

House Committee on Human Services

Hearing Time: 9:30 a.m., January 31, 2023

Location: State Capitol

Re: HB 317, relating to youth fees and fines

Aloha e Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato and members of the Committee:

We are writing to provide **comments on** HB 317, relating to youth fees and fines.

This bill prohibits the assessment of any fines, fees, or court costs against a person who was adjudicated for an offense committed during the person's minority, or against the person's parent or guardian, and discharges all related debt obligations assessed prior to the effective date of the Act. It requires the Office of the Administrative Director of the Courts to submit a report to the Legislature.

Although we are still reviewing the potential impacts of this measure, we seek to express our support for the intent of addressing the punitive aspects of the judicial system experienced by youth.

Our collective, the Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi (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. Although HB 317 specifically pertains to minors, we also support the legislature’s ongoing efforts to address the needs of opportunity youth more broadly.

The Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi 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 houselessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally-informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.