

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
**OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES**  
1010 Richards Street, Suite 314  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

March 1, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Executive Director

SUBJECT: **SB 869 SD1 – RELATING TO THE YOUTH COMMISSION**  
Hearing: March 3, 2023, 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Office of Youth Services (OYS) supports this measure.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill, with SD1 amendments, is to amend the number of commissioners needed to make quorum to do business.

The Office of Youth Services (OYS) oversees the Hawaii State Youth Commission (HiYC) and strongly supports the Youth Commission's mission and its ability to provide strong youth voice in advising the governor and effecting legislative policies as they relate to youth issues in the State. Over the past year, the Youth Commission has struggled with membership and has often not had the ability to establish quorum and conduct official business. The OYS supports the expansion of the definition of quorum.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



**Chair Karl Rhoads**  
**Vice Chair Mike Gabbard**

**Senate Committee on Judiciary**

**Chair Donovan Dela Cruz**  
**Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran**

**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Friday, March 3, 2023**  
**10:00AM**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB869 SD1 RELATING TO THE YOUTH  
COMMISSION**

Aloha Chair(s) Rhoads & Dela Cruz, Vice Chair(s) Gabbard & Keith-Agaran, Members of the Senate Committee(s) on Judiciary and Ways & Means,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission was first created through Act 106 in 2018, "to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State." The Hawai'i State Youth Commission (HiYC) is in **Strong Support** of **SB869 SD1**, Relating to the Youth Commission.

HiYC supports amending section 352D-11 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes to set the quorum requirement to a *majority* of the members rather than eight members in order to do business. This

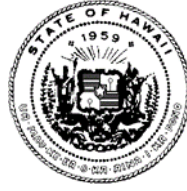
is because, in the past, the HiYC has seen some difficulty maintaining the quorum needed to conduct our mission and purpose. There have been unforeseen conflicts and events, such as staggered start and end times for individual commissioner terms, which affects our ability to fill vacancies and will be important in the coming months as several of the current commissioners will be ending their current terms (giving eligible commissioners the ability to go through the reappointment process again). It has been challenging to meet the current quorum requirements and has hindered the ability of the commission to conduct official business. **Amending the definition of quorum to a majority of appointed members will enable the Youth Commission to more easily fulfill its missions and tasks.**

In the previous subject matter committee, language was deleted that would have allowed HiYC to appoint its own Executive Director. The Youth Program Specialist staff position, which acts as the executive director for the Hawai'i State Youth Commission, has been left vacant for over six months. As signed into law in 2018, Act 106 appropriated funds for administration costs and for the executive director position, which acts as a liaison between the Youth Commission and the Office of Youth Services. While the commission would still very much like to play an active role in selecting the Youth Program Specialist, we are in the process of working on amended language that would address liability and confidentiality concerns. **In the meantime, we would like for your committees to PASS Senate Bill 869 SD1 as is. Changes in quorum requirements is still very much a priority that we would like to see passed by the legislature.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission  
[hawaiistateyc@gmail.com](mailto:hawaiistateyc@gmail.com)

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 2, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [SB 869 SD1](#) - RELATING TO THE YOUTH COMMISSION.

Hearing: March 3, 2023, 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the measure's intent and defers to the Hawaii Youth Commission and the Office of Youth Services.

**PURPOSE:** This bill clarifies that a majority of the members appointed to the Youth Commission shall constitute a quorum to do business. Effective 12/31/2050. (SD1)

The SD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Deleting language that would have allowed the Youth Commission to appoint its own Executive Director; and
- (2) Inserting an effective date of December 31, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

The Department supports the mission of the Youth Commission, which is to advise the governor and Legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State per section 352D-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Revising the quorum will assist the Youth Commission's ability to make decisions and progress in its work.

Regarding participation in hiring of the Commission staff, DHS suggests as a viable option that the commissioners discuss with OYS ways for Commissioners to participate in the selection process to fill the current administrator position.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

**SB-869-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 2:40:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Zoey Duan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, Senate Committee on Judiciary, and Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Hello, I'm Zoey Duan, a Youth Commissioner on The Hawaii State Youth Commission. I am in support with comments of SB869 SD1, Relating To the Youth Commission.

I support amending the quorum requirement to a majority of the members rather than eight members. This would greatly increase our flexibility in performing and accomplishing various tasks that are time-sensitive and of priority while also accounting for extenuating circumstances.

Additionally, as a Youth Commissioner, I believe I should have a voice in the selection process of the commission's executive director, especially since we commissioners are the only ones who can best identify our needs and gaps that we would like assistance with. Having more mechanisms for us to encourage and facilitate the process will better enable us to find a suitable director in a timely manner. However, since there may be legal liability and confidentiality concerns if Page 4, Line 7-9 of SB869 is passed at this time, I would like to suggest that particular section be removed from the bill. I'd still like to emphasize the fact that it is important to improve upon the current hiring process to allow more engagement from youth commissioners, perhaps just in another way.

With these comments, I support SB869 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha, my name is Eric Pomaika'i Gee, and I am a junior at Kealakehe High School.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB869. I am fortunate to have been selected as one of the new commissioners this year. As I began attending sessions, it was clear that some restraints were halting productivity. In this case, the eight-member quorum regulation is nearly impossible to meet. Before I was voted in, there were only eight commission members, which meant all members needed to be present to vote in the new class of commissioners. We quickly discovered that the eight-member rule is only adequate when there are 15 commissioners. With the fluctuation in the commissioners, changing to a majority vote is a better fit for our current situation.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony!

**Mahalo,**

**Eric Pomaika'i Gee, CMfgA**  
**Hawaii State Youth Commission**  
**Kealakehe HS '24**  
**Vice-Chair | SCC**  
**KHS Head Ambassador**  
**ericpgee@gmail.com | (808) 938-3518**

**SB-869-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 7:02:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marissa Matsushige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Judiciary and Ways and Means Committee,

In support of SB869 relating to the Youth Commission.

Aloha! My name is Marissa Matsushige, a senior at Kaua'i High School and a recently appointed member of the Youth Commission. I am writing this testimony in support of SB869 SD1 highlighting the changes made to Section 1, Subsection f. As I have just been recently appointed to the Youth Commission, I have found that voting with a minimum of eight members is quite difficult as before I was appointed alongside two other members, there were only eight members of the Youth Commission. It took me a couple of meetings to be completely voted in as the schedules of the other youth commissioners did not quite match up for all eight to be present and to vote. Revising the quorum to the majority of the commission to vote will allow the Youth Commission to vote on certain subjects and issues in a timely matter allowing us to be productive in our business.

As commissioners are bound to come and go, there is no way of ensuring that there will be more than eight members on the commission at all times. This quorum restriction has slowed down the business on the agenda, thus proving that this revision to SB869 will provide the Youth Commission with the means to continue the good work that we do.

I am in strong support of SB869 as I know that the Youth Commission will be able to achieve many great things when the voting quorum is the majority of the commission.

Thank you for your time.

Marissa Matsushige

marissa.mats05@gmail.com



**Chair Karl Rhoads**  
**Vice Chair Mike Gabbard**  
**Senate Committee on Judiciary**

**Chair Donovan Dela Cruz**  
**Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Aragan**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Friday, March 3, 2023**  
**10:00 AM**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB869 SD1 RELATING TO THE YOUTH  
COMMISSION**

Aloha Chair(s) Rhoads & Dela Cruz, Vice Chair(s) Gabbard & Keith-Aragan, Members of the Senate Committee(s) on Judiciary and Ways & Means,

My name is Hana-Lei and I am one of the newest Hawai'i State Youth Commission members. We strongly support SD869 SD1, relating to the Youth Commission and amending section 3532D-11 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes to set the quorum requirement to a majority of the members.

I am joining the Commission as a second-year college student at Northwestern University in Illinois. This position is an amazing opportunity to connect and support initiatives back at home, despite being so far away. Many of our members are in similar positions, managing college classes while finding time for all of us to meet virtually from Hawai'i or across the country.

However, the current quorum requires eight members to conduct official business. After speaking with the commission and attending a few meetings this past month, it is evident that maintaining a quorum has been difficult up to this point. With the addition of myself and two other members on the Commission, we will in the short-term be able to have an easier time maintaining a quorum and taking care of Commission business. However, as individual commissioners' terms have started at varying times, some of the current commissioners' terms will be coming to an end at varying times in the next couple of months.

Alongside those potential new vacancies, existing vacancies we are still in the process of trying to fill, and any other personal situations that might affect people's availability from time to time, this leaves the Commission in a similar position as before, unable to move forward with the Commission's purpose "to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State." Amending the definition of a quorum to a majority of appointed members through

amending section 352D-11 will make it more accessible for the Youth Commission to carry out its purpose and efficiently achieve its mission.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,  
Hana-Lei Ji