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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO YOUTH.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 **PART I**

2 SECTION 1. The National Center for Housing and Child  
3 Welfare reports that there are between one million and seven  
4 million homeless youth who have run away or have been asked to  
5 leave their homes. According to the National Runaway Safeline,  
6 it is estimated that on any given night, there are approximately  
7 1.3 million homeless youth living unsupervised on the streets,  
8 in abandoned buildings, with friends, or with strangers.  
9 Homeless youth lack parental, foster, or institutional care and  
10 are thus prone to be at a higher risk for physical abuse, sexual  
11 exploitation, mental health disabilities, substance abuse, and  
12 death.

13 The legislature finds that Hawaii is not immune to the  
14 seriousness and prevalence of youth homelessness. A 2016  
15 National Conference of State Legislatures article, "Homeless and  
16 Runaway Youth", indicates that studies have shown that forty-six  
17 per cent of runaway and homeless youth reported being physically



1 abused, thirty-eight per cent reported being emotionally abused,  
2 and seventeen per cent reported being forced into unwanted  
3 sexual activity by a family or household member. Furthermore,  
4 seventy-five per cent of homeless or runaway youth have dropped  
5 out or will drop out of school. The legislature recognizes the  
6 necessity of establishing safe places that offer shelter,  
7 programs, and support to at-risk youth.

8 The purpose of this part is to:

- 9 (1) Require the office of youth services to coordinate a  
10 three-year safe places for youth pilot program, which  
11 will coordinate a network of safe places that youth  
12 can access and obtain advice, guidance, access to  
13 programs, and services; and
- 14 (2) Establish and appropriate funds for a safe places for  
15 youth pilot program coordinator position and  
16 residential options for the pilot program.

17 SECTION 2. (a) The office of youth services shall  
18 coordinate a three-year safe places for youth pilot program in  
19 partnership with private organizations. The primary objective  
20 of the pilot program shall be to coordinate a comprehensive  
21 network of safe places that youth can access for safety and



1 where they can obtain advice, guidance, programs, and services.  
2 All youth shall be eligible for services at the safe places.  
3 The requirements to consent to emergency shelter and related  
4 services, as set forth in section 346-17.6, Hawaii Revised  
5 Statutes, shall apply to services provided under the safe places  
6 for youth pilot program.

7 (b) There is established the position of a safe places for  
8 youth pilot program coordinator. The coordinator shall:

- 9 (1) Coordinate the safe places for youth network;  
10 (2) Partner with an entity to maintain an updated listing  
11 of safe places statewide;  
12 (3) Provide ongoing training for organizations designated  
13 as safe places for youth, including training in  
14 emergency response and trauma;  
15 (4) Partner with the department of education, state  
16 student council, peer education programs, private  
17 schools, and other youth services organizations to  
18 build awareness of the safe places for youth network;  
19 and  
20 (5) Convene an annual meeting of safe places for youth  
21 organizations and other interested parties to identify



1 emerging needs, provide feedback on program  
2 effectiveness, and provide an opportunity to recommend  
3 improvements to the pilot program.

4 (c) The safe places for youth pilot program shall provide  
5 access to and linkage with services and programs needed by  
6 youth, including:

- 7 (1) Domestic violence prevention or reduction;
- 8 (2) Violence and trauma recovery and support;
- 9 (3) Human trafficking resources and prevention;
- 10 (4) Suicide prevention;
- 11 (5) Resources targeted at teenagers, including teen  
12 pregnancy prevention;
- 13 (6) Tobacco cessation;
- 14 (7) Alcohol and substance abuse support;
- 15 (8) Assistance for youth to achieve their educational and  
16 vocational goals; and
- 17 (9) Other relationship-building and life skills.

18 (d) The office of youth services shall submit a report to  
19 the legislature of its findings and recommendations, including  
20 any proposed legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the  
21 convening of the regular sessions of 2021 and 2022. The reports



1 shall include a recommendation on whether the pilot program  
2 should be continued, modified, or terminated.

3 (e) The safe places for youth pilot program shall cease to  
4 exist on June 30, 2022.

5 (f) For the purposes of this section:

6 "Safe places" means physical and virtual places of safety  
7 for youth.

8 "Youth" means any person less than eighteen years of age.

9 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$70,000 or so much  
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the  
12 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
13 2020-2021 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) safe places for  
14 youth pilot program coordinator position and for residential  
15 options for the pilot program.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
17 of human services for the purposes of this part.

18 **PART II**

19 SECTION 4. The legislature finds that offenses known as  
20 "status offenses", which include conduct such as truancy that  
21 would not be criminal except when committed by a minor, are



1 linked to a strong need for social services to address the root  
2 causes of the commission of juvenile status offenses. The  
3 general response to status offenders is involvement with the  
4 criminal justice system, even though research has shown that  
5 incarceration and other forms of secure detention have a severe  
6 negative impact on youth and do not resolve the issues that led  
7 to the offense. Innovative programs have and continue to be  
8 developed to better address status offense conduct and divert  
9 youth from entering the criminal justice system.

10 The purpose of this part is to:

- 11 (1) Require the office of youth services to examine and  
12 report on options to reduce the use of status offense  
13 laws and increase the use of diversion programs and  
14 services for youth involved in status offense-type  
15 conduct; and
- 16 (2) Appropriate funds for the office of youth services to  
17 implement, through a three-year contract with a  
18 community services provider, a status offense  
19 diversion program.

20 SECTION 5. The office of youth services shall examine  
21 options to reduce the use of status offense laws and increase



1 the use of diversion programs and services for youth involved in  
2 status offense-type conduct. The office of youth services shall  
3 submit a report to the legislature of its findings and  
4 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, no later  
5 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions  
6 of 2021 and 2022.

7 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$130,000 or so much  
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the  
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
11 2020-2021 for the office of youth services to implement, through  
12 a three-year contract with a community services provider, a  
13 status offense diversion program.

14 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
15 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

Keiki Caucus; Office of Youth Services; Department of Human Services; Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program; Status Offense Diversion Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes and appropriates funds for a safe places for youth pilot program. Requires and appropriates funds for the office of youth services to reduce the use of status offense laws and implement a status offense diversion program. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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