

February 16, 2024

House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing Time: 2:00 PM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 325

Re: HB1812 HD1, RELATING TO CORRECTIONS

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi hui, we are writing in **strong support** of HB1812 HD1, relating to crisis corrections. This bill restricts the use of solitary confinement in state-operated and state-contracted correctional facilities, with certain specified exceptions. It prohibits the use of solitary confinement and requires the use of appropriate alternatives for committed persons who are members of a vulnerable population. This bill also requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to develop written policies and procedures regarding solitary confinement by 7/1/2025 and requires 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. Additionally, this bill also requires a report to the Legislature and Hawaiʻi Correctional System Oversight Commission.

The practice of solitary confinement within prison systems denies inmates a sense of humanity and restricts standard needs inmates have. This is especially true for vulnerable populations that face increased trauma if subjected to solitary confinement. Therefore, restricting the use of solitary confinement is the correct path to ensure that inmates are afforded all opportunities for proper rehabilitation without subjecting them to further psychological distress.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi 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.

**Please support HB1812 HD1.**

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