



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony COMMENTING on SCR151
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S CHILD AND ADOLESCENT
MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OFFICE,
ALSO KNOWN AS A FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER OFFICE, IN KA'U IN THE
COUNTY OF HAWAII

SENATOR SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALO, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 03-22-22

Room Number: Videoconference

1 **Department Testimony:**

2 All of the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division's (CAMHD) mental health treatment,
3 services, and supports, statewide, are given by contracted service providers near clients' homes or
4 in the clients' home (i.e., intensive in-home services) or through telehealth. These Community-
5 Based Services are convenient to the client and family and allow for less stress and disruptions in
6 the family's daily routine. For those living in the Kau area, community based services saves
7 families from having to drive distances to an office to receive services and supports.

8 Currently, there are two physical Family Guidance Centers (FGCs) on the island of
9 Hawaii, The East Hawaii Family Guidance Center (EHFGC) in Hilo, and the West Hawaii
10 Family Guidance Center (WHFGC) in Kamuela-Waimea. Both EHFGC's and WHFGC's office's
11 are for administration and care coordination, not direct delivery of services.

1 All CAMHD FGCs have Clinical Services Sections. The EHFGC has a clinical service
2 section devoted to mental health services of youth in the Ka'u area. This service section consists
3 of five Mental Health Care Coordinators, a Mental Health Supervisor, and a Clinical Lead
4 Psychologist. Fortunately, one of the five Mental Health Care Coordinators in this Clinical
5 Services Section, resides in the Ka'u area. The WHFGC also has a Mental Health Care
6 Coordinator who lives in the Ka'u area and provides mental health care coordination to the Ka'u
7 area with the support of a Mental Health Supervisor and Clinical Lead Psychiatrist. Both these
8 mental health care coordinators are familiar with the needs of families in the area and are able to
9 provide both telehealth and in-person support. Given the difficulties families in this area face
10 related to internet access, these two mental health care coordinators and multiple services
11 providers (intensive in-home therapy, multisystemic therapy, etc.) are available for in-person
12 services delivery if telehealth is not an option for families.

13 CAMHD FGCs are, and will continue to be, largely administrative offices. While they
14 are open to the public, there is no requirement that a family ever be present at an FGC to receive
15 services. CAMHD services are intended to be delivered at the family home or other locations
16 convenient to the family. As such, families in the Ka'u area have been receiving in-person and
17 telehealth service from the WHFGC and EHFGC before and throughout the pandemic.
18 CAMHD's community-based and telehealth practices pre-dates the pandemic. It is the intention
19 of CAMHD that services continue to be community-based because such delivery of mental
20 health services is beneficial to its clients and their families.¹

21 Additionally, the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE) has school-based
22 supports in place for student social, emotional and physical well-being of students and their

1 families and communities. Should the students' mental health needs exceed the capacity of
2 DOE's Student Services Supports, the students are referred to CAMHD for community based
3 intensive mental health services.

4 Although the intent of this bill is well meaning, CAMHD is already providing services to
5 best meet the mental health needs of families in Ka'u and other rural services areas, statewide.
6 For the Ka'u area specifically, two FGCs service this area, allowing families more support and
7 choice in the services they receive. Therefore, an additional FGC in the Ka'u area is unnecessary,
8 and will incur substantial cost to the state without increasing or improving services as they
9 currently are in this area.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

ⁱ National Institutes of Health <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6025474/>

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March 21, 2022

Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Health
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference

Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Honorable Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services
Conference Room 225 Videoconference

Re: S.C.R. No. 151 – Urging the Department of Health's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division to conduct a feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Community Mental Health Center Office, also known as a Family Guidance Center Office, in Ka'ū in the County of Hawai'i.

Honorable Chairs Keohokalole and San Buenaventura and Vice Chairs Baker and Ihara:

On behalf of myself and as Councilmember representing the rural districts of South Kona, Ka'ū and Volcano Village (Council District 6), I express my strong support of S.C.R. 151 relating to conducting a feasibility study in order to establish a family guidance center office in Ka'ū .

As you may know, many of the Ka'ū residents face cultural, financial, and geographical barriers that prevent them from accessing health services in rural areas in my Council District. As it exists now, Ka'ū residents would need to travel either to the Waimea or Hilo offices which is over one hundred miles. Expansion into Ka'ū of a Community Mental Health Center office is much needed.

Mahalo a nui loa for your favorable consideration.

Very truly yours,

Maile David

Maile David, Council Member
Council District 6, S. Kona, Ka'ū, and Volcano Village