

ACT 253

H.B. NO. 1233

A Bill for an Act Relating to Youth Services.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. In 1989, the legislature enacted Act 375, Session Laws of Hawaii 1989, which provided services and programs for youths at risk under one umbrella agency, the office of youth services (OYS). Act 375 also charged OYS with the responsibility for developing prevention services targeted at high risk youths and for developing and operating a network of youth services centers (centers) statewide. The mission of the centers is to provide an array of services to youths through delinquency prevention, intervention, and community empowerment programs.

However, the legislature finds that the mission of establishing full service youth centers has been hampered by the lack of sufficient funding for the centers. In fact, since 1994, funding for the centers has decreased rather than increased. In 1998, OYS issued requests for proposals to develop and fund the centers. The legislature finds that although OYS combined funds from a variety of sources to support development of the centers, funding continues to be less than adequate to meet the mandates of the centers under Act 375.

In 1999, OYS brought together executive directors and other staff from youth-serving agencies. One of the goals of the meetings was to examine the youth services centers concept and brainstorm on moving the concept forward. In late 2000, eight youth-serving agencies met and agreed to collaboratively move the youth services centers concept forward by seeking additional funding from the legislature and private foundations.

The legislature also finds that OYS has been designated by the governor to administer federal grant programs pertaining to, among other things, juvenile delinquency. One of these programs, the Hookala project, is solely funded with federal dollars. The Hookala project works with primarily at-risk youths by removing juveniles from inappropriate secured detention, and links children and families in trouble to services that prevent and minimize further involvement with the

juvenile justice system. In fiscal year 1997-1998, nine hundred eighty-six youths were served while in 1998-1999, seven hundred seventy-six youths were served. The State's compliance with the mandates of the juvenile justice and delinquency prevention federal grant programs ensures that Hawaii continues to receive valuable federal funds.

The purpose of this Act is to enhance the youth services centers by clarifying their services and appropriating funds for the centers and services.

SECTION 2. Section 352D-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

“(b) Each center shall ~~[be responsible]~~;

- (1) Be responsible for coordinating all services, justice system or nonjustice system, both public and private, to the youth referred to it[-]; and
- (2) Be responsive to the needs of its immediate community and offer an array of services that are tailored to the needs of its constituents.”

SECTION 3. The office of youth services shall monitor and evaluate youth services centers and shall submit a report to the legislature on its findings and recommendations at least twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2002.

The report shall include:

- (1) A descriptive summary of the operation of youth services centers, including the services they provide;
- (2) The number of recipients of services at each center;
- (3) The allocation of funds to each center;
- (4) Staffing information at each center;
- (5) Recommendations regarding the continuation of youth services centers and future plans for expansion;
- (6) Recommendations regarding the process by which youth services centers are allocated resources;
- (7) A projected budget for the expenditures required to continue or expand youth services centers;
- (8) Proposals for legislation that are necessary to facilitate the continuation or expansion of youth services centers; and
- (9) A working plan of action for the strategic plan as designed in Act 375, Session Laws of Hawaii 1989.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2001-2002 and the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2002-2003 for youth services centers.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of youth services for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2001.

(Approved June 19, 2001.)