

April 4, 2024

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hearing Time: 10:15 AM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 211

Re: HB2042 HD1, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi hui, we are writing in **strong support** of HB2042, relating to mental health. This bill appropriates funds to address the mental health and wellness needs of youth in the state.

Increasing the funds for outreach and availability of community-based mental health services is an excellent way to combat the increased rates of mental health issues among youth. By providing greater access, we can ensure that youth receive the care and attention they need to thrive and lead fulfilling lives and do not deal with the lasting effects of mental health struggles.

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 HB2042 HD1.**

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