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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.G.A., M.P.H.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB1442 SD1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND
ADOLESCENTS.**

SENATOR KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: February 27, 2025

Room Number: 211

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) Child & Adolescent Mental Health
2 Division (CAMHD) strongly supports this bill. It has been 50 years since the Mental Health
3 Services for Children and Youth statutes have been codified. The amendments proposed by this
4 bill bring the statute up to date to reflect the current role of the Child & Adolescent Mental
5 Health Division in addressing intensive mental health needs of children and adolescents in
6 Hawaii.

7 Although originally a branch of the Adult Mental Health Division, Child & Adolescent Mental
8 Health became its own Division of the Department of Health decades ago as research emerged
9 about the distinct and specialized nature of child and adolescent mental health services. Today
10 CAMHD is the state's Medicaid provider for intensive mental health services for children and
11 adolescents with a serious emotional disturbance (SED). CAMHD works collaboratively with
12 other child-serving agencies and has developed a comprehensive array of treatment services for
13 youth with SED via Purchase of Service contracts. Mental health assessments, clinical oversight
14 and care coordination are provided by employees at Family Guidance Centers on Oahu, Hawaii,
15 Maui, and Kauai. In addition, the Family Court Liaison Branch on Oahu provides mental health
16 services to youth who are incarcerated or detained. This system of care is based on core values to
17 provide child and family-centered, culturally sensitive, least restrictive and evidence-based
18 mental health services. Over the past 30 years, CAMHD has leveraged federal system of care

1 grants to actively develop and improve the child and adolescent mental health service system of
2 care in Hawaii based on national standards and best practices.

3 In 2023, CAMHD partnered with the University of Hawaii, School of Public Health to conduct a
4 five-year statewide needs assessment of mental health services for youth. The final assessment
5 report is expected by December of 2027. Once completed, this assessment will be used to
6 develop a Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services Plan.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE
KE KE'ENA KŪPA'A MAULI OLA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
415 S.BERETANIA ST. #415
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Senate Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means
February 27, 2025, at 10:25 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

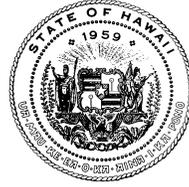
In SUPPORT of
S.B. 1442 SD1 Relating to Mental Health Services For Children and Adolescents

The Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) in the Governor's Office **SUPPORTS** S.B. 1442 SD1, relating to Mental Health Services For Children and Adolescents. While we defer to the Department of Health Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) regarding the technical details of this housekeeping bill, we recognize the profound significance of modernizing these statutes to better reflect the work that the CAMHD is doing to serve our youth's complex mental health needs through a trauma-informed, healing-centered lens.

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

Tia L.R. Hartsock, MSW, MSCJA
Director, Office of Wellness & Resilience
Office of the Governor

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



Katherine Aumer, PhD
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378, Room 256
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
and Senate Committee on Judiciary
In Support of S.B. 1442 S.D.1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS
February 27, 2025 10:25 a.m., Room 211 and Video

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Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice-Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii law, HRS §334-10, established the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) as a 21-member body to advise on the allocation of resources, statewide needs, and programs affecting more than one county as well as to advocate for adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbances, individuals with mental illness or emotional problems, including those with co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Members are residents from diverse backgrounds representing mental health service providers and recipients, students and youth, parents, and family members. Members include representatives of state agencies on mental health, criminal justice, housing, Medicaid, social services, vocational rehabilitation, and education. Members include representatives from the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances and county service area boards on mental health and substance abuse.

The Hawaii State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) strongly supports SB1442 SD1, which seeks to clarify and update the responsibilities of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) within the Department of Health to better reflect current mental health systems of care for Hawaii's children and adolescents.

Mental health challenges among youth in Hawaii have become increasingly complex, requiring a comprehensive, coordinated, and evidence-based approach to ensure that children and adolescents receive the

appropriate services and support. By modernizing the statutory language governing CAMHD, this bill ensures that Hawaii's mental health care framework aligns with best practices and evolving community needs.

SB1442 SD1 is critical because it:

1. **Clarifies CAMHD's role** in delivering high-quality mental health services, ensuring efficiency and accountability in service delivery.
2. Supports a system of care model that **prioritizes early intervention, family involvement, and culturally competent services.**
3. **Improves coordination between CAMHD and other child-serving agencies,** strengthening Hawaii's overall mental health system.

The Hawaii State Council on Mental Health remains committed to advocating for policies that enhance mental health care access and effectiveness for Hawaii's youth. We believe SB1442 SD1 is a vital step toward ensuring that every child in our state has access to the support they need to thrive.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB1442 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please contact us at DOH.SCMHChairperson@doh.hawaii.gov.

VISION: A Hawaii where people of all ages with mental health challenges can enjoy recovery in the community of their choice.

MISSION: To advocate for a Hawaii where all persons affected by mental illness can access necessary treatment and support to live full lives in the community of their choice.



HAWAII SUBSTANCE ABUSE COALITION

SB1442 SD1 Mental Health CAMHD Updates

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Thursday, Feb 27, 2025: 10:25: Room 211 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB1442 SD1:

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 and prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

Updating mental health codes for children is important for several reasons:

1. Improved Diagnosis and Treatment As our understanding of mental health evolves updated codes allow for more accurate diagnoses and treatment plans tailored to children's unique developmental needs.

2. Reflecting New Research Advances in psychology and psychiatry reveal new conditions, refine existing ones, and improve classification methods, ensuring that children receive appropriate care.

3. Better Insurance Coverage Updated codes help ensure that insurers recognize and cover new and emerging mental health conditions, reducing financial barriers to treatment.

4. Early Intervention More precise coding can lead to earlier identification of mental health issues, allowing for timely intervention, which is crucial for long-term well-being.

5. Tracking Trends and Outcomes Updating codes helps researchers and healthcare providers track mental health trends in children, assess treatment effectiveness, and develop better policies.

6. Reducing Stigma More refined language and categorization can help reduce stigma by framing mental health conditions in a more accurate and supportive way.

Overall, updating these codes ensures that children's mental health care remains current, effective, and accessible.

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

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 27, 2025

TIME: 10:25 AM

PLACE: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

SB1442 SD1, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND
ADOLESCENTS.

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Ways and Means Committee and the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Mai Phan, and I am a student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in the School of Social Work. I am also a constituent of Representative Daniel Holt (District 28) and Senator Karl Rhoads (District 13). Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this hearing. I am testifying as an individual in strong support of Senate Bill 1442 SD1, which aims to strengthen and modernize mental health services for children and adolescents in Hawai‘i.

By improving accessibility, coordination, and effectiveness, this bill will help address the rising rates of depression, anxiety, suicidality, and other mental health challenges among Hawai‘i’s youth. SB1442 SD1 proposes Family Guidance Centers, long-term planning, and a focus on early intervention and community-based care, which will reduce crises and hospitalizations and ensure that young people receive the support they need.

As a social work student interning at the Boys & Girls Club, I witness firsthand the challenges youth face. While I do not speak on behalf of the organization, my experience working with the youth there, 98% of whom come from vulnerable backgrounds, has shown me

how critical accessible mental health care is for their well-being. Many of these children face economic hardship, unstable home environments, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), all of which increase their risk of developing mental health issues. This bill will provide the necessary support systems to help these youth thrive and become happy and healthy adults.

The benefits of SB1442 SD1 extend to all of Hawai'i's youth. Many of us have young people in our lives whom we deeply care about, whether they are our children, grandchildren, siblings, nieces, nephews, or cousins. By passing this bill, we are investing in their future and ensuring they have greater access to high-quality and effective mental health care. For these reasons, I support Senate Bill 1442 SD1 which prioritizes the well-being of Hawai'i's youth.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,

Mai Phan

(808)-690-6146

Minhphan2408@gmail.com

SB-1442-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:50:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/27/2025 10:25:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion Poirier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I am Marion Poirier, M.A.,R.N., and SUPPORT this bill; however, I believe the bill is just the beginning of appropriate attention to youngsters mental health needs. We vitally need to catch early mental health needs of our youth by having bone fide treatment proactively available. Thank you for the opportunity to share my views.

LATE

Committee on Judiciary (JDC)

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 27, 2025

TIME: 10:25 AM

PLACE: State Capitol Conference Room 211, 415 South Beretania Street & Videoconference

Testimony in Support of SB1442 SD1 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.

Aloha Chair(s) and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jacob Elizares, and I am a social work student at The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health and a social work intern at Family Programs Hawaii Ho'omalū O Na Kamali'i, currently working to gain experience in serving children and families in our community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB1442 SD1, which seeks to clarify and update the responsibilities of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) to better reflect the current mental health system and the needs of youth in Hawaii.

As someone who is preparing to enter the field of social work, I have seen firsthand how crucial accessible, well-coordinated mental health services are for children and adolescents. Many young people in Hawaii, particularly those in underserved communities, face significant barriers to receiving timely and appropriate mental health support. This bill is an essential step in ensuring that the CAMHD can effectively fulfill its role in connecting youth to necessary mental health services, improving coordination of care, and adapting to the evolving needs of our communities.

Children struggling with mental health challenges often rely on a network of professionals, including social workers, educators, and healthcare providers, to navigate available services. By updating CAMHD's responsibilities, SB1442 SD1 strengthens this

network and ensures that children and families receive the care they need in a timely, efficient, and culturally responsive manner.

I urge the committee to pass SB1442 SD1 to support the well-being of Hawaii's children and adolescents. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your commitment to improving mental health services in our state.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacob Elizares

(808) 722-8105

Jacob_k_elizares@yahoo.com

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health