



## *The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

### Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

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

Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 9:45 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

by  
Rodney A. Maile  
Administrative Director of the Courts

### **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

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**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.

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



RYAN I. YAMANE  
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  
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TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

March 11, 2025

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

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

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

Hearing: March 13, 2025, 9:45 a.m.  
Conference Room 016 & 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)

March 11, 2025

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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.



## HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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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 Hawaii*  
*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*  
*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*

March 8, 2025

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Judiciary

### **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



## **HB560 HD1 Reentry to Community Services for Judiciary**

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Thursday Mar 13, 2025 9:45 Room 016

### **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, **abstinent-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.



# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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*Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor*



## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Monday, March 13, 2025

Room 225 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

9:45 AM

## STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 560 HD1 - JUDICIARY FUNDING FOR CBOs

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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 3,723 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars<sup>1</sup> and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as of March 3, 2025. We are always mindful that 938 - 49.5% - 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 member of the True Cost Coalition, Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates this opportunity to share our strong support for HB 560 HD1. This funding enables the Judiciary to fund community-based organizations that play a vital role in delivering essential services that strengthen access to justice, including legal aid, mediation, case management and behavioral interventions.

Increased funding supports the Judiciary's capacity to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable households. In a prior committee, the Executive Director of Legal Aid Hawai'i gave compelling testimony about having to turn people away who needed legal assistance because they don't have enough funding to meet the community's needs.

As an advocate for people reintegrating into their communities after serving time, we can attest to the fact that people generally leave jail or prison in bad shape. The importance of having available having resources to help them safely get back to community life benefits everyone.

We hope this committee sees the immense social value this funding can bring to some of our most vulnerable communities. Mahalo nui!

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<sup>1</sup> DCR Weekly Population Report, March 3, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-03-03-2.pdf>



March 13, 2025

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Chair Karl Rhoads  
Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Sen. Stanley Chang  
Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura  
Sen. Brenton Awa

Re: HB560 HD1 Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) addresses the social, political, and economic impacts of domestic violence on individuals, families, and communities. We are a statewide partnership of domestic violence programs and shelters. HSCADV is a member of the True Cost Coalition.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 25 member programs statewide, I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of HB560 HD1**, which 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, especially survivors of domestic violence. Their engagement with the legal system is often complex, ranging from protection orders, divorce, and custody in Family Court to the adjudication of criminal court cases. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

For years, our programs have barely been making do with their current funding. Contracted amounts have not changed in a decade, and organizations are expected to do more with less. Now, with potential changes in federal funding, lives are at stake. Those changes impact life-saving services and endanger survivors' lives and those of their children.

However, our programs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands without adequate funding. This bill is a step to ensuring justice for all residents, regardless of their economic status or personal circumstances, because, unfortunately, as a state, we continue to rely on non-general funds to support these critical services. According to the Judiciary's Report

on FY 2024 Non-General Funds<sup>1</sup>, **\$1,879,203** was used for the following:

- A Multi-Pronged Approach to Addressing DV (VAWA)
  - This grant program aims to build on the work completed during previous project periods for Judicial Education to provide domestic violence training to the Family Court judges who oversee a range of cases that include domestic violence such as cases pertaining to temporary restraining orders, divorce, child welfare, and juvenile justice, DV 101, the Correctional Program Checklist, Revision of the DVI Standards, and Strengthening the Coordinated Community Response.
    - \$46,344
- Access and Visitation Programs (DHHS)
  - This grant provides safe Supervised Child Visitation/Exchange for families experiencing domestic violence on Oahu with a secure visitation center.
    - \$100,000
- Strengthening Hawaii's Coordinated Community (VAWA)
  - This grant program aims to address the dynamics of domestic violence to stakeholders through multiple efforts such as the annual DV 101 training, the revision of the Hawai'i Batterer Intervention Program Standards, training for Family Court judges in domestic violence, and training to strengthen the coordinated community response in Hawai'i.
    - \$37,755
- Justice for Families (VAWA, secured by HSCADV, not renewed)
  - This grant aims to assist self-represented victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking to understand their legal options and assert their rights, as well as to provide training and technical assistance for victim advocates and child welfare workers about critical civil legal issues.
    - \$107,489
- Indigent Legal Assistance Fund established under HRS 607-5.7
  - This fund provides civil legal services to indigent parties.
    - \$1,207,719

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.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/RPT-FY2024-Non-General-Funds-601-3.2-FINAL.pdf>

We respectfully urge you to pass HB560 HD1 and demonstrate your commitment to safety, fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director



**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 Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, & Members,  
Senate Committee on Judiciary  
**FROM:** Trisha Kajimura, Vice-President of Strategy and External Affairs  
**DATE:** March 13, 2025 at 9:45 AM

**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](mailto:tkajimura@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.



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Shelby Morrison

*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!

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Thursday, March 13, 2025, 9:45 a.m.  
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

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

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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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Shelby Morrison

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!

Nickolas Kacprowski  
Board President

Rachel Figueroa  
Executive Director



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 560, HD1  
RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY  
Committee on Judiciary –March 13, 2025 9:45 a.m.**

CHAIR RHOADS, VICE CHAIR GABBARD AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE  
ON JUDICIARY:

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 needs<sup>1</sup>, 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

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<sup>1</sup>According 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/>



*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: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Re: HB 560 HD 1 Relating to the judiciary

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Via Videoconference  
Thursday March 13, 2025, 9:45AM

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

**On behalf of HCANSpeaks!, I am writing in strong support of HB 560 HD 1, 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 HD 1 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 560 HD 1.**

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

TO: Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard & Members of House Committee on Judiciary, Ways & Means

FROM: Renae Hamilton-Cambeilh, YWCA Kaua'i Executive Director

DATE: March 11, 2025

RE: In Support of HB 560

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, Mahala for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB 560, On behalf of the YWCA staff and the individuals and families we serve, I am testifying in strong support of HB 560, which appropriates funds for the Judiciary 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 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 provides long term support for the survivors trying to healing from these traumatic experiences and crimes.

The Judiciary has been the sole 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 fill the funding gap including raising fees, this is simply not sustainable and the gap grows each year. It is to the point that the agency at the end of 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. Mahala for your consideration to support HB 560.

Respectfully,

Renae Hamilton-Cambeilh, Executive Director 



HAWAII HEALTH &  
HARM REDUCTION CENTER

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[www.hhhrc.org](http://www.hhhrc.org)

*"Reducing harm,  
promoting health,  
creating wellness, and  
fighting stigma  
in Hawai'i and  
the Pacific."*

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 560, HD 1

TO: Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, & JDC Committee

FROM: Nikos Leverenz, Policy & Advancement Manager

DATE: March 13, 2025 (9:45 AM)

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Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) **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.

HHHRC 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.

HHHRC'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.



Statement Before The  
Thursday, March 13, 2025  
9:45 AM  
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

in consideration of  
**HB560, HD1**

**RELATING TO JUDICIARY.**

Chair RHOADS, Vice Chair GABBARD, and Members of the SENATE Judiciary 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 mahalos this Judiciary committee for the proposed \$1 million increase in the budget, per SB260, and notes that with respect to legal services providers (not other providers), the \$1 million could be a number to insert into HB560, HD1 to support all providers.

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

Very respectfully yours,

*Amy Agbayani*

Amy Agbayani, Ph.D.  
Chair, Advocacy Committee  
The Legal Clinic

*Sandy Ma*

Sandy Ma  
Community & Policy Advocate  
The Legal Clinic



# Adult Friends for Youth

*"Redirecting lives to stop Violence"*

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

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*\*Past Chair of the Board*

Testimony on HB560 HD1

Submitted to: Committee on Judiciary  
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

From: Debbie Spencer-Chun, President and CEO of Adult Friends for Youth (AFY).  
In support of HB560 HD1.

Mahalo nui loa for allowing me to testify.

As the President and CEO of Adult Friends for Youth for the past 17 years and working directly with high-risk youth for over 20 years, it comes as no surprise that the needs have gotten greater despite the great work that many Community-Based Organizations deliver to our society.

For many years, CBOs have had to deliver services at the same rate. We often don't get paid the full amount and have to offset our budgets with other funding, making it a balancing act to stay afloat. Some key concerns, according to a 2022 survey conducted by True Cost Coalition of Community-Based Organizations, are

- "79% had to cut administrative costs." (Noting that some private funders are not allowing this cost either.)

Examples:

1. Salaries: It takes people to conduct the services, so salaries are critical. Our staff has to wear dual hats as administrators and direct service roles, which means that we can only charge percentages of their time. In turn, our staff has to submit timesheets/salary worksheets to the government, which means more paperwork for our staff to provide statistics on their daily duties. Do government workers have to do this?
2. Rent: This is not seen as critical. Yet, our staff needs a safe space to write reports, prepare sessions, conduct mediation, conduct group sessions with high-risk youth (especially during violent crisis situations), provide individual and family counseling sessions, and so much more.
3. Insurance: The government has a threshold that we must meet for insurance coverage, but it does not consider the rising costs. (Note: According to TCC, "Insurance expenses rose by 40.8% (adjusted for 2022 dollars).")

There are many more examples, but for the sake of this testimony, I will limit them to these three points.

Bottom line: We are grateful for the government's support. However, I would like us to be recognized as a partnership—the same private/public partnership they build/have with for-profit businesses. Recognize that without many of CBO's crucial services, our great state of Hawaii would be in dire straits.

Mahalo for your time. I appreciate you allowing me to share my mana'o.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Spencer-Chun

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



Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Committee on Judiciary

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Maui United Way  
Hawaii Island United Way

Thursday, March 13, 2025; 9:45 a.m.  
Conference room 016 & Videoconference

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

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard 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



**“We’re all about FAMILY”**

Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



**TO:** SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee

**FROM:** Micah A. Kāne, CEO & President

**RE:** Testimony in Support for HB 560 HD1, Relating to the Department of Human Services

**DATE:** Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 9:45am

**PLACE:** Conference Room 016

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) supports HB 560 HD1, which increases funding for the Judiciary to contract with organizations that provide vital services to the community. Human support services are a priority area under HCF's CHANGE Framework within the Community Centered Economy and Health and Wellness sectors.

HB 560 HD1 is crucial for ensuring that our most vulnerable populations, including victims of crimes such as domestic violence, the homeless population, and Veterans, receive legal services. HCF grantees across the CHANGE framework see firsthand the tremendous challenges faced by those who rely on legal services and programs. Their work often requires partnering with Judiciary to deliver essential services.

However, the current funding levels for these services have not kept pace with the growing demand or the rising operational costs. Given the uncertainty around federal funding, service providers are likely to see even greater budget shortfalls. The consequences of not funding the true costs of these services will be direct and immediate. Services will be cut, and jobs will be lost. On the other hand, increased funding will sustain the community and extend Judiciary's reach and positive impact.

HCF supports HB 560 HD1 and encourages the Committee to pass the bill.



March 12, 2025

**Subject: Support for HB 560 HD 1 Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard 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 strong support of HB560 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 HB560 HD 1 to demonstrate your commitment to fairness and equity for all in our community.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Bartell".

Michelle Bartell  
President & CEO  
Aloha United Way

## **TESTIMONY ON HB560**

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Thursday March 13, 2025 at 9:45 a.m.

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii submits testimony in support of the intent of HB560—Relating to the Judiciary.

HB560 proposes increased funding for essential services, to be administered by the Judiciary. Legal Aid, Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest non-profit legal service provider, receives general legal services funding administered by the Judiciary. To the extent that this bill is intended to provide funding for general civil legal services, Legal Aid supports the intent of this bill, and requests that \$1,000,000 for legal service providers be considered.

Currently, Legal Aid is also supporting an increase to the existing Judiciary line item in the budget for civil legal services. Mahalo nui to this committee for including an additional 1 million in support for civil legal services as a line-item increase in the current version of the Senate Bill relating to the Judiciary’s budget, SB260.

Legal Aid respectfully requests that any appropriation for this measure not supplant Judiciary priorities and biennium budget requests.

## **IMPACT OF CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUNDING**

With the support of general civil legal services funding, Legal Aid has been able to provide civil legal services to low-income and vulnerable populations across our state. As the state’s largest and oldest legal service provider, we deliver legal services in the areas most needed by Hawai‘i’s residents, including family law, housing, domestic abuse, consumer protection, immigration law, public benefits, child welfare, and elder law. Legal Aid provides these services statewide through its 12 offices located in every county and on every island, as well as through our Maui Disaster Legal Services office and our Hawai‘i Immigrant Justice Center. Our over 100 dedicated staff are all committed to our mission of obtaining a fair and just Hawai‘i for all.

Each year, Legal Aid impacts the lives of approximately 20,000 Hawai‘i residents. In the last fiscal year, we received over 15,000 requests for assistance and were able to provide legal help in a little over 7000 cases in legal areas ranging from family, housing, consumer, foreclosure, public benefits, elder law, homelessness, immigration, language access, and child welfare. Of those served last year, over 2,000 of our clients were homeless or at risk for homelessness, over 1,600

were Native Hawaiian, over 1,200 experienced domestic violence, and about 700 spoke a primary language other than English.

### **NEED FOR INCREASED FUNDING**

We are grateful to the legislature for their past and continuing support of general civil legal services in the Judiciary budget and to the Judiciary for providing a home for this program and administering these important funds. However, more funding is urgently needed.

In Legal Services Corporation's Justice Gap Report (2022), researchers found that "low-income [individuals] did not receive any or enough legal help for 92% of their civil legal problems[.]" and that Hawai'i is unfortunately consistent with this national average. More than one-half of people nationwide have no confidence that they would be able to find a lawyer they could afford if they needed one. In Hawai'i, at least 72% of households had one or more civil legal problems in the past year. Current resources are not meeting our community's needs: the National Justice Index determined that nine times as many legal services attorneys and advocates are needed to meet Hawai'i low-income residents' legal needs.

Changes to the federal funding and policy landscape also require additional support for Hawai'i's legal services providers. Recently, there have been dramatic reductions in available federal funds for victims of crime and domestic violence survivors. Proposed reductions in federal funds threatens to impact legal services related to housing, assisting Hawai'i's houseless communities, kūpuna legal services, health insurance navigators, and more. Disaster legal services, which includes over one million in funding for Hawai'i, was also recently left out of the most recent funding resolution.

There are now four legal service providers receiving general civil legal services funding, and all of our low-income and vulnerable populations statewide and across demographics are positively impacted by this support.

The Judiciary has been a leader in supporting "access to justice" initiatives here in Hawai'i and has generously provided a home for civil legal services funding. **Our ask is intended to supplement the Judiciary's legislative priorities, and should not come at the expense of any priority or portion of the Judiciary's proposed budget.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.  
Sincerely,

David Kaulia Kopper  
Executive Director  
For The Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i

# Hawai'i True Cost Coalition

Date: March 13, 2025

Re: Strong Support of HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

Our coalition of organizations for Hawai'i True Cost Coalition are writing in strong support of HB560 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.

HB560 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



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
FROM: Tina Andrade, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i  
Date: March 13, 2025

Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of HB560 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 HB560 HD1 and affirm your commitment to fairness, equity, and access to justice for everyone in Hawaii.

Sincerely,



CLARENCE T. C. CHING CAMPUS ■ 1822 Ke'eaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822  
Phone (808) 527-4813



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



**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of EPIC 'Ohana 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.

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 HB560 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



March 13, 2025

Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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 HB560 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 HB560 HD1.

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

Michelle Bartell  
President & CEO  
Aloha United Way



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Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706  
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Maui United Way  
Hawaii Island United Way

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

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Child and Family Service 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.

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 HB560 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 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,

Amanda Pump  
President & CEO  
Child & Family Service



**“We’re all about FAMILY”**

Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



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

## Letter of Support

March 13, 2025

### Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) 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.

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 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.

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

HAWAII HEALTH  
& HARM REDUCTION  
CENTER

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## HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Vonnell Ramos, President  
Cyd Hoffeld, Vice President  
Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer  
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Judith F. Clark, Executive  
Director

### Network Membership

*Access to Independence*  
*Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii*  
*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*  
*Alliance*  
*Lines for Life Youth Line*  
*Maui 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*

March 13, 2025

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

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1 Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 560, 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

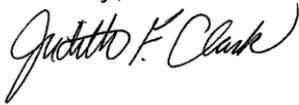
Family Intervention Services stopped admitting clients to its emergency shelter for boys on Maui due to critical staffing shortages.

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 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



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

**TO:** Chair Rhoads  
Vice Chair Gabbard

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

**DATE:** March 13, 2025

**POSITION:** IHS supports HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

IHS, The Institute for Human Services is 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 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 HB560 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.



March 13, 2025

Chair Karl Rhoads  
Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Maui Economic Opportunity, (MEO) Inc. 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. 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 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.

*Debbie Cabebe*

Debbie Cabebe, SHRM-SCP  
Chief Executive Officer



**THE MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC, INC.**  
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March 13, 2025

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Tracey S. Wiltgen

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

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1 Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Mediation Center of the Pacific 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 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 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

Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director  
The Mediation Center of the Pacific



**PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT**  
FOUNDATION

March 13, 2025

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

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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 HB560 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 HB560 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 HB560 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*

2040 Bachelot Street | Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817 | P 808.595.2752 | F 808.595.4932 | [www.pidfoundation.org](http://www.pidfoundation.org)



Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii  
PO Box 75380  
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

*A private, non-profit organization*

March 13, 2025

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii 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. 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 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,



Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii  
PO Box 75380  
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

*A private, non-profit organization*

Michael P. Marsh, MA, CFRE  
President & CEO



# Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii

March 13, 2025

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*Harvey Leighnor, LCSW, Case Reviewer*

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

Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i in **strong support** of HB560 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.

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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 HB560 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

March 13, 2025

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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 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,

Greg Waibel  
President & CEO



Lisa Darcy, Founder  
Share Your Mana, Maui County  
March 13, 2025

**Subject: Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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



March 13, 2025

**Testimony in Support for HB560 HD1, Relating to the Judiciary**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, 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



**LATE**

TO: Senator Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Judiciary

From: Monique R. Ibarra, CEO

RE: Support of HB560 HD1 – Relating to Judiciary

Aloha Senator Rhoads, Senator Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

On behalf of the Domestic Violence Action Center, I whole-heartedly **support 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.

DVAC has been a long-time service provider for the community for the judicial system to assist victims of domestic violence with legal services. Domestic violence is a pervasive issue that affects individuals regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status. The importance of having specialized domestic violence programs within the judicial system cannot be overstated. These programs not only offer immediate safety and legal support to survivors but also provide long-term resources such as counseling, housing assistance, and community support that enable individuals to rebuild their lives.

Continued funding is critical for programs that protect and support survivors of domestic violence as they are often under-resourced and unable to meet the increasing demand for services. This can result in delays, inadequate support, and, in some cases, a failure to protect vulnerable individuals. Funding these programs is not just a financial investment; it is an investment in the health and safety of our community.

By ensuring that domestic violence programs along with other community-based organizations are properly funded, we can provide survivors with the resources they need to escape dangerous situations, hold perpetrators accountable, and ultimately reduce the cycle of violence.

I urge you to continue to support and advocate for the funding necessary to strengthen community-based organizations and programs within our judicial system. Ensuring that these programs have the funding resources they need is a crucial step in protecting survivors, promoting justice, and building a safer and more equitable community for all.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this important issue. I am confident that with your support, we can continue to make strides in addressing the needs of survivors of domestic violence.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION CENTER**

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LEGAL HELPLINE: (808) 531-3771

TOLL-FREE NEIGHBOR ISLAND HELPLINE: (800) 690-6200

WEBSITE: [WWW.DOMESTICVIOLENCEACTIONCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.DOMESTICVIOLENCEACTIONCENTER.ORG)

EMAIL: [DVAC@STOPTHEVIOLENCE.ORG](mailto:DVAC@STOPTHEVIOLENCE.ORG)



**HB-560-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2025 6:44:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/13/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of HB560 HD1**, which 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, especially survivors of domestic violence. Their engagement with the legal system is often complex, ranging from protection orders, divorce, and custody in Family Court to the adjudication of criminal court cases. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are essential partners in delivering legal aid, case management, and mediation services that support these individuals and streamline judicial processes.

For years, our programs have barely been making do with their current funding. Contracted amounts have not changed in a decade, and organizations are expected to do more with less. Now, with potential changes in federal funding, lives are at stake. Those changes impact life-saving services and endanger survivors’ lives and those of their children.

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, these CBOs cannot sustain operations or meet increasing demands without adequate funding. 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 safety, fairness, equity, and access to justice in Hawai‘i.

Thank you, Pahnelopi McKenzie

**HB-560-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2025 2:51:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/13/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB560.

**HB-560-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:27:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/13/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

**HB-560-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:57:42 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/13/2025 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laurie Arial Tochiki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.



**SanHi**

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: March 12, 2025

TO: Senator Karl Rhoads  
Chair, Committee on Judiciary

Senator Mike Gabbard  
Vice Chair, Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Mihoko Ito

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

**Hearing Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 9:45 a.m.**  
**Conference Room: 016**

---

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

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 note that the legal service providers have requested a \$1M increase to their existing line item in the Judiciary budget for civil legal services (\$1.2M). If that increase does not move forward, we would ask for consideration of an increase of funding in this bill.**

With all the uncertainties at the federal level, the need for funding for civil legal services will be more critical than ever in the coming years. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.