

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



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

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

February 5, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 438 – RELATING TO YOUTH PROGRAMS.**

Hearing: February 7, 2023, 8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconferencing, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure, provides comments, and defers to the Office of Youth Services. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation in this measure not replace or reduce priorities identified in the executive budget and forthcoming Governor's Messages.

**PURPOSE:** This bill appropriates moneys and establishes one Pacific youth programs coordinator position within the Department of Human Services, Office of Youth Services. Appropriates moneys.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's attention to the needs of Hawaii's youth, specifically Native Hawaiian youth and youth from other Pacific Island nations. A Pacific Youth Programs Coordinator Position within the Office of Youth Services would be an appreciated resource as OYS embarks on establishing the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program statewide.

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



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

February 6, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Leanne Gillespie, Executive Director

SUBJECT: HB 438 – RELATING TO YOUTH PROGRAMS  
Hearing: February 7, 2023, 8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference, State Capitol

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

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to establish a pacific youth programs coordinator within the Office of Youth Services. The measure appropriates moneys for one FTE position and programs costs.

The Office of Youth Services manages the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) and provides and coordinates a continuum of programs and services statewide for at-risk youth and their families to prevent delinquency and reduce recidivism. The OYS manages approximately 60 contracts with community-based organizations, including ten for project-based cultural programs. Most of these contracts prioritize program eligibility to marginalized youth involved in our child-serving systems: including the child welfare and juvenile justice system.

The OYS also manages the National Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Title II State grant. One of the focusses of this grant program is to research and facilitate system changes related to racial and ethnic disparities within our juvenile justice system. Research shows that Pacific Islander youth are overrepresented within our social, behavioral and health systems, including the juvenile justice system and the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility.

The OYS acknowledges that there is a lack of awareness of, and coordination of, programs and services that exists within our communities, especially for programs working with pacific islander youth and their families. In 2019, to address the lack of awareness of existing programs, the OYS procured a contract for a statewide youth services directory. However, due to budget cuts this contract was terminated in 2020. The OYS did not have the staffing to

further coordinate between these programs on the directory, nor facilitate awareness outreach efforts so that youth, their families, and communities knew where to get assistance. The passing of this measure will address these gaps and provide needed service coordination.

The Office of Youth Services respectfully requests \$218,556 for one FTE Children and Youth Program Specialist V, and program and administrative costs to re-activate a youth services directory and facilitate statewide coordination.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

# Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i

Committee: House Human Services  
Hearing Time: 8:30 a.m., February 7, 2023  
Location: State Capitol  
Re: HB 438, Relating to Youth Programs

Aloha e Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **support** of HB 438, Relating to Youth Programs.

This bill requires appropriates funds and establishes one Pacific Youth Programs coordinator position within the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services.

Our organizations and the individuals in them work collaboratively with the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services and have a shared vision for supporting youth and reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system. We believe that this measure is an important step toward providing the office with necessary additional resources.

Our collective, the Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i (OYAH), works to support young people under age 25 who are disconnected from school and work, referred to as "opportunity youth." This developmental time period is extremely consequential to the individual growth and overall life chances of our children. We support this measure.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i hui is a collaboration of organizations and individuals committed to 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 HB 438.**

# Filipinos for Affirmative Action

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## House Committee on Human Services

February 7, 2023, 8:30 am

Hawai'i State Legislature

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 329

**To:** Chair John M. Mizuno  
Vice-Chair Terez Amato  
Committee on Human Services Members: Della Au Belatti, Diamond Garcia,  
Greggor Ilagan, Bertrand Kobayashi, Scott Y. Nishimoto, Jenna Takenouchi

**From:** Agnes Malate, PhD  
armalate@yahoo.com

My name is Agnes Malate and I am in full support of House Bill 438 to appropriate moneys and establish one Pacific youth programs coordinator position within the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services. I immigrated to Hawai'i from the Philippines with my parents and have experienced first hand the challenges adjusting to a new culture and environment. I have also been actively involved with advocating for and providing services to immigrants and migrants from all points of the world, especially during the pandemic.

While working at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and the University of Hawai'i School of Medicine's 'Imi Ho'ola Post-Baccalaureate Program, I became acutely aware of the severe lack of resources available to Pacific Islander youth and their families. As the Principal Investigator of the GEAR-UP Mānoa project in the early 2010s, I recall meeting with Dole Middle School administrators and how concerned they were about not having the capacity, knowledge, understanding, and resources to meet the needs of the growing number of students and their families.

Having a coordinator to work with Pacific youth is much needed and I ask for your consideration in passing SB 438.



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir  
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB438  
RELATING TO YOUTH PROGRAMS  
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing Date: February 7th, 2023

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights is in **full support of HB438**, which appropriates funds and establishes one Pacific youth programs coordinator position within the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services.

HB438 recognizes the critical need for support and services for at-risk youth in Hawai'i. With high rates of youth suicide and dropout, as well as interactions with the criminal justice system, it is evident that the youth of Hawai'i face numerous challenges that requires immediate attention.

Recent reports by Civil Beat and scholars at the University of Hawai'i have found that youth from COFA nations face outsized discrimination and structural barriers to success at school and in the workforce.<sup>1</sup> In order to address these systemic challenges the state must make structural changes that address these inequities and focus resources on the nonprofits and programs that are working directly with the population.

The establishment of a Pacific youth program coordinator within the Office of Youth Services will provide a permanent and dedicated resource to support at-risk youth, especially those from various Pacific Island nations. With this position in place, our State will have a clear point person to coordinate and provide services for our young people and ultimately help to prevent delinquency, reduce the incidence of recidivism, and provide a bright future for our youth from various Pacific Islands.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Liza Ryan Gill

Coordinator/Refounder

Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/11/struggles-of-micronesian-students-point-to-significant-issues-in-hawaii-school-system/>

**HB-438**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 10:32:24 AM

Testimony for HUS on 2/7/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
amy agbayani	Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights strongly supports hb 438 that provides for a position and funds in the Office of Youth Services to be responsible for supporting policies and programs for a Pacific Islander youth. Families from these communities face many barriers in the schools, had the highest covid 18 positive cases, lack language access to government services, experience discrimination and have low income. Many are also ineligible for many federally funded services.

We strongly support this bill and express our appreciation to the Filipino Legislative caucus for including in their legislative package.

Amy Agbayani and Patricia McManaman

Hawaii Friends of Civil Rights

**HB-438**

Submitted on: 2/3/2023 7:47:42 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/7/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stnad in Support



**HB-438**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 10:11:16 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/7/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roman Leverenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly in support of this bill. Pacific Islanders, and Micronesians in particular, have had some major difficulties in our public schools and this bill will try to address some of the issues and problems and profound sense of alienation that many of these students have experienced.

I have served on the Board of The Legal Clinic with Shanty Asher for a couple of years. She has told me stories of her talks with Micronesian students that have been emotionally very difficult to listen to. Boys have been told that they would not need much of an education because they would just end up being garbage men. Conversely, Micronesians who have done well in school have been told they are too smart to be Micronesian. If the committee has the time and not already done so, I would highly recommend looking up a poem read by Kathy Jetnir-Kijiner, a young Marshallese woman who lived in Hawaii for 17 years. It is entitled, "Lessons from Hawaii," and is readily brought up on YouTube. It is raw, emotional, and leaves one wondering how can this be happening in Hawaii. How much Aloha has been shown to these fellow Pacific Islanders?

This bill will continue the efforts to better integrate our Micronesian brothers and sisters who live in our communities. Positive steps are being made but this bill will give this effort additional momentum and has the potential to make a real difference.

**HB-438**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 10:44:42 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/7/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia Halagao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Professor at the University of Hawaii, Manoa College of Education. I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaii.

I strongly support HB438, which establishes a Pacific youth programs coordinator position, within the office of youth services. We must invest in supporting our youth, especially our most vulnerable and at-risk youth.

Thank you for your consideration.

**HB-438**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:01:58 PM

Testimony for HUS on 2/7/2023 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, & Committee Members:

I write in strong support of HB 438, which establishes one Pacific youth programs coordinator position within the Department of Human Services Office of Youth Services.

As you are likely aware, [many of our Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students are disproportionately criminalized and dismissed from public schools.](#)

While this bill does not reach that urgent matter of ongoing public concern, it represents a constructive way for state government to better engage young persons who face significant challenges to their immediate and longer-term health and well-being.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.