



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/28/2023

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 1044, SD1 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to hire complex-based behavioral health specialists for Hawaii's rural public schools. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports and appreciates SB 1044, SD1.

The appropriation of funds to increase the behavioral health specialist workforce would strengthen the Department's efforts to meet the needs of students in Hawaii's rural areas experiencing trauma, grief, family separation, depression, and other crises.

The allocation of \$861,000 would fund the establishment of an additional 12 behavioral health specialists. The Department would allocate two behavioral health specialist positions for each of the following complexes:

Hilo-Waiakea Complex;
Kau-Keaau-Pahoia Complex;
Honokaa-Kealakehe-Kohala-Konawaena Complex;
Kapaa-Kauai-Waimea Complex;
Hana-Lahainaluna-Lanai-Molokai Complex; and
Baldwin-Kekaulike-Kulanihakoi-Maui Complex.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 1044, SD1.



HAWAI`I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Vonnell Ramos, President
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Jefferson Gourley, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive
Director

Network Membership

Bay Clinic

*Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai`i
Big Island Substance Abuse
Council*

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai`i

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC `Ohana, Inc.

Family Programs Hawai`i

Family Support Hawai`i

Friends of the Children's Justice

Center of Maui

Get Ready Hawai`i

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale `Opio Kaua`i, Inc.

Hawai`i Children's Action

Network

Hawai`i Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Ho`ola Na Pua

Ho`okele Coalition of Kaua`i

Ka Hale Pomaika`i

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kaua`i Planning and Action

Alliance

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

PFLAG – Kona, Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest, Hawaii

Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community

Center

The Catalyst Group

February 24, 2023

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1044 SD 1 RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 1044 SD 1 Related to Mental Health.

In recent years, our children and youth have experienced trauma related to the COVID pandemic and other problems. Virtual learning was not a success. Families have been stressed emotionally and economically.

TeenLink Hawaii, a web-based, statewide information and support resource for adolescents reported 29,560 website visits between April and September 2022, a huge increase over pre-Covid years when the site received 5,000 – 7,000 visits a year.. Mental health and suicide were among the five most popular topics.

HYSN conducts evaluation for the AmeriCorps Program in the Northern Mariana Islands, including review of reflection journals by the Members, who are high school seniors. They spoke about the trauma they endured and shared the things that helped them cope.

One Member wrote, *"There's just so many things going on with school and some things outside of school that made me feel so overwhelmed."*

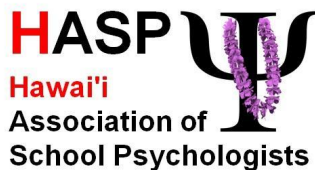
Another shared what helped. *"From time to time I would also talk to some people about my mental health and I am really glad that I have people to talk about it while feeling comfortable."*

This is why we need more mental health resources in our schools..

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director



SB1044
Relating to Mental Health

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists (HASP) offers comments on SB1044:

HASP strongly supports the intent of the Department of Education to increase the number of mental health service providers in schools to address issues such as suicide, trauma, grief, family separation, depression, and other crises.

School Psychologists receive extensive training in crisis prevention and preparedness, response, and intervention and recovery. School Psychologists are uniquely trained to address mental health in schools, including suicide, trauma, grief, anxiety, family separation, depression, and other crises. In schools, School Psychologists are the educators who know the most about psychology, and the psychologists who know the most about education.

Using funds requested in this Legislation to increase the number of School Psychologists by addressing recruitment and retention challenges, will ensure the State's keiki have access to high quality school-based mental health services by individuals most qualified to do so in school settings.

We therefore recommend that lines 12-13 of page 2 be amended to read as follows:

2024-2025 to hire [~~complex-based behavioral health specialists~~] School Psychologists for the State's rural public schools.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Respectfully Submitted:

Alec Marentic, Ed.S., NCSP
HASP President

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i

February 28, 2023

Committee: Senate Ways and Means
Hearing Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: State Capitol
Re: SB 1044, SD1, Relating to Mental Health

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **support** of SB 1044, SD1, Relating to Mental Health.

This bill will appropriate moneys to hire complex-based youth mental health specialists for rural Hawai'i Department of Education schools.

As explained by the California Department of Education, providing mental health services in a school based setting helps address barriers to learning and provide supports so that all students can achieve in school and ultimately in life. Schools are places where prevention and early intervention activities can occur in a non-stigmatizing environment. Students will be able to maximize their benefit from mental health support services when they directly work with certified mental health specialists.

Our collective, Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i (OYAH), works to support young people under the age of 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.**

Opportunity 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 SB 1044, SD1.

Written Testimony: Youth Mental Health Services

Chair of the Senate Committee (WAM): Dela Cruz, Donovan M.

SB1044

Measure Title: Relating to Mental Health

Report Title: DOE; Youth Mental Health Services; Appropriation (\$)

Scheduled Hearing: February 28, 2023, at 10:00 am. Conference Room 211 & Video conference

Hello Chair and Committee,

My name is Jaika Aila Enriquez a student from the Social Work program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am testifying today in support of SB1044 whose focus is to help youth and their mental health by providing put-together services of specialists that could help with their mental health sufferings. I am supporting SB1044 for various reasons. One is because based on personal experience, I learned that the best self-care is to make sure your mental health is taken care of and well-supported. Youth with poor mental health can negatively affect school, grades, growth development into adulthood, and health. Two is due to the fact that schools have counseling offices that are staffed by social workers who lack the expertise to help students that are suffering from a mental health crisis. The third reason why I support SB1044 is that I do believe this could also be helpful for many young kids today especially youth who have parents that are struggling with mental health problems. Schools should be their second home where they can feel assured of these types of services. I am not a parent, but I am a sister. Although I can comfortably say that I can support my little brother with full potential with his mental health needs, I can be more assured and relieved that this is protected if schools have access to mental health services that mainly focus on serving students. Mental Health is more important than

anything else. Again, my name is Jaika Aila Enriquez, and I am here to support the measure title, relating to mental health, SB1044 Bill. Please consider supporting the bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jaika Aila Enriquez, Social Work Department at University of Hawai'i at Manoa

jaenriqu@hawaii.edu - (808)728-6575

SB-1044-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2023 8:25:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danielle Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Hawaii State Legislators,

I am writing to express my opposition to SB1044 SD1. As a high-school student in Hawaii who has experienced and witnessed the struggles my peers face, I understand the importance of addressing this issue. However, this bill is not the solution and may do more harm than good.

Many students, including myself, are reluctant to seek help for our mental health since we fear that our guardians will be notified under the mandated reporting laws; unwillingly sharing highly personal information can be traumatizing, especially for kids that come from families where mental health is overlooked or not understood. We worry that our parents or guardians will not support us or may even punish us for seeking help. As a result of this, many students will not pursue counseling.

I urge you to vote against SB1044 SD1 because it will not curb youth suicides or improve mental health. I believe this bill is a waste of Hawaii's resources as I know the majority of students will not utilize it. Instead, it would be more beneficial to address the root of the problem, why youth suicides have spiked, because the problem lies within the root, not the student.

Thank you for your time,
Danielle

SB-1044-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2023 1:43:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sidney Hsu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maternal and Child Health Bureau's Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Sunday, February, 26, 2023

Support for S.B. No. 1044, S.D. 1, Relating to Behavioral Health Services

As both a LEND trainee and a doctoral candidate of psychology, I have been fortunate enough to witness the intersection of child needs and mental health. Much of my clinical work has been providing services to the underserved local populations and at-risk youth of O'ahu. I've waited outside the cell of a 13 year-old who was detoxing from a binge of methamphetamines. I've listened to the stories of abuse and fear from an 8 year-old while they played with their toys. I've witnessed children fall between the cracks because they had been labeled as a "bad kid" rather than a child who required additional support. A child who has been pained without fully understanding what had happened. Without having guidance or a place to feel safe.

Our keiki need more. No, they deserve more. They deserve to know that our community will not label and abandon them without hearing their story. They deserve a supportive network that fights for them. Fights for them to have a chance. They are our future. They are the beautiful souls that keep our days bright and sunny. We are responsible for teaching them about the world. Let's show them a world where they feel safe, loved, and happy. So that one day when they are grown and in charge of these lands, they have forgiving hearts and open minds. Because that's what we showed them. Please consider how expanding specialized mental health care for underserved children grows our community and heals our future. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.