



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE, 2016**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1986, RELATING TO YOUTH GANG PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

DATE: Thursday, February 4, 2016

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 329

TESTIFIER(S): Douglas S. Chin, Attorney General, or
Blair Goto, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of the bill is to appropriate \$1 for fiscal year 2016-2017 to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop prevention and intervention programs to target youth who are at high risk of engaging in gang activities or of joining youth gangs.

Article III, section 14 of the Hawaii Constitution provides in part: "No law shall be passed except by bill. Each law shall embrace but one subject, which shall be expressed in its title. . . ." The title of this bill, "Relating to youth gang prevention and intervention," arguably expresses two subjects—youth gang prevention and youth gang intervention. Indeed, the bill requires the DHS to develop programs that both help prevent youth from joining gangs and help intervene in the lives of youth who engage in gang activities. Because the bill appears to include two subjects in its title, the bill may be subject to challenge as violative of article III, section 14, of the Hawaii Constitution. We suggest this problem could be cured by providing an explanation in section 1 as to why "prevention and intervention" actually constitute a single subject. If this explanation cannot be made and there are really two subjects, we recommend that another vehicle with a title such as "Relating to Youth Gangs" or "Relating to Human Services" be used to enact the appropriation proposed by this bill.

We respectfully ask the Committee to make the suggested amendments or to hold this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
707 Richards Street, Suite 525
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 3, 2016

TO: The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Merton Chinen, Acting Executive Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1986, Relating to Youth Gang Prevention and Intervention**

Hearing: Thursday, February 4, 2016, 8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

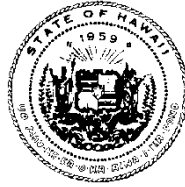
OFFICE'S POSITION: OYS supports the intent of the measure but requests that any appropriation not affect the priorities in the Executive Biennium Budget. OYS agrees that many factors can contribute toward an apparent increase in graffiti, violence, substance abuse and criminal activities, including risk factors such as poverty, higher concentrations of immigration, lack of parental guidance and supervision, and social disorganization in the community. Careful analysis of the extent and depth of the type of criminal activity, and symptoms of underlying social and economic dynamics is required prior to committing valuable resources toward any initiative related to our State's at-risk and troubled youth.

OYS supports a balanced and multi-prong approach to strengthen and improve a community's response in addressing any problem affecting a community. Currently, prevention and intervention efforts are underway through ongoing partnerships with various resources such as the police, Department of Education, Judiciary, community-based agencies, and the University of Hawaii, to address problems such as increased criminal activities that may be more related to ethnic and geographic concerns rather than a strict definition of gang activity.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the measure is to appropriate funds to target youths who live in public housing who are at risk of engaging in gang activities or joining gangs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

February 4, 2016 8:30 A.M.
Room 329, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
HB 1986
RELATING TO YOUTH GANG PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

Honorable Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding House Bill (HB) 1986, relating to youth gang prevention and intervention.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) appreciates the intent of this measure to fund the Department Human Services (DHS) to target youths living in public housing who are at risk of engaging in gang activities.

The HPHA welcomes the opportunity to work with any agency, nonprofit or program that would be of benefit to our tenants and the community at large. We defer to DHS and stand with their testimony on this measure.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Human Services with the HPHA's comments regarding HB 1986.

DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

ALII PLACE
1060 RICHARDS STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
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KEITH M. KANESHIRO
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

ARMINA A. CHING
FIRST DEPUTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



**THE HONORABLE DEE MORIKAWA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2016
State of Hawai'i**

February 4, 2016

RE: H.B. 1986; RELATING TO YOUTH GANG PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

Chair Morikawa, Vice-Chair Kobayashi and members of the House Committee on Human Services, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") supports the intent of H.B. 1986, however, would urge this committee to consider reallocating the funds associated with H.B. 1986 to Adult Friends for Youth as an alternative agency to carry out the goals and objectives.

The purpose of H.B. 1986 is to help reduce the growing youth gang problem in the State by creating programs aimed to promote education, self-esteem, individual growth and development, leadership, and responsibility. The creation of additional programs to assist our youth is consistent with this Department's ongoing concern for at-risk youth and the rise of youth gang affiliation. Over the years, our Department has seen increases in crime involving youth offenders who at times are as young as 12 years of age. Yet, despite this rise, there are few programs available to youth offenders in Hawaii, often leaving them with little or no meaningful alternatives.

While the purpose of H.B. 1986 is to establish a multi-pronged approach in programs which aim to target at-risk youth who reside in the public housing, our Department would strongly urge this committee to consider appropriating funds associated with H.B. 1986 for the fiscal year 2016-2017 to Adult Friends for Youth as an alternative. Adult Friends for Youth, was established in 1985 at the University of Hawaii, School of Social Work and boasts a stellar track record and history of sustainability which would ensure that any appropriated funds will be allocated properly and effectively. Adult Friends for Youth works with more than 400 high risk youth per week and has established many successful programs such as their Re-directional Therapy which is an effective therapeutic approach to combat violence, drugs, crime, teen pregnancy, family dysfunction, learning disabilities and anti-social behaviors amount the very

high risk youth both in and outside of the classroom. Through the programs implemented by Adult Friends for Youth, their services have successfully changed the attitudes and behaviors of over numerous different gangs. They have also successfully assisted multiple gang members through the difficult task of integration back into the community.

For all the reasons above, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu supports the intent of H.B. 1986 and strongly urges this committee to reallocate any funds to the Adult Friends for Youth Program. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

kobayashi2-Jessi

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2016 9:04 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: sabra@afyhawaii.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1986 on Feb 4, 2016 08:30AM*

HB1986

Submitted on: 2/2/2016

Testimony for HUS on Feb 4, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sabra Della Lucia	Adult Friends for Youth	Oppose	No

Comments:

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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TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Thursday, February 4, 2016

8:30 a.m.

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice – Chair

By: Dennis Arakaki for the Kalihi Community Youth Violence and Gang Prevention and Intervention Task Group.

Aloha Mai Keia Kakahiaka kakou, Madam Chair and members of the House Human Services Committee. I stand in strong support of HB 1986.

As the convenor of the Kalihi Community Youth Violence and Gang Prevention and Intervention Task Group, I want to relay our concerns for the growing incidences of youth violence in our communities and neighborhoods. We have seen and heard reports about a proliferation of violence on school campuses, parks, housing complex', fast food establishments and almost all public places that youth gather. These fights, that some refer to as gang fights, occur quickly as young people use the latest communication devices to spread the word which allow them to gather and disperse very quickly.

Kalihi is a melting pot of diverse cultures and ethnicities where many young immigrants and families get their start. The socio-economic factors that are woven throughout the community lead many young people feeling isolated and even excluded from the mainstream cultures as well as academic and economic successes. It's unfortunate but there is de facto segregation by ethnicity and socio-economic factors that are not intentional but create a community of youth faced with alienation caused by lack of opportunity to join the mainstream culture. Thus, the so called gangs are centered on territorial identities and ethnic similarities as their source of pride.

Kalihi is also like the canaries in the mine and the problems that face our community serve as indicators of more ominous problems we face statewide with our youth. The Task Group members recognize the importance and effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies that provide programs and activities that

keep youth out of the judicial system and the costly alternatives of rehabilitation and treatment.

I want to encourage our legislators to look to youth programs and services that give Recommendations include mobilizing the community to eradicate graffiti, provide multi-lingual information videos and pamphlets for parents and guardians to enable them to spot problems in their children and providing the referral to agencies and organizations that can help families. At one time most of the Public Housing project had resources to conduct social and recreation program within their complex'. But many expressed doubts about whether it was the role of public housing to implement these programs. Some even felt it was promoting segregation for those youth who reside in public housing. But like programs that accommodate students with special needs in our schools, we also need to consider programs that address the needs and conditions of youth who reside in public housing.

I urge you to pass this measure and refer it to the Finance Committee with a strong recommendation for funding. Mahalo!



Adult Friends for Youth

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Deborah L.K. Spencer-Chun, M.S.W.

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Sidney M. Rosen, M.S.W., Ph.D

**Past Chair of the Board*

Submitted to
Committee on Human Services
Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Submitted by:
Deborah L.K. Spencer-Chun
President and CEO, Adult Friends for Youth

Although good intentions to provide services to youth in gangs, I oppose HB 1986 because it limits services to youth in gangs that reside only in public housing. Gangs do not only reside in public housing it has become an Island wide problem. The use of technology via social media has had a far reaching impact on Oahu. We have seen gangs gravitate to Kalihi from as far West (including Waianae, Nanakuli, Kapolei, and Waipahu) and as far East (including Aina Haina, Waimanalo, Kaimuki, etc...) We have also witnessed youth from the North Shore engaging in gang activities. Believe it or not, many communities and public schools are affected by this wide spread problem. To limit funding or services to public housing would be tragic and not allow services to address the larger problem.

I thank you for your time.



Adult Friends for Youth

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**FOUNDER AND
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Sidney M. Rosen, M.S.W., Ph.D

**Past Chair of the Board*

Submitted to:
Committee on Human Services
Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair
Representative Betrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

Submitted by:
Mckay Schwenke
Vice President, Adult Friends for Youth

The initiative to submit a Bill that relates to working with youth gangs is one that makes a lot of sense, however, to limit those services to only youth who reside in Public Housing Communities would be a big mistake. For this reason I strongly oppose HB 1986 because much of the youth gang activities, fights, and violence occur outside of the housing projects. Many of the youth that may need the required services reside outside of the Public Housing Projects. In order to meet the demands of gang activity in the neighborhoods, funding should also be available for services that work with youth everywhere. Youth violence is a growing problem in our communities throughout the State. Addressing this issue Statewide should be a priority because promoting safe schools and communities will in the end help to combat youth gang activities both in and out of the Public Housing Projects. This is a community problem, not a housing problem.

I therefore oppose HB 1986.

Mahalo for your time!

kobayashi2-Jessi

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2016 9:14 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: lisa@afyhawaii.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1986 on Feb 4, 2016 08:30AM*

HB1986

Submitted on: 2/2/2016

Testimony for HUS on Feb 4, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Tamashiro	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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