/cpja/files/2021/09/Crime-in-Hawaii-2019.pdf>

³ 2020 O‘ahu Point in Time Count Comprehensive Report. Partners in Care, O‘ahu’s Continuum of Care. <https://www.partnersincareoahu.org/pit-reports>

⁴ Hawaii Department of Human Services Databook. December 2021. <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/DHS-Databook-20212.pdf>

⁵ 2018 Hawaii Profile, Transition-Age Youth in Foster Care. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. November 2018 <https://assets.aecf.org/m/blogimg/hawaii-fosteringyouthtransitions-2018.pdf>

SB-3235-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2022 3:32:26 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/18/2022 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Eileen McKee | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support the passage of SB3235 SD1.
Mahalo for considering my late testimony.

Eileen McKee

Kihei