

March 15, 2023

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Hearing Time: 03:00 p.m.

Location: State Capitol

Re: HB 823 HD2, Relating to Deaths Within the Correctional System

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, and members of the Committee:

We are writing in **strong support of** HB 823 HD1, Relating to Deaths Within the Correctional System.

This bill will expand the scope of reports on correctional facility and community correctional center deaths that are submitted to the governor and legislature; require certain reports to be published on the department of corrections and rehabilitation website; and mandate public access to other information reported.

The lives of those in correctional facilities matter just as much as those that are not. And their deaths should be investigated, treated, and reported on with the utmost respect and diligence. The public deserves complete transparency on the happenings within the correctional and justice systems of Hawaiʻi.

Our collective, Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi (OYAH), works to support young people under the age of 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 support this measure.**

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 HB 823 HD1.**