

**OPPORTUNITY
YOUTH
ACTION HUI**

1 April 2022

House Committee on Finance

Hearing Time: 3:00 pm

Location: State Capitol/Virtual

Re: SB 1128, SD2, HD1, Relating to Office of Youth Services

Aloha Representative Luke, and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **strong support** of SB 1128, SD2, HD1, relating to the Office of Youth Services. This bill would establish the office of youth services revolving fund to permit individual vocational programs to engage in commercial enterprises for self-sustainability purposes for young adults.

Legislation was enacted in 2014 to reform and improve the state's juvenile justice system. Since then, there has been a significant reduction in admissions to the Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility. The Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center was established in 2018 to provide services for at-risk youth and young adults, including skills building, vocational training, and economic programming. The additional source of revenue proposed by this measure will support the Office of Youth Services' ongoing efforts to promote self-sustainability in at-risk youth and young adults. We support and see the potential in the innovative programs of the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hui 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 homelessness 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 1128, SD2, HD1.