

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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KE KIA'ĀINA



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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

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 24, 2025

TO: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 560 HD1 – RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY.**

Hearing: February 25, 2025, 12:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the measure, defers to the Judiciary, and provides comments.

Funds for civil legal, mediation, and other services assist low-income and vulnerable residents in navigating the legal process and avoiding long-term consequences that result without representation or assistance. These programs also promote confidence in the civil justice system and the rule of law. Eviction mediation programs set during the COVID-19 pandemic proved successful in assisting residents and landlords to resolve their housing disputes without further court intervention. Maintaining housing stability is the foundation of overall well-being and community resilience. Conversely, housing instability impacts employment, education, physical and mental health, and the quality of life of those impacted.

PURPOSE: Appropriates funds to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

February 24, 2025

Page 2

The Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs amended the measure by changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion .

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

by
Rodney A. Maile
Administrative Director of the Courts

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 560, H.D. 1, Relating to the Judiciary

Purpose: Appropriates funds to the judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of House Bill No. 560, H.D. 1 to appropriate funds to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations. Courts and programs of the Judiciary contract with organizations across the state for important services for court-users and clients. This includes anger management classes, emergency shelter services, adult and juvenile sex offender assessment and treatment services, adult and juvenile substance use treatment services, mental health assessments for juveniles, certain mental health services, mediation and dispute resolution services, victim advocacy for child physical abuse and child sex trafficking, domestic violence intervention services, sober living and treatment services, and more.

The Judiciary respectfully requests that any appropriation for this measure not supplant Judiciary priorities nor biennium budget requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**Parents And
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 560 HD1 RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, & Members,
House Committee on Finance
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO
DATE: February 25, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Parents and Children Together (PACT) strongly supports HB 560 HD1, which appropriates funds for the Judiciary to increase allocation for contracts with community-based organizations providing critical services in Hawaii. PACT is contracted by the Judiciary to provide services related to domestic violence in three counties – Honolulu, Maui and Kaua‘i. Through these contracts we help survivors and child witnesses cope through their trauma, heal from abuse, and rebuild safe and self-sufficient households. We also work with individuals who have committed crimes of domestic violence through classes and counseling. These services and the staff dedicated to providing them are specialized and essential to the safety and well-being of our community.

We submit this testimony as a member of the Hawai‘i True Cost Coalition – over 50 community-based non-profit organizations fighting to sustain essential services for our communities. The people of our community are strong, resilient and capable yet challenged by systems of scarcity that are difficult to overcome without targeted support. They must be supported by high-quality organizations that are sustainable, and Judiciary funding is an important part of that. When state contract amounts do not increase over time as operating costs do, this important service for the community becomes unsustainable.

Founded by residents of Kuhio Park Terrace in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or tkajimura@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



HB560 HD1 Reentry to Community Services for Judiciary

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Tuesday Feb 25, 2025 12:00 Room 308

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB560 HD1:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment, prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

A comprehensive program that includes diversion to treatment and reentry to community services produces better outcomes and is more cost-effective.

HSAC understands this very well since we treat all these issues for those who have chronic to severe levels as well as new programs for mild to moderate conditions.

- **A chronic condition of substance abuse often has multiple conditions** such as co-occurring mental health issues and physical health conditions.
- There are **various levels of mild to chronic** forms of substance use disorders, mental health disorders and even criminality.

Comprehensive services can address the various levels of mild to moderate to chronic for **multiple reentry issues that can include specialized treatment for substance abuse and/or mental health disorders, harm reduction for lower use of substances, housing, case management, vocational training and employment, education, family integration, harm reduction, restorative practices and more.**

1. **For offenders with heavy use substance use and either low or high functionality, abstinence-based treatment is essential for what works according to research** from the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the definitive body of science for levels of care. The more chronic substance abuse, especially for addiction, would be best to start at residential or if less severe, start at outpatient treatment. Treatments would also address criminality and include medications if needed.

- a. If **residential**, start first and then move to housing.
 - i. Key to residential is to **have complex patient capability**.
 - ii. Key is to have **case management** after treatment that focuses on helping offenders “pursue abstinence” knowing that chronic illnesses tend to have relapses.
 - b. If **therapeutic living programs or outpatient**, then start at **housing and include outpatient**.
 - i. Education would be beneficial before, during and after treatment.
 - ii. Vocational training and employment can occur simultaneously with outpatient.
 - iii. Case management and **medication management** are key as part of and following treatment.
2. **For offenders with lower substance use and either low or high functioning, it is preferable to start with housing plans, case management, education, vocational training and employment with wrap around harm reduction practices.** If substance abuse continues without controlled use and especially if there are other behavioral health issues then counseling, medications, or outpatient treatment can be considered especially as for co-occurring substance misuse along with mental health disorders. Any needed substance use disorder or co-occurring disorder outpatient or counseling treatments would be best to include programming that addresses criminality issues. Medication management would be considered.
3. Using **nationally standardized screening and assessment tools** are **essential to develop appropriate reentry plans to determine an integrated approach for reentry:**
- a. that incorporates residential or outpatient treatment as part of housing or
 - b. if substance abuse treatment is not needed, then integrate recovery-oriented services as part of housing, such as case management or medication management.
 - c. Vocational is key for long-term rehabilitation.
 - d. It is important that parole and probation are involved in every step with service providers.

Telehealth also considered a very cost-effective means for assessments and engagement.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for further questions.



HAWAI`I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 904

Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

Vonnell Ramos, President
Cyd Hoffeld, Vice President
Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer
Greg Tjapkes, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Network Membership

Access to Independence
Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai`i
Bobby Benson Center
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai`i
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC `Ohana, Inc.
Friends of the Children's Justice
Center of Maui
Get Ready Hawai`i
Hale Kipa, Inc
Hale `Opio Kaua`i, Inc.
Hawai`i Children's Action
Network
Hawai`i Health & Harm
Reduction Center
Hawaii Island Community`
Health Center
Ho`ola Na Pua
Ho`okele Coalition of Kaua`i
Ka Hale Pomaika`i
Kokua Kalihi Valley
Kaua`i Planning and Action
Alliance
Lines for Life Youth Line
Mau`i Youth and Family Services
Na Pu`uwai Molokai Native
Hawaiian Health Care
Systems
P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.
Parents and Children Together
PHOCUSED
Piha Wellness and Healing
Planned Parent
Great Northwest, Hawaii
Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana
Residential Youth Services
& Empowerment (RYSE)
Salvation Army Family
Intervention Services
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community
Center
The Catalyst Group

February 22, 2025

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Finance

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 560 HD1 RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Hawaii's most vulnerable populations including children, youth, and young adults, need the services provided by CBOs in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes. We all want our children to grow up safe, healthy, and ready to succeed. It takes a network of trauma-informed, culturally relevant, and accessible services to enable our young people to make successful transitions to adulthood.

The most recent ALICE report by Aloha United Way stated that 37% of households said that someone in their family is considering moving out of state. 85% of families said it was simply the high cost of living in Hawai'i, and 73% said it was because of the high cost of housing,

CBOs struggle to attract and retain qualified staff. When contracts and grants do not pay the full cost of providing services, CBOs are not able to pay competitive wages. Workers choose higher paying jobs or places with a lower cost of living. It is shameful when wages are so low that a portion of Hawaii's CBO staff receive SNAP and other public assistance benefits. Staff working with homeless persons are often concerned about becoming homeless themselves. One outreach worker shared with me, "If my landlord raises my rent, I won't be able to afford my housing." In 2024, The Salvation Army

Family Intervention Services stopped admitting clients to its emergency shelter for boys on Maui due to critical staffing shortages.

As a member of the True Cost Coalition, HYSN believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com

Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Room 308 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

12:00 NOON

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 560 HD1

JUDICIARY; FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai`i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 3,700 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as of February 17, 2025. We are always mindful that 936 - 49.6% of Hawai`i's male prison population are serving their sentences abroad -- thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

As a proud member of the True Cost Coalition, Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates this opportunity to **strongly support HB 560 HD1** that appropriates funds for the to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the Judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, February 17, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-02-17.pdf>

We know how families struggle when the main breadwinner is incarcerated because CAP speaks with families trying to survive almost every day and we appreciate the Judiciary funding services to help some of our most vulnerable neighbors. As a community, we are lucky to have the services of the Legal Aid Society and others to help folks. The Executive Director of Legal Aid Hawai`i spoke in committee about how their budget is stretched to the max, making it is difficult to meet the needs of so many.

The looming threat of the Federal government cutting off funding for these desperately needed services for our neighbors is frightening and could result in more families living on beaches, in parks, and on the streets, etc. These organizations are doing the work that the government just cannot do itself. We need to appreciate that! It would be a very different Hawai`i without their dedicated service to our neighbors.

Community Alliance on Prisons sends a warm mahalo the committee for hearing this important measure and we hope the committee members support our neighbors by strongly recommending that the Judiciary receives appropriate funding so that these terrific organizations can continue serving our communities, especially in these challenging times.

Mahalo nui!

Hawai'i True Cost Coalition

Date: February 25, 2025

Re: Strong Support of HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Our coalition of organizations for Hawai'i True Cost Coalition are writing in strong support of HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary, which appropriates funds to the judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

The Hawai'i True Cost Coalition is an alliance of over 70 community-based nonprofit organizations serving more than 500,000 residents statewide. Since its establishment in 2020, the coalition has focused on strengthening collaboration between nonprofits and the state to ensure taxpayer funds are allocated equitably and efficiently. By advocating for sustainable funding solutions, the coalition helps safeguard critical services for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations, including children, kupuna, individuals experiencing homelessness, and survivors of domestic violence. These efforts are essential to ensuring that nonprofit organizations can continue providing the vital care and support on which so many residents rely.

Hawai'i's safety net often goes unnoticed—until it begins to fray. This safety net consists of community-based nonprofit organizations (CBOs) that provide essential services to tens of thousands of residents every day. These organizations offer shelter for at-risk youth, meals for kupuna, aid for survivors of domestic violence, and countless other supports that touch every corner of the state. Without immediate action, many of these programs could disappear entirely, leaving some of Hawai'i's most vulnerable residents without the critical support they need to thrive.

HB 560 HD1 addresses funding gaps for the Judiciary, enabling stronger partnerships with CBOs and sustaining essential services. Increased Judiciary funding ensures Hawai'i families receive housing assistance, food security, youth support, and care for low-income households. This measure promotes community well-being while strengthening Hawai'i's social safety net for the future. Investing now secures vital support for years to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Adult Friends for Youth | Aloha Harvest | Aloha United Way (AUW) | AlohaCare | Arc of Kona | Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii | Blueprint for Change | Catholic Charities Hawaii | Child and Family Service | Community Alliance on Prisons | Domestic Violence Action Center | Easter Seals | Epic `Ohana | Family Promise of Hawai'i | Full Life | Girl Scouts of Hawaii | Going Home Hawaii | Goodwill Hawaii | Hale Kipa | Hale `Opio Kaua'i | Hawai'i International Film Festival | Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) | Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) | Hawai'i Food Bank | Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) | Hawai'i Meals On Wheels | Hawai'i Public Health Institute | Hawai'i Youth Services Network | Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence | Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies | Hope Services Hawai'i | Imua Family Services | Institute for Human Services (IHS) | Kalamapi'i Play School | Kinai `Eha | Kumukahi Health and Wellness | Lanakila Pacific | Maui AIDS Foundation | Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO) | Maui Family Support Services | Mental Health Kokua | Mediation Center of the Pacific | Mindful Living Group | Nurturing Wahine Fund | Parents and Children Together (PACT) | Partners In Care (PIC) | Partners In Development Foundation (PIDF) | PATCH | Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE) | Responsive Caregivers of Hawai'i | Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii | Share Your Mana | The Spirit Horse Ranch | U.S. Vets | Women Helping Women | YMCA of Honolulu

1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 | (808) 447-1840



Statement Before The
Tuesday, February 25, 2025
12:00 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

in consideration of
HB560, HD1

RELATING TO JUDICIARY.

Chair YAMASHITA, Vice Chair TAKENOUCI, and Members of the House Finance Committee

The Legal Clinic (TLC) supports HB560, HD1, which appropriates funds to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the Judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

TLC is a Hawai'i nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. TLC is a direct legal services provider, representing those in Hawai'i who meet income eligibility guidelines without regard to immigration status, national origin, ethnic background, race, religion, ideology, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability. TLC works alongside immigrants so they can attain authorization to work and live with dignity, reunite with their families after years of separation and escape horrific violence to find refuge in the United States. TLC recognizes that every person needs and deserves to feel a sense of trust, welcome, and belonging.

TLC supports increased funding for the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services to vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals impacted by a lack of resources. TLC anticipates an exponential increase in those needing support in immigration proceedings with the current federal administration's immigration enforcement actions and rhetoric. TLC is already experiencing increased calls for Know Your Rights support and training throughout the community from partner organizations and individuals.

TLC notes that there is a line item in the current Judiciary's budget for \$1.2 million for civil legal services. TLC also supports increasing this amount given the growing need placed on safety net providers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB560, HD1, and TLC respectfully urges the Committee members to pass HB560, HD1 out of your Committee. If you have questions of me, please contact me at sma@tlchawaii.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma

Sandy Ma
Community & Policy Advocate
The Legal Clinic



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: House Committee on Finance
FROM: Tina Andrade, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Date: February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of HB 560 HD1** which allocates critical funding to the Judiciary to improve access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable communities. I am Tina Andrade, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, Community-Based Organization that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 77 years. CCH has programs serving children, families, elders, homeless, and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i.

We are a member of the Hawai'i True Cost Coalition, comprised of Community-Based Organizations across the state. Many residents in Hawaii face substantial obstacles when navigating the legal system, especially low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those needing behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) play a critical role in providing legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals while enhancing the efficiency of judicial processes.

The uncertainty of federal funding for legal services and justice programs poses additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that assist it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and reductions could significantly impair the ability of CBOs to deliver essential services. By securing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can address these uncertainties and guarantee consistent support for vulnerable residents seeking justice.

Without sufficient funding, CBOs cannot sustain their operations or meet the growing demand for services. The True Cost Coalition strongly believes this bill is vital to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their financial circumstances or personal situations.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and affirm your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice for everyone in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Tina Andrade, President and CEO of Catholic Charities Hawai'i





Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of EPIC 'Ohana in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

EPIC 'Ohana has served communities, families, young adults, and children impacted by the foster care system statewide, for almost thirty years. The need for critical supports has never been more urgent as Child Welfare Services faces an almost 40% vacancy rate and a newly released legislative working group report that highlights the need for sweeping reform. The Judiciary serves a vital role in ensuring that families, youth and children are served with efficacy, integrity and compassion as they navigate legal pathways in the foster care system.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Me Ka Ha'aha'a (With Humility),
Delia Parker Ulima
Executive Director, EPIC 'Ohana



February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Aloha United Way and our many non-profit partner agencies who provide services via State contracts, and as a member of the True Cost Coalition, I write in support of HB 560 HD1, to provide critical funding for the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's vulnerable populations.

Many of Hawaii's residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

Without adequate funding, the CBOs the State depends on for services cannot sustain operations or meet a growing demand. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Michelle Bartell
President & CEO
Aloha United Way



91-1841 Fort Weaver Road
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706
Phone 808.681.3500
Fax 808.681.5280
www.childandfamilyservice.org

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Maui United Way
Hawaii Island United Way

Amanda Pump
President & CEO
Child & Family Service
February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Child and Family Service in strong support of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Communities, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions, often face significant barriers when trying to navigate the legal system. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services.

The True Cost Coalition believes HB 560 HD1 is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Amanda Pump
President & CEO
Child & Family Service



“We’re all about FAMILY”

Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



February 25, 2025

Testimony in Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO), I am writing in **strong support** of HB560 HD1, which aims to increase funding for the Judiciary to enhance its partnership with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

The Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) is a statewide, sector-wide professional association of nonprofits that works to strengthen and unite the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve the quality of life in Hawai'i. Since 2006, HANO has been a leading voice for the nonprofit sector, leveraging resources, educating and advocating for policies and practices that promote the professionalism, sustainability, and effectiveness of nonprofits and the communities they serve.

Hawai'i depends on nonprofit and community-based organizations to provide essential services like legal aid, case management, and mediation, helping community members—many of whom are immigrants, low-income families, individuals in crisis, or those needing behavioral support—navigate the legal system and simplify judicial processes. However, these organizations' ability to effectively deliver services relies on fair funding and strong partnerships between the Judiciary and nonprofit CBOs.

HANO supports this bill as a crucial step in securing state funding and ensuring continued access to vital legal services for our most vulnerable residents. Given the ongoing uncertainty and shifts in federal policy, it is critical for our legislature to act swiftly and protect the stability of CBOs providing these essential legal services in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Mahalo,

Jodi Robinson
Policy Director, HANO



REDUCING HARM,
PROMOTING HEALTH,
CREATING WELLNESS,
AND FIGHTING STIGMA
IN HAWAII AND
THE PACIFIC

Letter of Support

February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

HHHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Heather Lusk, LCSW, MSW
Executive Director
Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center

HAWAII HEALTH
& HARM REDUCTION
CENTER

677 Ala Moana Blvd.
Suite 226
Honolulu, HI 96813

(808) 521-2437

www.hhhrc.org



HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 904

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

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Cyd Hoffeld, Vice President
Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer
Greg Tjapkes, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

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Bobby Benson Center
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC 'Ohana, Inc.
Friends of the Children's Justice
Center of Maui
Get Ready Hawaii
Hale Kipa, Inc
Hale 'Opio Kaua'i, Inc.
Hawaii Children's Action
Network
Hawaii Health & Harm
Reduction Center
Hawaii Island Community'
Health Center
Ho'ola Na Pua
Ho'okele Coalition of Kaua'i
Ka Hale Pomaika'i
Ko'ua Kalih Valley
Kaua'i Planning and Action
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Maui Youth and Family Services
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Hawaiian Health Care
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Parents and Children Together
PHOCUSED
Piha Wellness and Healing
Planned Parent
Great Northwest, Hawaii
Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana
Residential Youth Services
& Empowerment (RYSE)
Salvation Army Family
Intervention Services
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community
Center
The Catalyst Group

February 25, 2025

From: Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director
Hawaii Youth Services Network

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 560 HD1, which aims to increase funding for the Judiciary which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Hawaii's most vulnerable populations including children, youth, and young adults, need the services provided by CBOs in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes. We all want our children to grow up safe, healthy, and ready to succeed. It takes a network of trauma-informed, culturally relevant, and accessible services to enable our young people to make successful transitions to adulthood.

The most recent ALICE report by Aloha United Way stated that 37% of households said that someone in their family is considering moving out of state. 85% of families said it was simply the high cost of living in Hawaii, and 73% said it was because of the high cost of housing,

CBOs struggle to attract and retain qualified staff. When contracts and grants do not pay the full cost of providing services, CBOs are not able to pay competitive wages. Workers choose higher paying jobs or places with a lower cost of living. It is shameful when wages are so low that a portion of Hawaii's CBO staff receive SNAP and other public assistance benefits. Staff working with homeless persons are often concerned about becoming homeless themselves. One outreach worker shared with me, "If my landlord raises my rent, I won't be able to afford my housing." In 2024, The Salvation Army

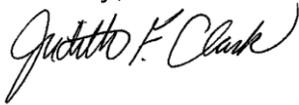
Family Intervention Services stopped admitting clients to its emergency shelter for boys on Maui due to critical staffing shortages.

As a member of the True Cost Coalition, HYSN believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a distinct "F" and "C".

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



The Institute for Human Services, Inc.
Ending the Cycle of Homelessness

TO: Chair Yamashita
Vice Chair Takenouchi

FROM: Connie Mitchell, Executive Director
IHS, The Institute for Human Services, Inc.

DATE: February 25, 2025

POSITION: IHS supports HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

IHS, The Institute for Human Services is in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many individuals residing in Hawaii face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. As the homeless service provider that has had the most experience filing petitions for assisted community treatment in the State of Hawaii, we know all too well the obstacles that individuals, family members, and households face when trying to navigate the legal system to create stability and access resources they're eligible for. Often, it is Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that provide essential support to help them access legal aid, case management, treatment, and supportive services.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. This bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances. We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your leadership in addressing this critical issue and for this opportunity to testify.



THE MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC, INC.
Bringing People Together to Talk, Negotiate and Resolve Conflict Creatively

1301 Young Street, Honolulu, HI 96814 Tel: 521-6767 Fax: 538-1454 Email: mcp@mediatehawaii.org

February 25, 2025

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Tracey S. Wiltgen

From: Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director
The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc.

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1 Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Mediation Center of the Pacific in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The Mediation Center of the Pacific believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue

Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director
The Mediation Center of the Pacific



PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION

February 25, 2025

From: Shawn Kana'iaupuni, President & CEO
Partners in Development Foundation

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I write to you today not just as President and CEO of Partners in Development Foundation, but as a voice for the youth, families, and communities of our beloved Hawai'i. We stand in strong support of HB 560 HD1, a bill that promises new life into our justice system and extends its reach to those who need it most.

In the tapestry of our island community, we've seen too many threads frayed by the challenges of navigating a complex legal system. Our keiki, our kūpuna, and our 'ohana in crisis often find themselves lost in a maze of procedures and paperwork, their voices unheard and their needs unmet. This bill is a beacon of hope, illuminating a path to justice for all.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are the unsung heroes in this story. They are the hands that guide, the voices that advocate, and the hearts that care. These organizations are the bridge between our most vulnerable and the justice they deserve. These bridges are straining under the weight of increasing demand and dwindling resources. The unpredictability of federal funding casts a long shadow over their future. This bill is not just about money; but care for our community by ensuring that these vital services remain strong and accessible.

By supporting HB 560 HD1, you're not just approving a budget; you're investing in the future of Hawai'i. You're saying that justice isn't a privilege for the few, but a right for all. You're affirming that every keiki deserves a fair start, every family in crisis deserves support, and every individual struggling with behavioral health needs deserves compassion and care.

This bill represents the aloha spirit in action. It's about extending a helping hand to our neighbors, about weaving a stronger social fabric that can withstand the storms of life. It's about building a Hawai'i where no one is left behind in the pursuit of justice.

We humbly ask you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawai'i

Mahalo nui for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Shawn Kana'iaupuni

Shawn Kana'iaupuni, President & CEO
Partners in Development Foundation

Serving Hawai'i's Families, Living Hawaiian Values



February 25, 2025

Chair Kyle Yamashita
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi
House Committee on Finance

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Maui Economic Opportunity, (MEO) Inc. in strong support of HB 560 HD1 which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes. MEO has administered a Reentry Program for over 20 years and know first-hand the impact of social service assistance to support public safety and reduce recidivism.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and reentry services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. MEO believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Debbie Cabebe

Debbie Cabebe, SHRM-SCP
Chief Executive Officer



Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii
PO Box 75380
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

A private, non-profit organization

February 25, 2025

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii in strong support of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations. The mission of Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii is to increase independence, productivity and integration of persons with developmental disabilities. We serve over 100 adults with intellectual disabilities through day care, transportation and residential services.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii. Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Marsh, MA, CFRE
President & CEO



Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii

February 25, 2025

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From: Rachelle Chang
Executive Director
Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations.

Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides professional, accessible mental health counseling to people with limited resources. We are a safety net for individuals and families who are uninsured or underinsured; who are unable to afford high co-pays and deductibles; or who have health insurance coverage which pays at below market-rates, making it difficult for them to find a counselor.

Through our Client Assistance Fund, we ensure that the people of Hawai'i can receive the mental health care they need to be healthy and whole – and support access to mental health care, especially in rural and underserved communities.

Hawai'i's prison system is facing a mental health care crisis. Too many people with mental health conditions are being incarcerated and receive inadequate care, and are released without adequate mental health support. From 2001 to 2019, the number of suicides increased 85% in state prisons, and 13% in local jails (US Bureau of Justice 2021).

<https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/sljsfp0019st.pdf>

Many Hawai'i residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral health interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, mental health counseling, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

Celebrating 35 Years of Service

1020 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, HI 96814 • Phone: (808) 545-2740 • Fax: (808) 545-2852
www.samaritancounselingcenterhawaii.org • Email: info@samaritanhawaii.org

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawai'i's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawai'i can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

With aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachelle Chang". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachelle Chang
Executive Director



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Greg Waibel, CEO of the YMCA of Honolulu. We are one of the largest nonprofits in Hawaii. I am in **strong support** of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Greg Waibel
President & CEO

Nickolas Kacprowski
Board President

Rachel Figueroa
Executive Director



545 Queen Street, Suite 100
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Phone: (808) 528-7050
Fax: (808) 524-2147
www.vlsh.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 560, HD1
RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY
Committee on Finance –February 25, 2025 12:00 p.m.

CHAIR YAMASHITA, VICE CHAIR TAKENOUCHI AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:

Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i supports the intent of H.B. 560, HD1.

Volunteer Legal is also supportive of an increase to the existing line item in the budget for civil legal services.

We are more worried than ever about the impact that the limiting of services has on the safety net of legal services. Volunteer Legal is concerned about all the federal actions limiting services to those residents who need it the most. There are many unmet needs¹, and Volunteer Legal is often the last line of defense for someone facing critical issues, like landlord/tenant or child custody issues.

In the last forty-four years, Volunteer Legal has partnered with volunteer attorneys in the provision of civil legal assistance to individuals and families of Hawai'i. While Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i's only office is on Oahu, we service residents of Hawai'i statewide. In 2024, with only a staff of 9, Volunteer Legal qualified around 1000 individuals. Volunteer Legal provides legal checkups, educational presentations, clinics, brief services and/or full representations. Twenty-one (21%) of those helped are homeless or at the risk of being homeless, 28% of those helped suffer from domestic violence, 6% of those helped were veterans, 26% of those helped are disabled, and 20% of those helped were aged 60 and over. If not for Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i, these individuals would have otherwise gone without legal help.

Volunteer Legal Services Hawai'i thanks the committee for the past support of legal services in the judiciary budget. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Rachel Figueroa, Executive Director

¹According to the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report in 2022, in Hawaii alone, 11% of residents were below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), with 33% that earned above the Federal Poverty Line but not enough to afford the basics in the community where they live. <https://unitedforalice.org/national-overview>

“Low-income Americans do not get any or enough legal help for 92% of their substantial civil legal problems.” <https://justicegap.lsc.gov/resource/executive-summary/>



Lisa Darcy, Founder
Share Your Mana, Maui County
February 25, 2025

Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Share Your Mana in **strong support** of HB560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Lisa Darcy
Founder, Share Your Mana

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

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Council on Accreditation
Better Business Bureau

AFFILIATIONS
Kauai United Way
Maui United Way
Hawaii Island United Way

Tuesday, February 25, 2025; 12:00 p.m.; Agenda #2
Conference room 308 & Videoconference

Subject: Support for HB 560 HD1 - Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Child and Family Service in strong support of HB 560 HD1, which provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Communities, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions, often face significant barriers when trying to navigate the legal system. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawaii's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services while easing the strain on judicial resources.

Child and Family Service believes HB 560 HD1 is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances; safeguarding the continuity of services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Amanda Pump
President & CEO
Child & Family Service

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi & Members of House Committee on Finance
FROM: Renae Hamilton-Cambeilh, YWCA Kaua'i Executive Director
DATE: February 24, 2025

RE: In Support of HB 560 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee on Finance

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB 560 HD1, On behalf of the YWCA staff and the individuals and families we serve, **I am testifying in strong support of HB 560 HD1**, which appropriates funds for the Judiciary Department to increase allocation for contracts with community-based organizations providing critical services in Hawaii. YWCA Kaua'i has a long history of being contracted by the Judiciary Fifth Circuit Court to provide services related to domestic and sexual violence for our community. These contracted services assist survivors and child witnesses cope through their trauma, heal from abuse, and rebuild safe and self-sufficient households. We also work with individuals who have committed crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault through intense clinical counseling via group or individual settings. It is vital for these types of services that staff who provide direct client services be well experienced and knowledgeable in these specialized areas. Our services save lives, holds batterers and offenders accountable and provide long term support for the survivors trying to heal from this traumatic experiences and crimes..

The Judiciary has been the primary funder for these vital services for over 25 years, during this period the funding has not risen to meet the yearly rising costs of providing services. The YWCA has taken steps in an attempt to patchwork the funding needed for service delivery, this is simply not sustainable and the gap grows each year. It is to the point that the agency, after this fiscal year the agency will not be able to provide all services that have been required if funding is not increased. We simply are not able to retain the staffing required with inadequate funding. This will result in a serious threat to public safety as fewer survivors, child witnesses, batterers and sexual offenders will get the help they need.

I support this bill as it is necessary to address the stagnant funding to ensure our state has services in place for the most vulnerable individuals and families. Mahalo for your consideration to support HB 560 HD1.

Respectfully, 
Renae Hamilton-Cambeilh, Executive Director



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: House Committee on Finance
Re: HB 560 HD1 Relating to the judiciary

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference
Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 12:00PM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

On behalf of HCANSpeaks!, I am writing in strong support of HB 560 HD1, relating to the judiciary. This bill appropriates funds to the judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households. This bill provides much-needed funding to the Judiciary to enhance access to justice for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations.

Many residents face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, particularly low-income families, individuals in crisis, and those requiring behavioral interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

The unpredictability of federal funding for legal services and justice programs creates additional challenges for Hawai'i's judiciary and the CBOs that support it. Federal resources are often subject to shifting priorities, and any reductions would severely limit the ability of CBOs to provide essential legal aid, case management, and mediation services. By committing state funding through this bill, Hawaii can proactively address these uncertainties and ensure consistent support for vulnerable residents navigating the legal system.

However, without adequate funding, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands. The True Cost Coalition believes this bill is crucial to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 560 and demonstrate your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawaii. Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue, and for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of this bill, HB HD1 560.**

Sincerely,
Noreen Kohl, Ph.D.
Policy Researcher and Advocate
Hawai'i Children's Action Network, a member of the Hawai'i [True Cost Coalition](#)



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 560, HD 1

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, & FIN Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
Policy & Advancement Manager

DATE: February 25, 2025 (12:00 PM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** HB 560, HD 1, which appropriates funds to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

HHRC provides homelessness services in Regions 1 and 6 on O'ahu and is a member of [Partners in Care \(PIC\)](#), a planning, coordinating, and advocacy alliance that develops recommendations for programs and services to fill needs within O'ahu's continuum of care for homeless persons. In alignment with PIC and other non-profit members of the [True Cost Coalition](#), we support legislative efforts to increase baseline funding for work that is outlined in multi-year service contracts.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions, and have also been deeply impacted by trauma related to histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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Ku'ikahi Mediation Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations to which are tax-deductible. We welcome your support!

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 12:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

RE: Support of HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Ku'ikahi Mediation is submitting testimony to strongly support HB 560 HD1, which appropriates funds for the Judiciary for the fiscal biennium beginning 7/1/2025 and ending 6/30/2027. This bill appropriates funds to the judiciary for services contracted with community-based nonprofit organizations like ours that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

Hawai'i's families depend on a network of community-based nonprofit organizations that serve as a critical safety net. Unfortunately, this safety net is fraying due to insufficient government funding.

The Judiciary relies on its non-profit partners to provide legal aid, case management, and mediation services. Local court self-help centers receive more inquiries than they can process. Mediation is integral to Hawai'i's "Access to Justice" framework, which strives to ensure that all people have access to civil processes.

Between 50-60% of Ku'ikahi Mediation Center's clients have annual household incomes under \$20,000. Census data shows that the Ka'u and Puna districts, which are among those we serve, house some of the poorest populations in the state. Sample opportunities include: 1) domestic mediations to help parents put kids first after separations and divorces, 2) debt meditations for credit cards or medical bills to negotiate debt reduction, payment plans, or forgiveness due to hardship, and 3) landlord/tenant mediations to prevent eviction and homelessness.

Our agency provides a vital service to the community, especially in domestic (divorce, paternity, family), consumer/merchant, landlord/tenant, and restraining order cases. Our mediation services are provided either free of charge or on an affordable sliding scale, and no one is turned away for lack of funds.

According to The Mediation Centers of Hawaii "Economic Impact and Social Return on Investment Analysis for the Fiscal Year 2017," for every \$1 invested in our mediation programs, they deliver \$8.03 in immediate and long-term consequential financial benefits to the citizens of Hawaii. (This analysis was conducted by the accredited Community Services Analysis LLC in Arizona.)



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Government contract rates remain below actual service costs and haven't kept up with inflation. For example, The Mediation Centers of Hawaii—of which Ku'ikahi is a member—had its Judiciary contract restored in December 2023 to funding rates from FY 2009-2010. While the nominal increase was appreciated, these rates are now a decade-and-a-half old and do not reflect the cost of doing business in a post-COVID island economy.

Community-based nonprofit organizations like ours fill funding gaps through private fundraising, staff reductions, loans and lines of credit, and non-government grants. However, these methods are no longer viable, and organizations may soon face hard decisions to decline contracts, reduce services, or even shut down entirely.

Without adequate funding, Hawai'i's safety net for vulnerable families will unravel. Urgent legislative action is needed to ensure the sustainability of community-based nonprofit organizations and the services we provide.

We strongly urge you to pass this legislation. Thank you for reading this testimony.

Mahalo,

Julie Mitchell
Executive Director

a partner agency of the



Ku'ikahi Mediation Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations to which are tax-deductible. We welcome your support!



DATE: February 24, 2025

TO: Representative Kyle Yamashita
Chair, Committee on Finance

Representative Jenna Takenouchi
Vice Chair, Committee on Finance

FROM: Mihoko Ito

RE: **H.B. 560, HD1 - Relating to the Judiciary**

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.
Conference Room: 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

I write in support of H.B. 560, HD1, which appropriates funds to the Judiciary for services contracted with community-based organizations that deliver essential services, streamline judicial processes, and support the judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households.

Having worked on civil legal service provider funding for many years, I am aware that civil legal service providers are chronically underfunded. Legal service providers are often the last line of defense protecting individuals from eviction, deportation, homelessness, family separation and other barriers to basic survival in our community.

I do not wish for this bill to supplant any of the Judiciary's other priorities, but respectfully ask that consideration be given to moving this measure.

I would respectfully ask for the Committee to keep this vehicle alive. There is a bill moving in the Senate, S.B. 933 which provides grant funding for nonprofit organizations due to the possibility of federal funding freezes. That bill specifically excludes funding for the Judiciary budget, so it would help to have a vehicle alive specific to the Judiciary.

With all the uncertainties at the federal level, any available funding for civil legal services is more critical than ever. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.