

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i

House Committee on Corrections, Military & Veterans

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m., January 31, 2024

Location: Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 430 & Videoconference

Re: HB1812, Relating to Corrections

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Chun and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **SUPPORT** of HB1812, Relating to Corrections

This bill will restrict the use of solitary confinement in state-operated and state-contracted correctional facilities, with certain specified exceptions; prohibit the use of solitary confinement and requires the use of appropriate alternatives for committed persons who are members of a vulnerable population; require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to develop written policies and procedures regarding solitary confinement by 7/1/2025; and require the Department to develop policies and procedures to review committed persons placed in solitary confinement and develop a plan for committed persons currently in solitary confinement by 4/1/2025.

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 commend the legislature for previously reducing the use of solitary confinement for incarcerated youth and strongly supported those efforts. We now support this bill which expands existing restrictions.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i 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 HB1812.