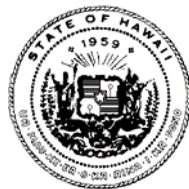


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

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

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

April 6, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

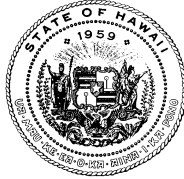
SUBJECT: **HCR 139/ HR 19 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A COORDINATED PLAN TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS.**

Hearing: April 7, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this resolution and provides comments. DHS defers to the Departments of Health and Education, and will work with them to build on learning of the Hawaii FASD Action Group to address the resolution's request. However, DHS notes that the Med-QUEST Division (MQD) is currently focused on meeting multiple implementation requirements of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), Public Law 119-21, through 2027. Consequently, DHS MQD may not have required staff available to dedicate to the effort to develop a plan that will be available by December 15, 2026.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this resolution.

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



KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.G.A, M.P.H
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on HCR139
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, AND
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A COORDINATED PLAN TO REDUCE THE IMPACT
OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS.

REP. CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 7, 2026
Room 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) appreciates HCR139's focus on
3 prevention, which is DOH's primary strategy to improve and protect the health of Hawaii's
4 residents.

5 It is worth noting that Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is underdiagnosed and not
6 systematically tracked in the state, and population-based data to inform subsequent services
7 and supports is not readily available. However, prevention efforts can have a large impact on
8 the incidence of FASD.

9 According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 30 years of research has shown that
10 alcohol screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) is effective at reducing
11 excessive alcohol use. In 2018, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) examined the
12 evidence on alcohol screening and behavioral counseling interventions and recommended
13 universal implementation, saying, "The USPSTF recommends screening for unhealthy alcohol
14 use in primary care settings in adults 18 years or older, including pregnant women, and
15 providing persons engaged in risky or hazardous drinking with brief behavioral counseling

- 1 interventions to reduce unhealthy alcohol use.” To this end, the Department of Human
- 2 Services Med-QUEST Division published in 2023 an [SBIRT manual for clinicians](#) to improve
- 3 diagnosis and treatment.

- 4 Discussions among DOH, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Education
- 5 that focus on prevention is a prudent use of limited resources.

- 6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SIERRA WHITESIDE
CHAIRPERSON

DAINTRY BARTOLDUS
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543**

April 7, 2026

The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Todd and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: HCR139 / HR131 Requesting the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Department of Education to develop a coordinated plan to reduce the impact of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities offers its SUPPORT for HCR139 / HR131, which requests the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Department of Education to develop a coordinated plan to reduce the impact of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) often result in lifelong cognitive, behavioral, and functional impacts that can mirror or overlap with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Despite this, individuals with FASD frequently experience challenges accessing appropriate services and supports, particularly within existing eligibility frameworks. In Hawai'i, this has contributed to ongoing gaps in how individuals with FASD are identified, served, and supported across systems.

Diagnosis itself can present additional barriers. FASD remains highly stigmatized, which can discourage families from seeking formal identification or delay diagnosis altogether. At the same time, without a clear diagnosis, individuals may struggle to access services, supports, or accommodations that align with their needs. This creates a disconnect where individuals experience significant functional limitations but do not neatly fit within existing system definitions, including within developmental disabilities services.

A coordinated, cross-agency plan presents an important opportunity to better align health, education, and human services systems in a way that reflects the lived experiences of individuals with FASD and their families. Improving early identification, strengthening service coordination,

and ensuring that eligibility and service frameworks account for functional needs—rather than relying solely on diagnostic categories—will be critical to improving outcomes.

This measure also supports broader system goals of reducing reliance on higher-cost interventions, including foster care and the criminal justice system, by investing in earlier, more coordinated supports. Ensuring that individuals with FASD are appropriately recognized within these systems will strengthen the State’s ability to respond effectively and equitably.

For these reasons, the Hawai‘i State Council on Developmental Disabilities supports HCR139 / HR131.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator



HRC139/HR131 Develop Plan for FASD

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Chris Todd, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Tuesday, Apr 7, 2026: 10:00: Room 308 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports HRC139/HR131:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the ad hoc leader of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder prevention and treatment agencies and recovery-oriented services such as stabilization crisis, harm reduction and supportive housing.

HSAC supports that DPH, DHS, and DOE develop a plan to address to reduce the impact of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder that they receive early detection, prevention and coordinated interventions.

FASD is a problem in Hawaii and efforts can be made to prevent this devastating condition as well as to treat children and adults that would increase their functioning:

- Understand the disorder and reshape some of our interventions to change a child's behavior and improve functionality.
- Reduce the prevalence of FASD.
- Empower care givers to help FASD people reach their full potential.
- Address stigma by educating our communities to understand the complexities of this disability while promoting a more inclusive culture.
- Greatly improve upon outcomes through measurement brought about by Medicaid funding.
- Reduce childhood trauma by increasing supports for high-risk families, building resilience, and improving access to treatment.

Working together, we can join the growing number of states that claim to be a “FASD-Informed State.”

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

HR-131

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:16:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We are in strong support. Obtaining appropriate services for those with FASD is one of our agency's highest priorities. Act 192 SLH 2023 was an achievement that represented the culmination of years of persistent advocacy. It created a feeling of great promise. In fact much has been accomplished and the FASD Action Group has done a wonderful job within the constraints under which they have operated. While the Department of Health has been somewhat supportive they have also been one of those constraints. To begin with, funding for the current project was released long after the timeline that was contemplated. That has delayed progress.

More recently there had been discussions surrounding the creation of a position within the Department to serve as an FASD Coordinator. Aside from the benefits of having a state department help lead the efforts, recent federal legislation has allocated funds to states that have a Coordinator in place. For that reason, the failure of the Department to designate a Coordinator has potentially left federal dollars on the table. This has left advocates quite frustrated. We understand that at one time the Department, within the Family Health Services Division, did actually have a position for a Coordinator. Yet, no one seems to have any recollection of that.

We see the main thrust of this Resolution as hopefully getting the Department of Health to coordinate with the other agencies to make this issue a real priority. Among other things, it should certainly come back next session with a Budget Request to fund the Coordinator position so that we can really make more progress on this issue.



April 6, 2026

Testimony in Support of HCR 139

Aloha Chairs and Committee Members:

My name is Greg Tjapkes (chap-kes), Executive Director of The Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai'i. I strongly support HCR 139.

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders have a profound impact on children, families, schools, and communities throughout Hawai'i. Early identification, prevention, and coordinated intervention can improve outcomes and reduce long-term costs.

Our organization has a longstanding connection to this issue and the Hawaii FASD Action Group, through our former Clinical Director, Dr. Ann Yabusaki. We continue to support the important work of this group.

HCR 139 takes an important next step by asking the Hawai'i Department of Health, Hawai'i Department of Human Services, and Hawai'i Department of Education to work together on a coordinated plan, including consideration of a statewide FASD coordinator and opportunities to access available federal funding.

We respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Greg Tjapkes
Executive Director
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii



Alan Shinn, MSW
PRESIDENT
Retired Executive Director

Ken Yabusaki, PhD
TREASURER
Retired Biochemist

William Kumagai
SECRETARY
Transform Hawaii Government

Stephanie W. Batzer, Esq., LSW
SECRETARY
*Child & Family Attorney
Child & Family Social Worker*

Jane Onoye, PhD
DIRECTOR
*Professor
Department of Psychiatry, JABSOM
University of Hawaii*

Arlina Wong, MSW, LSW
DIRECTOR
*Hawaii Executive Director
Acumen Fiscal Agent*

Ginny Wright
DIRECTOR
Educator/Family Advocate

Amanda Luning, LMHC, IECMH-E
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Hawaii FASD Action Group

TO: The Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the House Finance Committee of the 2026 Session of the Hawai'i State Legislature

RE: Testimony in Support of HCR139/HR131

Aloha,

My name is Amanda Luning, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i FASD Action Group in strong support of HCR139/HR131 during the 2026 session of the Hawai'i State Legislature. These resolutions represent a crucial step forward for our community, addressing issues at the heart of the mission of the Hawai'i FASD Action Group: to improve the lives of individuals and families impacted by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) through education, support, advocacy, and collaboration.

Alcohol use and pregnancy are complicated. This is well acknowledged and understood. The data is strong and the resources exist...those are not the real issues. **Coming together is.** Talking together is. Taking the time to understand is. Awareness, reframing, and coordination are upstream approaches that we know **are systemically less costly to everyone when taken seriously.**

What was discovered from the work of Act 192, is that it was passed under several assumptions:

- That our health, social services, and education systems are regularly screening for FASD. **They are not.**
- That we have FASD Specialists in Hawai'i. **We do not.**
- That we have reasonable diagnostic capacity in Hawai'i. **We do not.**
- That we have designations (such as clear eligibility criteria) for service and care provision and FASD-Informed systems. **We do not.**
- **That it is safe for women, families, and people affected to talk about FASD in their communities. It is not.**



Alan Shinn, MSW
PRESIDENT
Retired Executive Director

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Amanda Luning, LMHC, IECMH-E
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Hawai'i FASD Action Group

With national data indicating that 1 in 20 people have an FASD, this means a lot of people are going without the support they actually need. **Individuals are ending up in systems that are more costly, such as corrections and mental health facilities, when less expensive more responsive care could be provided through services like occupational and speech therapy, case management, and care coordination.**

The challenges surrounding FASD are deeply embedded in complex systems involving health, education, social services, and justice, but transformation is more than possible. **Navigating these interconnected systems requires thoughtful coordination and a unified approach.** The Resolutions recognize this systemic complexity and call upon state agencies and departments to come together, share expertise, and coordinate resources efficiently.

This cross-departmental collaboration is vital for eliminating silos, addressing workforce and service gaps, and ensuring that individuals and families receive comprehensive, seamless support throughout their journey. By fostering awareness and open dialogue, they help create a compassionate, informed environment where individuals and families are empowered—not judged. This work is critical to early identification, effective support, and ensuring that every person can achieve their full potential, in keeping with the principles of dignity, equity, and thriving communities. **It stands to create paradigm shift and promote both efficiency in use of resources AND positive outcomes.**

These Resolutions reflect the values of education, advocacy, and partnership, and acknowledge that **they support efficient, intentional, and positive use of public resources.** By supporting these resolutions, the Legislature acknowledges the importance of informed public policy, the vital role of family and community voices, and the need for continued education for professionals and the public alike—values that are foundational to both our Mission and all of a healthy Hawai'i.



Alan Shinn, MSW
PRESIDENT
Retired Executive Director

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DIRECTOR
Educator/Family Advocate

Amanda Luning, LMHC, IECMH-E
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Hawaii FASD Action Group

We humbly urge the committee to support state-based coordination for FASD as soon as possible. In doing so, you will help build a stronger, more intentional Hawai'i, grounded in awareness, collaboration, and hope.

Mahalo nui, for your dedication to our community and for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully,

HR-131

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 3:20:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenichi Yabusaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

04/02/2026

Aloha Representative Todd, Chairman, and Representative Takenouchi, Vice Chair:

I strongly support the passage of HR131/HCR139 FOCUS (FASD Outreach, Coordination, & Unified Support). The passage of the above will make available \$12 million to the 50 States of our Nation to address the multiple needs of those affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). To this end, members of the United States Congress have worked diligently for several years to pass the “FASD Respect Act” of 2025, to which both Senator Brian Schatz and Representative Mazie Hirono have contributed to its passage. The State of Hawaii must immediately establish a state FASD coordinator to “hit the deck running” with a plan to support those impacted by FASD that includes both prevention and treatment (interventions) of this condition.

FASD costs the State of Hawaii (for example, schools, prisons, mental health, and social services) nearly \$1 billion annually. FASD is a national and global public health issue. In Hawaii, each year, nearly 700 first-grade children have FASD (based on a national study that determined 1 in 20 first-grade children had FASD)

Those affected by FASD are in every sector of our society and are born into and alienated from an “impossible world” due to brain-based behavioral symptoms. The most effective means for treating and/or supporting these individuals is through early interventions. They can become productive members of our society. Too many individuals are misdiagnosed or diagnosed with FASD after it’s too late. WE MUST SUPPORT THEM WITH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE PROPERLY TRAINED AND THUS, FASD INFORMED.

In a society where the consumption of alcohol is a “living issue”, it is our responsibility to make the world “possible” for those affected by FASD. It is society that must change to accommodate their “abilities”, not “disabilities”.

Thank you for your service and support to finance HR131/HCR139 FOCUS.

Respectfully,

Kenichi Yabusaki, Ph.D.

Retired Biochemist

geckogroup@cs.com

(808) 348-0839

HR-131

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 6:13:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlyn Chen Scovell	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Dearest Chair, Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Vice Chair, Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this resolution, [HCR 139](#) / [HR 131](#), requesting the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Department of Education to develop a coordinated plan to reduce the impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) in Hawai'i.

Mahalo Nui Loa and Aloha.

Always with Gratitude and Prayers.

Respectfully yours, with much Sincerity,

Darlyn Chen Scovell

Doctoral (PsyD) Candidate, CSU School of Behavioral Sciences

Project Title: Pediatrician and PCP Perspectives on FASD Challenges and Needs in Hawai'i

IRB Reference Number: 2369111-2

HR-131

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:09:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

139 HCR REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A COORDINATED PLAN TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS.

HR-131

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 10:36:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cleota Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Of the 16,700 children born annually in Hawai'i, 840 are estimated to be born with an FASD due to the exposure of alcohol in the last trimester of pregnancy. It is also reported that roughly 85% of the children seen in diagnostic clinics for FASD in Hawai'i are adoptees or in foster care.

This is a crisis which continues to be traumatic given the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Department of Education do not have a coordinated plan to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). Children with this developmental disability in their formative years, continue to experience preventable trauma due to a lack of training and understanding of the needs of children with a FASD.

Proactive, interdisciplinary planning (health, education, social services) is essential for effective intervention.

I urge the Hawai'i State Legislature to pass HCR139/HR131 and to focus this 2026 Legislative Session on improving the lives of these children.

Sincerely,

Cleota G. Brown, Community Advocate