

LATE



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/21/2013

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 0395,HD1 RELATING TO YOUTH

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Office of Youth Services to coordinate a Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program that will coordinate a network of safe places that youth can access for safety and where they may obtain advice, guidance, programs, and services. Establishes the Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program coordinator. Appropriates funds. Effective July 1, 2013. (HB395 HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) is in support of HB 395,HD1 as it begins the challenging work of creating a safe haven for youth who lack a stable home environment. Such a program will provide youth with an opportunity to thrive as individuals and achieve optimal educational outcomes.

The Department is poised to partner with the Office of Youth Services, other agencies, branches and organizations in this pilot effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of this measure that will provide a safety net for our at-risk youth.

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46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Legislative Director

TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 395, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO YOUTH

**House Committee on Finance
Hon. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Hon. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Hon. Aaron Ling Johanson**

**Thursday, February 21, 2013, 11:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

Honorable Chair Luke and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 150 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of HB 395, relating to youth.

As advocates for survivors of human trafficking, we've encountered numerous minors while conducting outreach to victims. Sadly, many of these victims are misidentified as status offenders by law enforcement, who then subject them to detainment, arrest, and the legal protocols of family court. These children often, but not always, come from broken or abusive homes. What *is* almost always true, however, is that, once on the run, these kids are targeted by pimps and sex traffickers seeking to exploit their youth for financial gain. We feel that creating a network of “safe places” for the provision of counseling and information about available services would help address our victims' needs—especially with regard to psychological treatment and trauma care—by linking together existing services under a coordinated umbrella. That said, we urge you to be vigilant about safeguarding against lapses in privacy protection when information is shared between agencies participating in the pilot program, since such lapses could jeopardize the safety of victims and disincentivize utilization of the program's resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director
IMUAlliance

Testimony on HB 395 HD1
Relating to Youth

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Presented to the House Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Thursday, February 21, 2013

By Deborah L.K. Spencer-Chun, M.S.W.
Adult Friends for Youth
President and CEO

Chairman Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance, I am here to testify in support of HB 395 HD1 which will allow youth to access safe places to obtain advice, guidance, programs and services.

Before taking on my role as President and CEO, I spent over 20 years in the field working directly with youth. I have seen the successes when youth are provided with opportunities, guidance, and a safe, non-judgmental, nurturing, and respectful place to develop as productive and contributing members of society. But unfortunately I have also witnessed that at a young age, many of our youth fall prey to gangs, crime, drugs and violence which includes cyber bullying, human trafficking and other traumas. Times have changed and now our youth live in world where technology can be a double edge sword. They can access the world beyond their community and imagination providing them education opportunities beyond the classroom but they also become vulnerable to the unsuspecting perpetrators of society that have victimized them in many ways. In this sense, they become victims of their community. The key here is for youth to be able to access the appropriate services they need to overcome these negative influences. Helping them to develop and become healthy and successful people. Our youth deserves our help and more importantly they deserve to be protected.

I ask that you support HB 395 HD 1 as it will provide the financial means for youth to access safe places and live lives that are not only safe but healthy to continue thrive and become productive citizens of Hawaii.

FINTestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 1:00 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: foxhawaii2010@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB395 on Feb 21, 2013 11:00AM

HB395

Submitted on: 2/21/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 21, 2013 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Sims	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support HB395 which will require the Office of Youth Services to work on a "safe place" for at risk youth, abused children, and human trafficking youth victims. This is needed to help our youth obtain the support services and help they need. Lisa Sims Hawaii Resident

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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