

February 20, 2024

House Committee on Ways and Means

Hearing Time: 10:05 AM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 211

Re: SB2345 SD1, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

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 SB2345 SD1, relating to crisis intervention. This bill requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers. Additionally, this bill Requires the Department of Health to certify crisis intervention officers. Defines "crisis intervention officer". Establishes positions. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Makes an appropriation.

Designating positions for and providing training on de-escalation methods for mental health emergencies demonstrates efforts to improve the care each mentally ill individual receives, which will be reflected in their long-term interactions with the justice system. By integrating these initiatives, the state enhances the capacity of law enforcement to address delicate mental health incidents with respect and empathy.

We are reviewing the latest amendment to SB2345 SD1 and express potential concerns about the limits to a crisis intervention officers’ ability to respond to emergencies.

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 SB2345 SD1.**

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