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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A YOUTH COMMISSION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that increasing youth  
2 participation in the public policymaking process is a vital  
3 state interest. Hawaii has the lowest youth voter participation  
4 rate in the United States. In 2008, Hawaii's voter  
5 participation rate among eighteen to twenty-nine year olds was  
6 thirty-one per cent, compared to fifty-seven per cent among  
7 those thirty years of age and older.

8           The legislature further finds that youth aged sixteen and  
9 seventeen may legally work, pay taxes, marry, and drive.  
10 However, they are denied a formal role in the political process  
11 because they are prohibited from voting. Although youth under  
12 the age of eighteen may not vote, they deserve access and input  
13 through other means to the policymaking process.

14           Many of the most persistent issues facing the State, such  
15 as affordable housing, jobs, and education, primarily affect  
16 youth. Youth are the ones who need a place to live, depend on  
17 good employment to support themselves and their families, and



1 seek quality education for their children, if applicable. Yet  
2 after many decades, these issues remain among the most difficult  
3 to address.

4 The legislature further finds that a youth commission would  
5 enable a greater role for young people in the policymaking  
6 process. Furthermore, the legislature and governor would  
7 benefit from additional formal input from youth on the effect of  
8 legislation on young people in the State.

9 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 10 (1) Establish a youth commission within the office of  
11 youth services to advise the governor and legislature  
12 on the effects of legislative policies, needs,  
13 assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets  
14 concerning the youth of the State; and  
15 (2) Appropriate funds for the hiring of one staff position  
16 to administer the youth commission and other  
17 administrative costs.

18 SECTION 2. Chapter 352D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
19 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
20 and to read as follows:



1        "§352D- Youth commission. (a) There is established  
2 within the office of youth services, for administrative purposes  
3 only, a youth commission to advise the governor and legislature  
4 on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments,  
5 priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the  
6 State.

7        (b) The commission shall:

8        (1) Respond to requests for comment and recommendation on  
9 matters referred to it by the governor or legislature;

10       (2) Conduct research and community outreach regarding the  
11 needs of the youth of Hawaii, including but not  
12 limited to increasing youth participation in  
13 government and public policy;

14       (3) Make recommendations addressing the concerns and needs  
15 of the youth of Hawaii; and

16       (4) Report to the governor and legislature the activities,  
17 goals, and accomplishments of the commission by July 1  
18 of each calendar year, beginning on July 1, 2019.

19       (c) The youth commission shall consist of fifteen members  
20 between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four and shall not be  
21 subject to section 26-34. Of the members:



1       (1) Five members shall be appointed by the governor;  
2           provided that the governor shall ensure that each  
3           county is represented by at least one appointee;  
4           provided further that the governor shall ensure that  
5           at least one member is a previous recipient of youth  
6           services;

7       (2) Five members shall be appointed by the president of  
8           the senate; and

9       (3) Five members shall be appointed by the speaker of the  
10           house of representatives;

11       provided that the president of the senate and the speaker of the  
12       house of representatives shall appoint members representing the  
13       diversity of the State.

14       (d) Each member shall be appointed for a term of two  
15       years; provided that the initial terms of the appointed members  
16       shall be staggered as follows:

17       (1) Six members, two each appointed by the governor, the  
18           president of the senate, and the speaker of the house  
19           of representatives, to serve three-year terms;



1       (2) Six members, two each appointed by the governor, the  
2       president of the senate, and the speaker of the house  
3       of representatives, to serve two-year terms; and

4       (3) Three members, one each appointed by the governor, the  
5       president of the senate, and the speaker of the house  
6       of representatives, to serve one-year terms.

7       (e) The youth commission shall annually elect one of its  
8       members to serve as chairperson.

9       (f) Eight members of the youth commission shall constitute  
10      a quorum to do business. Any action taken by the commission  
11      shall be validated by a simple majority of the quorum.

12      (g) The youth commission members may invite other  
13      individuals to participate in commission activities as  
14      temporary, nonvoting members.

15      (h) If the governor, president of the senate, or speaker  
16      of the house of representatives fails to appoint a member to the  
17      youth commission for any reason within six months after a  
18      vacancy occurs, the commission by a majority vote may appoint a  
19      person who satisfies the requirements of this section to the  
20      commission to fill the vacancy."



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the  
4 hiring of one staff position to administer the youth commission  
5 and other associated administrative costs.

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

8 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Youth Commission; Office of Youth Services; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a Youth Commission within the Office of Youth Services to advise the Governor and Legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets relating to youth. Appropriates funds.  
(SB2089 HD1)

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