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LATE

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

March 20, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy San Buenaventura
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Executive Director

SUBJECT: **HCR200/HR180 - REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO REPORT ON THE CULTURAL AND THERAPEUTIC SERVICES PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AT THE KAWAIILOA YOUTH AND FAMILY WELLNESS CENTER.**

Hearing: **Thursday, March 21, 2024, Time 9:30 a.m.**
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

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

PURPOSE: This resolution requests the Department of Human Services to submit a report on:

- (1) positive effects of cultural and therapeutic services that are provided by community-based organizations at the Kawaiiloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC);

- (2) plans for expanding state and private sector collaboration to reduced homelessness and the negative effects of incarceration and promote youth wellness; and
- (3) its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation.

OYS appreciates the Legislature's continued support and interest in delinquency prevention and recidivism reduction for youth at risk. Hawai'i State Legislature established the Office of Youth Services (OYS) in 1989 to provide and coordinate a continuum of services and programs in every county. The OYS is responsible for the administration of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, reauthorized in 2002.

[Hawaii Revised Statute § 352-32 \(2019\)](#) created the Kawailoa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC) operated by the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility. The purpose of KYFWC creation was to prevent delinquency, offer residential programs in delinquency prevention, provide a wider range of informal dispositions, and develop an improved system of intake, assessment, and follow-up for youth at risk and young adults at risk.

OYS annually reports to the Legislature on the programs it currently provides, number of youth served, agency collaboration projects it participates in, and the programmatic value of KYFWC programs and their relationship to the continuing efforts in Hawaii's juvenile justice reform focusing on prevention and re-entry at a system level. OYS is willing to provide additional information to include programmatic outcomes and recommendations for system level juvenile justice reform needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



March 19, 2024

The Honorable Representative Lisa Marten, Chair
The Honorable Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair
House Committee on Human Services
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Hearing on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 9:30 a.m., Via VideoConference, Conference Room #329

Regarding HCR 200/HR180, "Requesting the Department of Human Services to Report on the Cultural and Therapeutic Services Provided by Community-Based Organizations at the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center."

Dear Chair Marten and Vice Chair Amato and Members of the House Committee on Human Services,

As indicated by the organizations that have signed on to this letter, we ask that you **strongly support HCR 200/ HR180** to request a report by the Department of Human Services on the innovative approach and services provided by community-based organizations (CBOs), such as RYSE (Residential Youth Services and Empowerment), Kinai 'Eha, and Partners in Development Foundation's Kupa 'Aina Farm as well as DOE's Olomana Youth Center and the State's Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility, which work collaboratively with OYAH (the Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i) hui. This work could not be possible without the numerous other partners who support justice-involved and opportunity youth such as other Native Hawaiian and community-based organizations, Hawai'i Public Policy Advocates, law enforcement, Hawai'i's State Judiciary, Office of the Public Defender and Department of Health's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division.

The Kawaioloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC) was statutorily formed in 2018 under the management of the Office of Youth Services. This 500-acre campus includes multiple state agencies and community non-profits, with a shared vision to promote and sustain healing and wellness of justice-involved youth, and collaborating to provide programs for the most vulnerable at-risk youth and young adult populations in the juvenile justice system. KYFWC has been developing culturally informed restorative practices as a Pu'uhonua – Sanctuary – a place of safety, peace and healing to support the well-being of the child and their family for the betterment of the community.

In October 2022, community and public partners co-located on the Kawaioloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC) campus launched an eight-year project, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to create innovative, cultural and therapeutic programs for youth through the work of these CBOs alongside state and other community partners. Together these partners are creating a pu'uhonua, or sanctuary for healing and restoration to help our opportunity youth transform their lives and begin journeys of healing and thriving in their own lives, in their families and their communities (Website: wearekawaioloa.org). The community partners include the following.

Kinai 'Eha is a Hawaii 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization specializing in innovation for workforce development, trauma-informed care, and youth justice. The organization is a leader in the trauma-informed care industry providing state-of-the-art staff training, mentoring, and alternative education options to justice-involved youth as well as all youth seeking purpose, personal empowerment, education, community service, leadership, cultural identity, connection, and workforce training in livable career pathways.
Website: kinaieha.org

Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE) operates a youth access center and shelter services. From 8am to 8pm seven days a week, youth ages 14–24 can use their drop-in services free of charge. RYSE also provides temporary transitional shelter for youth ages 18-24 with the goal to provide safety and help youth get off the streets, so that they can live and thrive as healthy, happy young adults.
Website: rysehawaii.org

Kupa 'Aina

Partners in Development Foundation's Kupa 'Aina Farm is a natural farming program that is paving the way for a food-secure Hawai'i by developing sustainable food production models and providing cultural 'āina-based experiential and vocational learning. Kupa 'Aina serves as a place for learning and connection to 'āina and uses Aloha 'Āina (love of the land) to heal youth, families, and communities.
Website: pidf.org/kupaaina

Partners in Development Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that inspires and equips families and communities for success and service, using timeless Native Hawaiian values and traditions. Since 1997, PIDF has served more than 148,000 people in over 50 communities across the Hawaiian Islands. To learn more about all of PIDF's programs serving Hawaiian families, visit pidf.org.

State partners on the campus include the following:

Olomana Schools: Olomana School dates back to 1850. Since 1974 the school has provided educational services to students at the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF), Detention Home (DH), Home Maluhia, and Olomana Youth Center (OYC). The HYCF students are incarcerated and DH/Home Maluhia students are awaiting hearing/trial or alternative placement; these students come from all over the state. OYC students are from the Windward District on the island of Oahu and enroll as a result of having difficulties in the educational mainstream because of disciplinary misconduct, chronic school alienation, failure and truancy.
olomanaschoolhi.k12.hi.us

Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility: HYCF, managed and operated by the Office of Youth Services, provides custody, care, and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders who have committed serious law violations. HYCF staff work closely with the Family Courts to ensure that any commitment to HYCF is a "last resort" – after all community-based services have been exhausted. Identification of community-based programs as alternatives to incarceration is ongoing.

Website: humanservices.hawaii.gov/oys/hawaii-youth-correctional-facility/

It is vital that this critical work continue to grow and HCR 200/HR 180 will support this work by raising the level of information available to the public and expanding the involvement and reach of the Department of Human Services and other state agencies as well as private sector organizations through coordinated plans to address the needs of opportunity youth in our state.

We ask that you support HCR 100/HR180.

On behalf of our partners, mahalo nui loa for your consideration of this request.



Shawn M. Kana'iaupuni, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Partners in Development Foundation

HCR-200

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 7:14:50 AM

Testimony for HUS on 3/21/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Houser	RYSE	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

On behalf of Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE), we are writing in **support** of HCR 200 and HR 100, requesting the Department of Human Services to report on the cultural and therapeutic services provided by community-based organizations at the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai‘i

March 20, 2024

Committee: House Human Services
Time: 9:30 AM
Location: State Capitol Conference Room 329
Re: HCR 200/HR 180

Aloha e Chair Marten, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity Youth Action Hawai‘i hui, we are writing in **support** of HCR 200 and HR 180, requesting the Department of Human Services to report on the cultural and therapeutic services provided by community-based organizations at the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center.

Hawai‘i’s Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth are overrepresented at every stage of the justice system, with challenges rooted in the history of our islands. By advancing an Indigenous model rooted in Hawaiian knowledge and cultural practices, reengaging with elders, and reconnecting to the land and community, the community-based organizations providing services at the Kawaihoa campus help youth to heal, recognizing their promise as positive community contributors.

The efforts of the community-based organizations at the Kawaihoa campus were recognized by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Lever for Change as one of five global finalists of the Racial Equity 2030 challenge, an open call for bold solutions to drive an equitable future for children, families, and communities worldwide. The Challenge awarded an eight-year grant for the project, “Kawaihoa: a Transformative Indigenous Model to Replace Youth Incarceration”, to help build and scale actionable ideas for transformative change in the systems and institutions that uphold racial inequities. Understanding the work of these organizations and their impact on youth in Hawaii will be beneficial to the legislature in its own efforts to address the youth justice system.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai‘i 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 HCR 200 and HR 180.

1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530 | Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 | (808) 447-1840

HCR-200

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 6:35:23 PM

Testimony for HUS on 3/21/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Tanaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my personal testimony in strong support of HCR200/HR180.

Through my public policy work, I have had the pleasure to watch the transformation and expansion of the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center throughout the last decade, and have been continually impressed by the impacts of its culturally-grounded, strengths-based programming on individuals and the community as a whole. The innovation and care demonstrated by program participants and administrators have the potential to not only transform the lives of families and youth, but our larger approach to justice, behavioral health, and true community resilience. I strongly believe that the passage of this resolution will help the legislature and the broader public better understand the benefits provided at Kawaihoa, as well as the potential for such alternative strategies in justice and healing to mend our social fabric and uplift our communiites as a whole.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS this Resolution. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Wayne Tanaka