



The Senate Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 18th, 2025

Aloha Paul Tonnessen:

Congratulations on your nomination to the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council. To assist the Hawaii State Senate with its confirmation process, we request that you submit the following information to our office no later than February 20th, 2025, to ensure that we proceed in a timely manner:

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council. I believe my years working in the field of child abuse and neglect as an advocate and voice for our youth at risk would be beneficial to the council.
2. What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council. To advise government and local communities to ensure effective service provision and development of policies that improve the juvenile justice system, advocate for delinquency prevention and guide Hawaii's youth in becoming productive community members
3. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities as a member of the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the board. I have been working within the Maui Juvenile and Family Courts for 13 years with their Judges, Juvenile Prosecutors, Juvenile Probation and Parole to ensure that there are alternatives to assisting the children being brought into the system. I've received numerous awards for my work in assisting our youth at risk and am engaged with Ku Like which was formed over 13 years ago to address the issues that were bringing our young people into the judiciary system. The group is comprised of various agencies and governmental entities that are working with this population. The creation of POI (Positive Outreach Intervention), Kalo (addressing the needs not only of our youth in the system but their families as a whole to bring alternatives to the youth caught up in the system rather than having to bring punitive action against them. Hale Pono Youth shelter was one of the latest accomplishments that came out of this group discussions surrounding support for the youth we serve. The Hale Pono Teen Shelter is a safe space for our at-risk youth between the ages of 12-17 in need

of a sanctuary until they can be reunified with their family or find supportive living arrangements.

4. What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service? To assist in bringing positive changes to our Juvenile Justice System.
5. Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council. I am empathetic, compassionate and a voice for what some call the voiceless (those brought into the system to afraid to share)
6. Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a member. I have lived experience having been brought into the system as a child and knowing that my behaviors were trauma based, and no one was addressing them in the system over 50 years ago.
7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council. How would you overcome conflicts of interest? I do not foresee any conflicts of interest and to overcome conflicts of interest, the most effective approach is for me to proactively identify potential conflicts, disclose them transparently, and implement appropriate mitigation strategies such as recusing yourself from relevant decisions, limiting involvement in specific projects, or seeking external review, all while adhering to clear policies set in place by the council regarding conflicts of interest.



HAWAI'I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Vonnell Ramos, President
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Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer
Greg Tjapkes, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Network Membership

Access to Independence
Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai'i
Bobby Benson Center
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai'i
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC 'Ohana, Inc.
Friends of the Children's Justice
Center of Maui
Get Ready Hawai'i
Hale Kipa, Inc.
Hale 'Opio Kaua'i, Inc.
Hawai'i Children's Action
Network
Hawai'i Health & Harm
Reduction Center
Hawaii Island Community'
Health Center
Ho'ola Na Pua
Ho'okele Coalition of Kaua'i
Ka Hale Pomaika'i
Kokua Kalihi Valley
Kaua'i Planning and Action
Alliance
Lines for Life Youth Line
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
PHOCUSED
Piha Wellness and Healing
Planned Parenthood of the
Great Northwest, Hawaii
Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana
Residential Youth Services
& Empowerment (RYSE)
Salvation Army Family
Intervention Services
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community
Center
The Catalyst Group

February 20, 2025

To: Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
And members of the Committee on Health and Human
Services

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SGN 519
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Juvenile
Justice State Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, PAUL
TONNESSEN, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports the nomination of Paul Tonnessen to the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council.

Paul has served as Executive Director of the Friends of the as a board member of Maui Children's Justice Center since 2001 and as Executive Director since 2012. The Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui supports the Children's Justice Center, promotes community awareness of child abuse and neglect, and provides funding for direct services to help children recover from the damaging effects of their abuse.

Paul has been a member of the Board of Directors of Hawaii Youth Services Network since 2022.

His extensive experience in working with children and youth who are survivors of crime will be a valuable asset to the Council.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director