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**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,  
State of Hawai'i to the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

March 20, 2025

S.B. 1028 SD1 HD1: RELATING TO YOUTH FEES AND FINES.

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender **strongly supports S.B. 1028 SD1 HD1:**

The Office of the Public Defender represents indigent juveniles in the criminal justice system. Most of our juvenile clients come from families with limited incomes and live in poverty. Many of our clients are not only entangled in the criminal justice system but may also be in foster care and have limited access to resources that many in our community take for granted. We strongly support the purpose of this measure and join in the call for the prohibition of fines, fees, and court costs against any person adjudicated for an offense committed during the person's minority, or against the person's parent or guardian.

The core principles and goals espoused in HRS § 571-1, which established the Family Courts, read in part as follows:

This chapter shall be liberally construed to the end that children and families whose rights and well-being are jeopardized shall be assisted and protected, and secured in those rights through action by the court; that the court may formulate a plan adapted to the requirements of the

child and the child's family and the necessary protection of the community and may utilize all state and community resources to the extent possible in its implementation.

This chapter created within the State a system of family courts and *it shall be a policy and purpose of said courts to promote the reconciliation of distressed juveniles with their families, foster the rehabilitation of juveniles in difficulty, render appropriate punishment to offenders, and reduce juvenile delinquency.*

Many of our juveniles involved in the court system are struggling with everything – from access to food and basic amenities, access to a safe place to live, access to education, access to transportation, access to a computer and internet services, and access to a reliable working phone. Juveniles in distress include children who are victims of physical and sexual abuse, children who have experienced traumas and face mental health challenges resulting from those traumas. They include children in our foster care system who may not have a loving responsible parent to care and provide for them.

This measure will help juveniles and their families concentrate their financial resources on accessing other services more in line with rehabilitation: providing basic needs, maintaining housing, accessing counseling services, educational services, mental health services, and reducing some of the daily pressures on families living in poverty by eliminating court-imposed debt that does nothing to promote rehabilitation, education, or the personal growth of youth in the criminal justice system. We want our youth to thrive, to be engaged in healthy habits and activities, and to have access to safe spaces that encourage positive outcomes. We don't want court-imposed fines and fees to be a barrier to any juvenile who is on the path toward a brighter future.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this comprehensive measure.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 1028 SD 1 HD 1**  
RELATING TO YOUTH FEES & FINES

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 20, 2025

2:00PM

Room 325

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Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB 1028 SD 1 HD 1** which prohibits the assessment of any fees, fines, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for an offense committed during the person's minority, or against the person's parent or guardian, discharges all related debt obligations assessed before the effective date of the Act, and limits court-ordered community service for a minor to no more than seventy-two hours. This is an evidence-based measure which ensures youth, and their families are not punished for their poverty.

In 2010, OHA produced a comprehensive report detailing the overrepresentation and disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. This report found that Native Hawaiian youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system and are also the most frequently arrested ethnic group in all offense categories.<sup>1</sup> In 2012, the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force (NHJTF) was tasked by the Legislature to address the issues raised in OHA's 2010 report. The NHJTF, in turn, acknowledged that "an individual's contact with the criminal justice system . . . often begins at youth."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, OHA believes that a close examination of the juvenile justice system as a "pipeline" into later incarceration is critical to disrupting and mitigating the substantial and disproportionate impacts of the criminal justice system on the Native Hawaiian community.

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, *The Disparate Treatment of Native Hawaiians in the Criminal Justice System 10* (2010), available at [http://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ir\\_final\\_web\\_rev.pdf](http://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ir_final_web_rev.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, *Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report 23 n. 28* (2012), available at [http://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2012NHJTF\\_REPORT\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2012NHJTF_REPORT_FINAL_0.pdf).

While fees imposed by the courts are an inconvenience for some, for those already struggling to keep up with the skyrocketing cost of living they can be detrimental. Of the five largest race groups in Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians have the highest poverty rates for individuals and families. 6,610 families (12.6% of families) and 45,420 individuals (15.5% of the population) are living below the poverty level, despite 74.5% of Native Hawaiians working 35 or more hours per week.<sup>3</sup>

In 2023, the US Department of Justice effectively put states on notice regarding juvenile courts requiring youth fees and fines, acknowledging that the practice could be in violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition against excessive fines.<sup>4</sup> The imposition of such costs pushes many individuals, and often times even their families, further into debt, forcing cases to remain open for much longer than they would have been otherwise due to unpaid fees. Some who cannot afford to pay might opt to spend a few nights in jail instead, which could result in unemployment, loss of their driver's license, or even the loss of housing. All for reasons unrelated to public safety.

As the report on restitution against minors referenced in the forward of this bill highlights, only 17% of fines ordered against minors were paid in Hawai'i over the past five years, showcasing the ineffectiveness of this practice.<sup>5</sup> As of 2024, seventeen states have passed legislation repealing all or most youth fees and fines.<sup>6</sup> An additional seven states have passed legislation appealing at least one youth fee and/or fine, while nine states have a locality that has repealed at least one youth fee and/or fine, or some other non-legislative appeal was enacted.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "Demographic, Social, Economic, and Housing Characteristics for Selected Race Groups in Hawaii," Research and Economic Analysis Division – Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism – State of Hawaii (March 2018) at p.11; p.13, [https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/SelectedRacesCharacteristics\\_HawaiiReport.pdf](https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/SelectedRacesCharacteristics_HawaiiReport.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta, "Access to Justice Spotlight – Fines & Fees," Office for Access to Justice – U.S. Department of Justice (2023) at p.1 – Letter from Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta, <https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-11/doj-access-to-justice-spotlight-fines-and-fees.pdf>

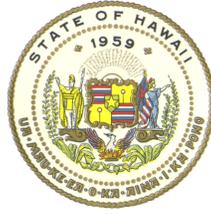
<sup>5</sup> "Report to the Thirty-Third Legislature – 2025 Regular Session – A Report on the Assessment of Youth Fees, Court Costs, Fines and Restitution in Cases Against Minors," Office of the Administrative Director of the Courts – The Judiciary – State of Hawaii (2024) at p. 35, <https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RPT-Assessment-of-Fees-Court-Costs-Fines-Restitution-for-Minors-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> "States that Have Repealed Youth Fees & Fines," Debt Free Justice (November 4, 2024), at Table 1, <https://debtfreejustice.org/states-have-repealed-youth-fees-fines>

<sup>7</sup> "States that Have Repealed Youth Fees & Fines," Debt Free Justice (November 4, 2024) at Table 1, <https://debtfreejustice.org/states-have-repealed-youth-fees-fines>

Continuing to impose fees upon indigent minors and their families corrodes public trust, economic stability, and community health. Because of the disproportionate socioeconomic impacts Native Hawaiians face, this practice may contribute to high rates of poverty and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system among Native Hawaiians. Accordingly, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges this committee to **PASS SB 1028 SD 1 HD 1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this critical measure.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA' ĀINA O KA  
MOKU' ĀINA 'O HAWAII'



**RICK COLLINS**  
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON  
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

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

March 19, 2025

**TO:** The Honorable Representative David Tarnas, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair,  
and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

**FROM:** Rick Collins, Chairperson, Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council

**SUBJECT: SB1028 SD1 HD1 - Relating to Youth Fees and Fines**  
Hearing: Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 2:00pm.  
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

**Council Position:** Strong Support

Aloha, my name is Rick Collins, and I'm the Chairperson for the Hawai'i Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council (JJSAC). The mission of JJSAC is, "To advise government and local communities to ensure effective service provision and development of policies that improve the juvenile justice system, advocate for delinquency prevention and guide Hawaii's youth in becoming productive community members."

I am submitting testimony on behalf of the JJSAC in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB1028 SD1 HD1. SB1028 SD1 HD1 prohibits the assessment of fines, fees, or court costs to minors and their guardians when the minor commits an offense while they are a minor and limits the community service to 72 hours for an offense.

**Monetary fines disproportionately affect low-income families**

Monetary penalties imposed on youth in the juvenile justice system are punitive and create lasting financial and emotional burdens for both young individuals and their families. These sanctions intensify economic disparities and disproportionately affect low-income families as well as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. Eliminating this counterproductive and harmful practice would align Hawai'i with numerous other states that have embraced debt-free justice for young people.

### **Monetary fines are not a relied upon revenue stream for Hawai'i courts**

Research indicates that these fees and fines neither contribute to rehabilitation nor significantly fund court operations. A report presented to the Hawai'i State Legislature by the Administrative Director of Hawai'i Courts revealed that, over the past five years, only 17% of juvenile fines have been paid. Courts in Hawai'i do not depend on these revenues, and many judges avoid imposing them, acknowledging their ineffectiveness and the financial strain they place on low-income families.

### **Monetary fines increase the likelihood of recidivism for youth of color**

Furthermore, criminological studies demonstrate that imposing fees and fines on youth—particularly youth of color—significantly increases the likelihood of recidivism, even when controlling for other factors. Data from other states also show that the costs of collecting these fees often exceed the revenue generated.

### **Strong local and national support for the abolishment of monetary fines for minors**

By eliminating court-assessed fees and fines for youth, SB1028 SD1 HD1 would position Hawai'i as part of the growing national movement to abolish such practices. Across the United States, over 20 states have already taken steps to remove fees and/or fines from their juvenile systems, with more jurisdictions following suit.

The federal Department of Justice, along with National Organizations of Judges, prosecutors, correctional leaders, and law enforcement officials, has expressed support for ending monetary sanctions against youth. In Hawai'i, advocates ranging from juvenile defense attorneys to restorative justice organizations have echoed this call for change.

Currently, Hawai'i stands apart in continuing to permit these sanctions under state law. While Kaua'i County has taken commendable steps to oppose these penalties, it is now up to the state legislature to repeal these outdated statutes. Removing the legal basis for youth fees and fines aligns with Hawaii's broader justice reform efforts and reflects the state's commitment to equity and effective practices.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony in strong support of this important measure.

Rick Collins

Chairperson  
Hawai'i Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [rick@hiphi.org](mailto:rick@hiphi.org) or (808) 591-6508, x22.

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<sup>1</sup> HAW. ST. JUD., A REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF FEES, COURT COSTS, FINES, AND RESTITUTION IN CASES AGAINST MINORS 3 (2024), <https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RPT-Assessment-of-Fees-Court-Costs-Fines-Restitution-for-Minors-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>1</sup> HOUSE COMM. ON HUM. SERVS. & HOMELESSNESS, HAW. ST. LEG., TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 129 (2025), [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB129\\_TESTIMONY\\_HSH\\_01-28-25\\_PDF](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB129_TESTIMONY_HSH_01-28-25_PDF).

<sup>1</sup> Alex Piquero, *Justice System—Imposed Financial Penalties Increase the Likelihood of Recidivism in a Sample of Adolescent Offenders*, *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 15(3), 325 (2017); Alex Piquero, Michael Baglivio, Kevin Wolff, *A Statewide Analysis of the Impact of Restitution and Fees on Juvenile Recidivism in Florida Across Race & Ethnicity*, *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 21(4), 279 (2022).

<sup>1</sup> BRENNAN CTR. FOR JUST., THE STEEP COSTS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FEES AND FINES (2019), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/steep-costs-criminal-justice-fees-and-fines>.

<sup>1</sup> *Our Impact*, DEBT FREE JUSTICE, <https://debtfreejustice.org/our-impact>.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Dep't of Just., *Dear Colleague* (Apr. 20, 2023), <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/press-release/file/1580546/dl>.

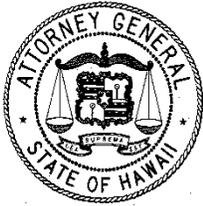
<sup>1</sup> Nat'l Council of Juv. and Fam. Ct. Judges, *Resolution Addressing Fines, Fees, and Costs in Juvenile Courts* (Mar. 2018), [https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ExXIII\\_FinesFeesCosts\\_Resolution.pdf](https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ExXIII_FinesFeesCosts_Resolution.pdf).

<sup>1</sup> FAIR AND JUST PROSECUTION, FINES, FEES, AND THE POVERTY PENALTY (2017), [https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FJPBrief\\_Fines.Fees\\_.pdf](https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FJPBrief_Fines.Fees_.pdf).

<sup>1</sup> Youth Corr. Leaders for Just., *Statement on Abolishing Youth Fines and Fees* (May 2021), <https://ycj.org/fines-and-fees>.

<sup>1</sup> L. ENF'T LEADERS TO REDUCE CRIME & INCARCERATION, ENSURING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY: FEDERAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE PRIORITIES FOR 2020 AND BEYOND (Apr. 2020), [https://lawenforcementleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020\\_04\\_LEL\\_Policy\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://lawenforcementleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020_04_LEL_Policy_Report_Final.pdf).

<sup>1</sup> OFF. OF THE PROSECUTING ATT'Y, CNTY. OF KAUAI, ST. OF HAW., MEMORANDUM 4 (2021), <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/FINAL-Fines-Fees-Kauai-DA-Policy.pdf>.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 1028, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, RELATING TO YOUTH FEES AND FINES.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**DATE:** Thursday, March 20, 2025      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 325

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Mark S. Tom, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The purposes of the bill are to (1) prohibit the assessment of any fines, fees, or court costs against a person who is adjudicated for an offense committed while the person was a minor under the age of eighteen, or against the person's parents or guardians; (2) limit court-ordered community service for minors to no more than seventy-two hours; and (3) repeal certain penalties imposed on parents, guardians, or other persons associated with unaccompanied children in streets and unmarried minors in dance halls.

The amendments made to the bill by the House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness do not appear to have addressed the potential constitutional issue with the title of the bill and the subjects contained in the bill. Section 14 of article II of the Hawaii Constitution provides, in part, that "Each law shall embrace but one subject, which shall be expressed in its title." The title of the bill, "Relating to Youth Fees **and** Fines," could be construed by a court as embracing two subjects, but even if "youth fees and fines" is considered a single statutory scheme, the subjects of this bill go beyond that. The current draft of the bill itself addresses fees, fines, court costs, and other subjects, including community service, penalties for parents or guardians, discharging of debt-related obligations, court-ordered treatment options for minors and their parents or

guardians, and alcohol or drug abuse counseling services. Not all of these added subjects are encompassed within the title of the bill.

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



**TO:** Chair Tarnas Vice Chair Poepoe, members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

**FROM:** Dana Matsunami, Attorney at the National Center for Youth Law

**RE:** Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 1028**

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members,

My name is Dana Matsunami, I am an attorney at the National Center for Youth Law. I live and work here in Hawai'i, where I focus on issues relating to foster care in our state. **On behalf of the National Center for Youth Law, I am testifying in strong support of SB1028**, which allows community service as an alternative to courts imposing fines against youth in vehicular offenses.

The National Center for Youth Law has been working for over a decade to end the harmful practice of charging juvenile fines and fees. Our work in this area is in response to **overwhelming evidence that charging fines and fees to minors imposes long-lasting financial and emotional harm on youth and their families**. Furthermore, charging youth fines and fees is ineffective: criminology studies have confirmed that youth, specifically youth of color, had significantly higher likelihood of recidivism (reoffending) when assessed court-ordered fees and fines, even when controlling for demographics and case characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

There are meaningful alternatives to charging fines and fees to minors that accomplish the purported goal of those fees. This bill supports youth participating in community service as an alternative to requiring that they pay money that they do not have in order to punish their behavior. We know from research that court imposed fines and fees are a cost paid by families, not the juvenile – and that means that families without the financial resources available to pay fees suffer additional financial hardship when they may already be struggling to provide food and housing in our incredibly expensive state. Because Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile legal system, this burden tends to fall more heavily on those families.<sup>2</sup> Native Hawaiian youth are also more likely to live in low-income households with parents who cannot afford the costs associated with the system.<sup>3</sup>

In my work, I have had the privilege of collaborating with current and former foster youth throughout Hawai'i to hear their stories, challenges, and visions for a better future. Youth in the foster system are more likely than their peers to be entangled in juvenile legal proceedings—not due to

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<sup>1</sup> Alex Piquero, Justice System–Imposed Financial Penalties Increase the Likelihood of Recidivism in a Sample of Adolescent Offenders, *YOUTH VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE*, 15(3), 325 (2017); Alex Piquero, Michael Baglivio, Kevin Wolff, A Statewide Analysis of the Impact of Restitution and Fees on Juvenile Recidivism in Florida Across Race & Ethnicity, *YOUTH VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE*, 21(4), 279 (2022).

<sup>2</sup> HAW. DEP'T HUM. SERVS., OFF. YOUTH SERVS., HAWAII JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM CRIME ANALYSIS, STATE FISCAL YEAR 2021–2023 246–263 (2025), [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BqiWJszmxWvd17MxxcWK9c9u-tY3ZoWu/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BqiWJszmxWvd17MxxcWK9c9u-tY3ZoWu/view?usp=share_link).

<sup>3</sup> Demographic, Social, Economic, and Housing Characteristics for Selected Race Groups in Hawaii. Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism 12 (2018).



disproportionate bad behavior, but because they are under increased surveillance by the state and their caretakers are much more likely to contact police about dysfunction in the foster placement than their parents and family of origin would be. They are also less likely than their peers to have access to familial wealth and adult financial guidance. Eliminating the harmful practice of assessing fines against youth helps Hawai'i move toward a future where all ʻōpio—including youth in the foster system—are allowed the opportunity to thrive, rather than disproportionately punishing youth who do not have access to familial wealth.

The National Center for Youth Law is in support of this bill as an imperative step towards ensuring youth in Hawai'i have equal opportunity to thrive.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Dana Matsunami  
Skadden Fellow, National Center for Youth Law



**SB-1028-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 2:54:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lynette Cruz	Malama Makua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Malama Makua supports SB 1028 SD1 HD1. Our youth, especially in Waianae, need support and encouragement to do better. Enough with the fines and fees. Maybe better to offer incentives for young people to do well.

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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

*Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor*



## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Representative David Tarnas, Chair

Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Thursday March 20, 2025

Room 329 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

2:00 PM

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 1028 - YOUTH FEES AND FINES**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe 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 3,720 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 10, 2025. We are always mindful that 936 - 49.3% - of Hawai'i's male prison population (1,895) 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates this opportunity to **support SB 1028** that allows community service in place of the assessment of any fines, fees, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for a traffic-related offense committed while the person was a minor under the age of 18 years, or against the person's parent or guardian.

Research has shown that brain development happens in the mid-twenties. Community Alliance on Prisons implores the committee to not let youthful indiscretions negatively impact the futures of our youth. We support community service for those whose offenses happened when they were still minors under the law.

In fact, it would be a good idea to connect the Judiciary with a variety of community organizations that would be of interest to youth. This kind of association can turn a life around when a youth finds something that really lights their fire and they see a possible future they never dreamed could happen for them. This is about believing that we can help our youth find purposeful and meaningful lives. This is a something that creates community and everyone benefits!

Community Alliance on Prisons hopes the committee supports this measure to help our youth realize their own strengths to plan a successful future! Mahalo nui for your hard work!

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<sup>1</sup> DCR Weekly Population Report, March 10, 2025

<https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2025-03-10.pdf>



Policy Advocacy Clinic

**THE HONORABLE DAVID A. TARNAS, CHAIR  
THE HONORABLE MAHINA POEPOE, VICE CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawai'i**

**March 20, 2025**

**RE: S.B. No. 1028 S.D. 1, H.D. 1: RELATING TO YOUTH FEES AND FINES**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the national Debt Free Justice campaign, we respectfully submit the following testimony to express our strong support for S.B. No. 1028 S.D. 1, H.D. 1, relating to youth fees and fines.

Debt Free Justice is the national campaign to end harmful financial penalties (fees and fines) assessed against youth and their families in juvenile legal systems throughout the country. The campaign is coordinated by the National Center for Youth Law, Juvenile Law Center, and UC Berkeley Law's Policy Advocacy Clinic, and powered by dozens of grassroots state advocacy organizations. Since 2021, Debt Free Justice has supported successful efforts in over 25 states to eliminate youth fees and fines, discharge outstanding court debt, and shift juvenile systems to alternatives that achieve justice and accountability through evidence-based strategies.

Debt Free Justice Hawai'i is a statewide coalition of advocacy organizations, academic institutions, and law and public policy experts dedicated to eliminating the harmful and unjust fees and fines imposed on youth and their families in the Hawai'i Family Court system. Led by Hawai'i non-profit 'Ekolu Mea Nui and supported by the Policy Advocacy Clinic at UC Berkeley School of Law and others, the Coalition has spent over four years researching fees and fines in Hawai'i, engaging directly with impacted youth and families, and crafting policy alternatives in collaboration with juvenile system attorneys and administrators.

Hawai'i state law authorizes the assessment of fees and fines against youth and their families in the juvenile legal system. These costs can range dramatically, from \$10 to \$5,000 for any given fee or fine.<sup>1</sup> These costs can accumulate, quickly becoming an insurmountable debt that imposes long-lasting financial and emotional harm on youth and their families.<sup>2</sup> It is no surprise that a 2024 report submitted by the Administrative Director of Hawai'i Courts found that youth and families have paid only 17% of fines assessed in juvenile cases over the past five years.<sup>3</sup>

Recognizing the significant toll that court debt places on young people, Hawai'i courts have already taken bold actions to design alternatives that achieve rehabilitation and accountability for youth without ordering crushing financial penalties. Because many of these fines are mandated by law, judges are forced to order rigid, formulaic penalties where individually tailored, community-centered alternatives have proven their comparable success.<sup>4</sup> The forced imposition of fines runs contrary to criminology research on youth monetary sanctions, which show that youth had significantly higher likelihood of recidivism (reoffending) when assessed court-ordered fees and fines, even when controlling for demographics and case characteristics.<sup>5</sup> In effect, the assessment of court fees and fines may further contribute to instances of misconduct that keep youth from achieving their fullest potential.

Analyzing trends from 2021 through 2023, the Hawai'i Department of Human Services' Office of Youth Services found that Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth are disproportionately represented throughout the juvenile legal system, from arrest and petition to detention and probation.<sup>6</sup> Hawaiians face the lowest median income of all major ethnic groups throughout the state.<sup>7</sup> The elimination of youth fees and fines provides further incentive to invest in proven alternatives that integrate Native Hawaiian culture and tradition into the justice system.

The federal Department of Justice, national associations of judges,<sup>8</sup> prosecutors,<sup>9</sup> correctional leaders,<sup>10</sup> and law enforcement professionals<sup>11</sup> all support the elimination of fees and fines for young people.

Hawai'i is an outlier in continuing to authorize monetary sanctions under state law. By removing court-assessed fees and fines against system-involved youth, H.B. No. 129 would bring Hawai'i in-step with the national movement to abolish youth fees and fines. Advocates from across the state of Hawai'i, from juvenile system attorneys to community-led restorative justice organizations, have already joined the call to end youth fees and fines.<sup>12</sup> Removing authorization for assessing fees and fines on youth aligns the law with Hawai'i's existing general practices and its dedication to reforming its justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our research and express our concerns on this measure.

Respectfully submitted,



Cameron D. Clark, Esq.  
National Co-Coordinator  
Debt Free Justice



Jamee Māhealani Miller, EdD, LSW  
'Ekolu Mea Nui  
Co-Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Haw. Rev. Stat. § 291E-61 (providing for mandatory fines of up to \$3,000 for first-time juvenile vehicular offenses), § 291E-61.5 (providing for mandatory fines of up to \$5,000 for repeat juvenile vehicular offenses).

<sup>2</sup> Depending on the circuit, youth and families are charged, on average, over \$600 in court costs per case. See HAW. ST. JUD., A REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF FEES, COURT COSTS, FINES, AND RESTITUTION IN CASES AGAINST MINORS 3 (2024), <https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RPT-Assessment-of-Fees-Court-Costs-Fines-Restitution-for-Minors-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> From January 2019 through September 2024, Hawai'i family courts ordered roughly \$40,600 in fines against youth and their families; they had only received roughly \$6,900 in repaid fine debt. HAW. ST. JUD., A REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF FEES, COURT COSTS, FINES, AND RESTITUTION IN CASES AGAINST MINORS 3 (2024), <https://www.courts.state.hi.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RPT-Assessment-of-Fees-Court-Costs-Fines-Restitution-for-Minors-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Haw. St. Jud., *Papa Hoike Kuleana: Accountability Program of the First Circuit Family Court* (Jul 8, 2016), [https://www.courts.state.hi.us/news\\_and\\_reports/featured\\_news/2016/07/papa-hoike-kuleana-accountability-program-of-the-first-circuit-family-court](https://www.courts.state.hi.us/news_and_reports/featured_news/2016/07/papa-hoike-kuleana-accountability-program-of-the-first-circuit-family-court) (describing the Program's "innovative approach to helping youth complete their court-ordered restitution and community service obligations, while instilling the values of forgiveness, healing and empowerment through mentorship.").

<sup>5</sup> Alex Piquero, *Justice System—Imposed Financial Penalties Increase the Likelihood of Recidivism in a Sample of Adolescent Offenders*, YOUTH VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE, 15(3), 325 (2017); Alex Piquero, Michael Baglivio, Kevin Wolff, *A Statewide Analysis of the Impact of Restitution and Fees on Juvenile Recidivism in Florida Across Race & Ethnicity*, YOUTH VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE, 21(4), 279 (2022).

<sup>6</sup> HAW. DEP'T HUM. SERVS., OFF. YOUTH SERVS., HAWAII JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM CRIME ANALYSIS, STATE FISCAL YEAR 2021–2023 246–263 (2025), [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BqiWJszmxWvd17MxxcWK9c9u-tY3ZoWu/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BqiWJszmxWvd17MxxcWK9c9u-tY3ZoWu/view?usp=share_link).

<sup>7</sup> *Income Inequality and Native Hawaiian Communities in the Wake of the Great Recession: 2005 to 2013*. Office of Hawaiian Affairs Research Division 2 (2014), <https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Income-Inequality-and-Native-Hawaiian-Communities-in-the-Wake-of-the-Great-Recession-2005-2013.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Nat'l Council of Juv. And Fam. Ct. Judges, *Resolution Addressing Fines, Fees, and Costs in Juvenile Courts* (Mar. 2018), [https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ExXIII\\_FinesFeesCosts\\_Resolution.pdf](https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ExXIII_FinesFeesCosts_Resolution.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Fair And Just Prosecution, *Fines, Fees, and the Poverty Penalty* (2017), [https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FJPBrief\\_Fines.Fees\\_.pdf](https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FJPBrief_Fines.Fees_.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Youth Corr. Leaders for Just., *Statement on Abolishing Youth Fines and Fees* (May 2021), <https://yclj.org/fines-and-fees>.

<sup>11</sup> L. Enf't Leaders To Reduce Crime & Incarceration, *Ensuring Justice and Public Safety: Federal Criminal Justice Priorities for 2020 and Beyond* (Apr. 2020), [https://lawenforcementleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020\\_04\\_LEL\\_Policy\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://lawenforcementleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020_04_LEL_Policy_Report_Final.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> COMM. ON HUM. SERVS. & HOMELESSNESS, HAW. ST. LEG., TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 129 (2025), [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB129\\_TESTIMONY\\_HSH\\_01-28-25\\_.PDF](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/Testimony/HB129_TESTIMONY_HSH_01-28-25_.PDF)



Committee: Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 2:00pm

Place: Conference Room 325, 415 South Beretania Street

**Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of S.B. 1028 SD1 HD1 Relating to Youth Fees and Fines**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS S.B. 1028 SD1 HD1**, which prohibits the assessment of any fines, fees, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for an offense committed during the person's minority or against the person's parent or guardian.

### **The Department of Justice Supports the Elimination of Fines and Fees**

**A 2023 report from the U.S. Department of Justice recommended that state and local courts, in addition to juvenile justice agencies, should operate with the understanding that “children and youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system should be presumed indigent and unable to pay fines and fees.”**<sup>1</sup> This guidance is not only moral, fair, and just—it is also pragmatic. Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta, summarizing this report, wrote: “eliminating the unjust imposition of fines and fees is one of the most effective ways for jurisdictions to support the success of youth and low-income individuals, honor constitutional and statutory obligations, and reduce racial disparities in the administration of justice.”

### **National research shows fees and fines imposed on young people increase the risk of recidivism.**

Fees are designed to cover administrative costs associated with the system. Fines are intended to punish or deter future behavior. However, research shows that fees and fines generate little or no revenue for local government while doing real harm to youth rehabilitation. Data from other states show that jurisdictions often spend more on collection than they generate in revenue from fees and fines charged to youth.<sup>2</sup>

Concerningly, **studies by criminologists found that youth who had fees and fines imposed on them had a significantly higher likelihood of recidivism, even when controlling for demographics and case characteristics. As fees and fines increased, so did the youth's chances of recidivism.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/news/juvjust/justice-department-addresses-court-imposed-fines-and-fees-youth>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/steep-costs-criminal-justice-fees-and-fines>

Fining youth also creates unnecessary laws, regulations, and enforcement. Law enforcement officers spend an extraordinary amount of time and resources on arresting and booking people for minor offenses with hefty fees attached, or for not paying those fees. Instead, those resources could be reallocated into prevention programs and other services that address pathways to involvement in the criminal legal system.

**Imposing fines and fees disparately impacts Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth and their families.**

Financial costs for juveniles associated with fines, fees, or court costs are unnecessarily punitive and can result in long-lasting financial harm and stress for these youth and their families. The majority of youth have no means to pay fees and fines as they have little to no income or assets of their own. As a result, the burden falls largely on their families. Because Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile legal system, this burden tends to fall more heavily on those families.

**By passing S.B. 1028 SD1 HD1, Hawai'i will join dozens of states that have already achieved debt free justice for youth and their families.**

Over 20 states and localities are acknowledging the harm created by imposing fines and fees on young people by abolishing them from their juvenile justice systems. Others are reducing fees as well.<sup>3</sup> Research on these localities suggest that eliminating fees for youth reduces financial burdens for families of justice-involved youth.<sup>4</sup> Many more are following their lead. We urge you to pass S.B. 1028 and implement debt-free justice for youth, which aligns with Hawaii's commitment to reform its juvenile justice system.<sup>5</sup>

Sincerely,  
Nathan Lee, Policy Legislative Fellow, ACLU Hawai'i

C: Carrie Ann Shirota, Policy Director, ACLU Hawai'i

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization founded in 1965 that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds.*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://imprintnews.org/justice/juvenile-justice-2/doj-fines-and-fees/247097>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.capolicylab.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Eliminating-fees-in-the-Alameda-County-Juvenile-Justice-System.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/07/25/hawaii-zero-girls-youth-correctional-facility/>



March 18, 2025

## Testimony in Support of SB 1028 Relating to Youth Fees & Fines

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe  
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Jamee Māhealani Miller, and I am the Co-Executive Director of 'Ekolu Mea Nui, a Native Hawaiian-led nonprofit organization committed to transforming Hawai'i's justice system through reinvestment in Native Hawaiian cultural practices and values. At 'Ekolu Mea Nui, we refuse to accept the criminal and juvenile legal systems as they are. We believe that alternatives to incarceration and punitive sanctions not only exist but are essential to creating a justice system that truly serves the people.

Our vision is a pono justice system—one that heals and empowers individuals, 'ohana, and communities. To make this vision a reality, we advocate for innovative laws and policies that move away from punishment and instead focus on restoring the human spirit and strengthening resilient 'ohana. SB 1028 aligns with this mission, and we strongly support its efforts to eliminate fees, fines, and court costs for youth involved in the justice system, as well as related penalties for their families.

By eliminating juvenile fees and fines, Hawai'i has the opportunity to align itself with national trends and reaffirm its own values of justice and equity. Across the country, jurisdictions are recognizing the harm caused by imposing financial penalties on youth and their families. For Native Hawaiian youth—who are already overrepresented in the justice system—these fees only deepen existing inequities. Shifting away from monetary sanctions reflects a commitment to fostering rehabilitation and healing rather than perpetuating cycles of harm.

These financial penalties place unnecessary burdens on families, forcing many to make impossible choices between paying court obligations or meeting basic needs such as housing, food, and education. This strain disrupts family relationships and creates barriers to rehabilitation for youth. Studies confirm that financial penalties increase the likelihood of recidivism, especially for youth of color, making these sanctions counterproductive to the goal of reducing repeat offenses. SB 1028 offers a pathway to accountability that strengthens family bonds and builds a foundation for growth and restoration.

Hawai'i has already begun to embrace culturally informed practices in its approach to justice, and this bill is an opportunity to expand those efforts. Financial penalties do not align with the

values of restorative justice that Hawai‘i is striving to uphold. Alternatives such as community service, when thoughtfully implemented, allow youth to take responsibility for their actions while reconnecting with their culture and community. However, care must be taken to ensure that these programs are accessible, reasonable in scope, and avoid becoming exploitative. With intentionality, culturally sensitive community service programs can provide youth with the chance to heal, grow, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Furthermore, eliminating fees and fines will not result in any financial loss to the court system. The Judiciary has confirmed that these penalties are not a significant source of revenue and are not actively tracked or relied upon for funding. In fact, pursuing these fees often incurs greater costs than the revenue they generate, particularly from low-income families who are unable to pay. By removing these penalties, Hawai‘i can redirect resources toward more effective and impactful approaches to youth accountability.

SB 1028 embodies the values of aloha, kuleana, and mālama ‘ohana by prioritizing healing over punishment and financial strain. As Native Hawaiians, we understand that true accountability comes from repairing relationships and restoring balance, not by deepening divides. This bill represents a critical step toward building a justice system that uplifts and supports youth, rather than compounding the challenges they already face.

At ‘Ekolu Mea Nui, we are dedicated to advancing culturally grounded solutions to address intergenerational incarceration and support justice-involved youth and their families. We believe that SB 1028 is essential to ensuring that Hawai‘i’s youth are given the opportunity to heal, grow, and thrive within their families and communities.

Mahalo nui loa for considering this measure and for your dedication to the well-being of Hawai‘i’s youth and families. We strongly urge the Committee to pass SB 1028.

Me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamee Māhealani Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Jamee Māhealani Miller, EdD, LSW  
‘Ekolu Mea Nui  
Co-Executive Director

[jamee@ekolumeanui.org](mailto:jamee@ekolumeanui.org)



**Testimony in Support of SB 1028, SD 1, HD1  
Submitted by Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai, Youth Council of 'Ekolu Mea Nui  
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs**

**March 19, 2025**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

We are [Nā 'Ōpio Waiwai](#), the youth council of 'Ekolu Mea Nui, a collective committed to uplifting Native Hawaiian youth and dismantling intergenerational incarceration through cultural practices and advocacy. As young leaders rooted in the values of aloha 'āina (love for the land) and 'ohana (family), we strive to empower justice-impacted communities and transform systems that disproportionately harm our people. We would have preferred to provide testimony in person today, but as high school students, our school commitments prevent us to participate in person or on-line. Please accept our apologies.

As Native Hawaiian youth, we speak from personal and shared experiences within our communities. SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1, is not just a policy—it is a step toward justice, equity, and healing for all young people in Hawai'i. For these reasons, we strongly support SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1.

**Our WHY:**

**1. SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1 Reflects Hawai'i's Leadership in Equity and Justice.**

Hawai'i is recognized nationally for embracing racial equity and trauma-informed care, and this bill aligns with that leadership. Eliminating juvenile fees and fines ensures that our justice system reflects our shared values of aloha and kuleana (responsibility). Punitive systems built on financial penalties only perpetuate cycles of harm, disproportionately impacting Native Hawaiians and communities of color. Instead, this bill offers us an opportunity to embrace solutions that truly support youth and families.

**2. Fees and Fines Punish Families, Not Just Youth**

Most youth in the justice system cannot afford to pay fees or fines. We are students, not full-time workers, and many of us come from low-income families. Our families are already making sacrifices to provide us with basic needs like housing, food, and education. Adding court fees to that burden only forces families to choose between paying for necessities and paying the system.

For Native Hawaiian families, who already face some of the lowest median incomes in the state, these penalties feel like additional punishment for being born into circumstances beyond our control. SB 1028, SD1, HD 1 lifts this unfair weight off the shoulders of families and opens the door to real accountability and growth.

**3. SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1 Reduces Recidivism by Focusing on Support, Not Punishment**

Fees and fines hurt more than they help. Research shows that financial penalties increase the chances of youth returning to the system. When youth are burdened with unpayable debt, they feel hopeless, which makes it harder to move forward. By eliminating these fees and instead focusing on support, we can break cycles of recidivism and give youth a real chance to succeed.

Our council has seen firsthand the impact of relevant cultural approaches, where youth are supported to take accountability in ways that strengthen, rather than harm, their relationships with their families and communities. 129, HD 1 is a critical step in prioritizing support over punishment.

#### 4. This Bill Reflects Hawaiian Values of Ho‘oponopono and ‘Ohana

As Native Hawaiian youth, we value the principles of ho‘oponopono (to make right) and mālama ‘ohana (caring for family). SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1 reflects these values by shifting from punishment to restoration. Penalizing youth and families financially only deepens the hurt and divides caused by the system. Instead, we need policies that help us heal as individuals and families, so we can be stronger individuals and families in our communities. Furthermore, community service in the form of ‘āina engagement is healing and constructive for the youth and the land.

#### 5. A National Movement for Justice Reform

Hawai‘i should join the growing number of states that have already recognized the harm caused by juvenile fees and fines. By eliminating this outdated and harmful system, Hawai‘i can continue to lead the way in innovative justice reform and demonstrate its commitment to protecting and uplifting its youth.

#### Our Ask

We ask you to support SB 1028, SD 1, HD 1 not just for us, but for all of Hawai‘i’s families. Eliminating fees and fines is a step toward building a justice system that values restoration, healing, and equity.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your commitment to Hawai‘i’s youth. Together, we can create a system that uplifts rather than punishes, and supports rather than burdens.

Mahalo nui loa,



Ōhāwai Manuel



Zoe Martinez



Aubree K-aloha



Oaklyn Unea-Beamer



Hailee K-aloha

Nā ‘Ōpio Waiwai  
Youth Council of ‘Ekolu Mea Nui  
now@ekolumeanui.org

# KAWAIILOA

## Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai‘i

March 20, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs  
Hearing Time: 2:00 PM  
Location: State Capitol Conference Room 325  
Re: SB1028 SD1 HD1, Relating to Youth Fees and Fines

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai‘i hui, we are writing in **support of SB1028 SD1 HD1 , relating to youth fees and fines**. The contents of this bill have been replaced with those of HB129, which this committee has previously passed, because, as a substantively similar measure, its contents were preferable. HB 129 modified the penalty sections of various areas of the HRS, in addition to already encompassing certain sections previously amended in this measure.

Currently, the bill prohibits the assessment of any fees, fines, or court costs against a person who is adjudicated for an offense committed while the person was a minor under the age of eighteen, or against the person's parent or guardian, and discharges all related debt obligations assessed before the effective date of the measure; limits court-ordered community service for a minor to no more than seventy-two hours; and repeals certain penalties imposed on parents, guardians, or other persons associated with unaccompanied children in streets and unmarried minors in dance halls.

We believe that SB1028 SD1 HD1 represents an important step towards creating a more equitable justice system that prioritizes rehabilitation and accountability over the imposition of punitive financial burdens. As demonstrated by a report from the Administrative Director of the Courts, only seventeen percent of fines ordered against minors in the past five years have actually been paid, demonstrating the impracticality and ineffectiveness of this punitive approach. Current practices disproportionately impact low-income families and communities of color, perpetuating ongoing cycles of poverty and inequity.

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai‘i is a collaboration of organizations and individuals committed to reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system for youth; promoting equity in the justice system; and improving and increasing resources to address adolescent and young adult mental health needs. We seek to improve the continuity of programs and services for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult status; eliminate youth houselessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.

**Please support SB1028 SD1 HD1.**

**SB-1028-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 1:50:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brytni K-aloha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kalei K-aloha and I am a resident in Ola‘a, Hawai‘i.

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 123 SD1, which aims to provide opportunities for young people to succeed in life by offering them support and education rather than focusing solely on punitive measures. As a community member who believes in the importance of nurturing and guiding the next generation, I believe that this bill is a critical step in helping our teens and young adults grow into responsible, contributing members of society.

Often, young people make mistakes as part of their learning process, and it’s essential that we as a society recognize that not everyone learns best through fees and fines. The challenges faced by many teenagers and young adults are already significant, and imposing additional burdens such as fines or other punitive measures can sometimes make it harder for them to overcome their mistakes and move forward. Rather than creating obstacles, we should focus on providing opportunities for growth, education, and mentorship.

Through programs and policies like those proposed in SB123 SD1, we can give these young individuals the tools they need to learn from their mistakes and avoid future ones. By offering guidance, support, and the chance to better themselves, we allow them to grow and mature into well-rounded adults who can contribute positively to their communities.

I believe in the potential of every young person, and I am confident that the provisions in this bill will provide the necessary foundation for them to thrive. It is our responsibility to help them succeed, especially after making poor decisions, rather than hindering their ability to turn their lives around.

Thank you for considering this important piece of legislation, and I encourage you to continue supporting initiatives that uplift and guide the next generation.

Mahalo,

Kalei K-aloha



**SB-1028-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 3:22:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill