



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB3137 SD1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN &
ADOLESCENTS
SENATOR KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

Hearing Date: February 23, 2024

Room Number: 016

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH), Child & Adolescent Mental Health
3 Division (CAMHD) strongly supports this bill. It has been 50 years since the Mental Health
4 Services for Children and Youth statutes have been codified. The amendments proposed by this
5 bill bring the statute up to date to reflect the current role of the Child & Adolescent Mental
6 Health Division in addressing intensive mental health needs of children and adolescents in
7 Hawaii.

8 Although originally a branch of the Adult Mental Health Division, Child & Adolescent Mental
9 Health became its own Division of the Department of Health decades ago as research emerged
10 about the distinct and specialized nature of child and adolescent mental health services. Today
11 CAMHD is the state's Medicaid provider for intensive mental health services for children and
12 adolescents with a serious emotional disturbance (SED). CAMHD works collaboratively with
13 other child-serving agencies and has developed a comprehensive array of treatment services for
14 youth with SED via Purchase of Service contracts. Mental health assessments, clinical oversight
15 and care coordination are provided by employees at Family Guidance Centers on Oahu, Hawaii,
16 Maui, and Kauai. In addition, the Family Court Liaison Branch on Oahu provides mental health
17 services to youth who are incarcerated or detained. This system of care is based on core values to
18 provide child and family-centered, culturally sensitive, least restrictive and evidence-based
19 mental health services. Over the past 30 years, CAMHD has leveraged federal system of care

1 grants to actively develop and improve the child and adolescent mental health service system of
2 care in Hawaii based on national standards and best practices.

3 In 2023, CAMHD partnered with the University of Hawaii, School of Public Health to conduct a
4 statewide needs assessment of mental health services for youth. Once completed, this assessment
5 will be used to develop a Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services Plan commencing in 2027.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

7 **Offered Amendments:** None.

8

JON N. IKENAGA
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Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender, State of Hawaii
to the Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 23, 2024

S.B. 3137 SD1: RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

The Office of the Public Defender strongly supports S.B. 3137 SD1:

The Office of the Public Defender submit that there is an ongoing need for mental health services for our youth across the State of Hawaii. Our office works with youth in the juvenile justice system, and we consistently see the need for mental health services, including counseling, therapy, and access to information and services to help youth manage their mental health challenges. We work with youth all along the spectrum of need. Youth who are in a severe mental health crisis and contemplating suicide or engaging in acts of self-harm. Youth managing serious depression. Youth in need of help to process trauma. Youth in need of help with anxiety disorders. Youth in need of grief counseling. These are just a few examples of the need in our communities. This measure would greatly benefit our youth in need who are involved in the juvenile justice system and would be another tool to help keep youth out of our juvenile justice system and to help keep youth engaged in mental health education, engagement, and services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

February 23, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICARY

Senate Bill 3137 SD1 – Relating to Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Bill 3137 SD1 – Relating to Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents.

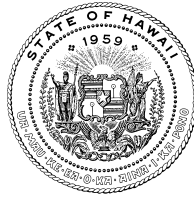
This bill amends the statutes pertaining to mental health services for children and adolescents provided by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health to reflect the current mental health systems of care that address intensive mental health needs of children and adolescents.

COVID-19 exposed the importance of mental health services being accessible for youth and adolescents. This bill helps to ensure that the current mental health systems of care address the mental health needs of children and adolescents in the State.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony in Support of S.B. No. 3137 SD1, Relating to mental health services for children and adolescents

Senator Rhoads, Chair
Senator Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 23, 2024, at 9:30 am

Room Number: 016

The Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **SUPPORTS** S.B. No. 3137 SD1, Relating to Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents.

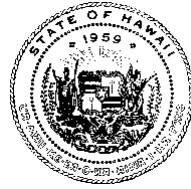
Established through Act 291 (Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022) the overall aim of the OWR is to make Hawai'i a trauma-informed state. The OWR is focused on breaking down barriers that impact the social, and emotional well-being of Hawai'i's people. Under this umbrella, the OWR is dedicated to addressing adverse childhood experiences. Addressing mental health needs early in life is critical for better health and well-being in adulthood. Supporting programs and policies that address the mental health and trauma children and adolescent is a critical piece of creating a trauma-informed Hawai'i. The OWR supports efforts that would support the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health to effectuate its obligations.

We look forward to continuing to work with departments and community partners to further strengthen the systems of support for our children and adolescents across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Mahalo,

Tia L R Hartsock, MSW, MSCJA
Director, Office of Wellness & Resilience
Office of the Governor

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA
MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I



KATHERINE AUMER, PhD
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
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**WRITTEN
TESTIMONY
ONLY**

**STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary
in Support of S.B. 3137 SD1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

February 23, 2024, 9:30 a.m., CR 016 and Videoconference

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Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii law, HRS §334-10, established the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) as a 21-member body to advise on the allocation of resources, statewide needs, and programs affecting more than one county as well as to advocate for adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbances, individuals with mental illness or emotional problems, including those with co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Members are residents from diverse backgrounds representing mental health service providers and recipients, students and youth, parents, and family members. Members include representatives of state agencies on mental health, criminal justice, housing, Medicaid, social services, vocational rehabilitation, and education. Members include representatives from the Hawaii advisory commission on drug abuse and controlled substances and county service area boards on mental health and substance abuse.

The SCMH members unanimously support this measure to amend the Hawaii Revised Statutes and reflect the current mental health systems of care that address the mental health needs of children and adolescents in the State. The amendments will clarify and communicate better the actual responsibilities of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) of the Department of Health (DOH). The SCMH supports a continuum of care that will address the needs of children and adolescents and their families in both urban and rural areas. It, therefore, encourages that future assessment of needs and solutions to gaps include island-level and county-level perspectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please contact us at DOH.SCMHChairperson@doh.hawaii.gov.

To the Honorable Representative, KOUCHI

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SB3137 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.

Hello,

My name is Mila Ramos. I am a MSW student from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am in strong support for mental health services for children and adolescents. I've spent 5 years of my education at the University of Hawaii, and 7 years in my career working with this population and have learned and witnessed the negative implications of mental disorders left untreated. Mental health disorders have a negative impact on people in their psychological and physical health, homes, communities and later along the line their ability to work harmoniously with others. These issues often may result in poverty, homelessness, substance misuse and overall poor health.

The prevalence of treating mental health disorders as children is critical at this age group. Studies have shown that mental health disorders typically involve by age 14, this affecting 1 in 5 before the age of 25. I understand that the COVID pandemic has caused negative implications among children's overall health. It prevented them from seeing their personal care providers in a timely manner, and it also prevented children from socializing with other peers which is vital for healthy brain development and functioning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for strong support of SB3137.

Sincerely,

Mila Ramos