
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESS YOUTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that one in ten young
2 adults who are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five
3 years, and at least one in thirty adolescents between the ages
4 of thirteen and seventeen, experience some form of homelessness
5 in which the young adult or adolescent is unaccompanied by a
6 parent or guardian over the course of a year.

7 The legislature further finds that among homeless youth,
8 sixty-nine per cent report mental health problems; thirty-three
9 per cent have once been part of the foster care system; and
10 fifty per cent have been in the juvenile justice system, in jail
11 or detention. Moreover, sixty-two per cent of lesbian, gay,
12 bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ+) youth
13 report being physically harmed while experiencing homelessness,
14 while forty-seven per cent of non-LGBTQ+ youth reported being
15 physically harmed while homeless.

16 The legislature also finds that runaway and homeless youth
17 are vulnerable to multiple threats, including having unmet basic



1 food and shelter needs, untreated mental health disorders,
2 substance use, significant disruption to their education,
3 sexually transmitted diseases and human immunodeficiency virus
4 infection, sexual exploitation, physical victimization, and
5 suicide. The legislature recognizes that existing resources for
6 outreach and shelter options are limited as unaccompanied
7 homeless youth tend to be an underserved and neglected
8 population.

9 The legislature additionally finds that Act 130, Session
10 Laws of Hawaii 2022 (Act 130), established a safe spaces for
11 youth pilot program within the department of human services.
12 According to the National Network for Youth, communities with
13 established safe spaces for homeless youth, like the program
14 established by Act 130, report higher success rates in terms of
15 improved housing stability, increased school enrollment, and a
16 reduction in risky behaviors. The legislature notes that Act
17 130 is scheduled to be repealed on June 30, 2025. In light of
18 its success, the office of youth services has worked on planning
19 and developing the safe spaces for youth pilot program and, with
20 appropriations, recommends the pilot program become permanent,



1 and is ready to open the first state-funded shelter for young
2 adults on the island of Hawaii.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

4 (1) Make the safe spaces for youth pilot program a
5 permanent program within the office of youth services;

6 and

7 (2) Provide funding for a permanent safe spaces for youth
8 program in the office of youth services.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 352D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
11 and to read as follows:

12 "§352D- Safe spaces for youth program. (a) There is
13 established within the office of youth services a safe spaces
14 for youth program, which shall provide, subject to the
15 availability of funds, safe spaces in each county for youth and
16 young adults experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

17 (b) The program shall collaborate with all departments of
18 the State and its political subdivisions that offer services for
19 the purpose of ensuring the well-being of youth and young adults
20 in Hawaii, including the department of education, department of
21 corrections and rehabilitation, department of health, department



1 of human services, department of land and natural resources,
2 department of law enforcement, state office on homelessness and
3 housing solutions, county police departments and other agencies,
4 and judiciary, to coordinate the identification of youth and
5 young adults who are experiencing homelessness or at risk for
6 homelessness and placement of these youth and young adults at a
7 shelter for homeless youth or young adults.

8 (c) The office of youth services may enter into contracts
9 with nonprofit organizations to provide services for youth or
10 young adults experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of
11 homelessness. Any nonprofit organization contracted under this
12 subsection shall have the knowledge, experience, and
13 qualifications, including licenses as needed for child caring
14 institutions, and other requirements to operate a shelter for
15 youth or young adults at risk of homelessness or who are
16 experiencing homelessness. Youth under the age of eighteen
17 shall not be sheltered with young adults eighteen to twenty-
18 four.

19 (d) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, a
20 shelter for homeless youth contracted under subsection (c) may



1 admit a youth into the shelter's care for up to ninety days
2 without the consent of the youth's parent or guardian.

3 (e) The office shall submit a report pertaining to the
4 safe spaces for youth program to the legislature no later than
5 twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session.

6 (f) The office may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91
7 necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

8 (g) For the purposes of this section, "shelter for
9 homeless youth" means a facility that operates to receive youth
10 or young adults twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and
11 provides youth or young adults with services, including:

- 12 (1) Overnight lodging and supervision;
- 13 (2) Hot meals and hot showers;
- 14 (3) Access to medical and behavioral health services; and
- 15 (4) Education and employment support."

16 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
19 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
20 year 2026-2027 for a permanent safe spaces for youth program
21 within the office of youth services.



1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



H.B. NO. 613
H.D. 1

Report Title:

Safe Spaces for Youth; Permanent; Office of Youth Services;
Department of Human Services; Appropriation

Description:

Makes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program permanent within
the Office of Youth Services. Appropriates funds. Effective
7/1/3000. (HD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

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