



February 12, 2020

To: The House Committee Members on Judiciary
The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

The House Committee Members on Consumer Protection & Commerce
The Honorable Roy Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair

Re: Strong Support of HB2043 HD1, Relating to Adolescent Mental Health Care

Hrg: February 12, 2020 at 2:05 PM at Capitol Room 325

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 400 community members, public health professionals and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA also serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA strongly **supports** HB2043 HD1, which would allow unlicensed mental health professionals, working under the supervision of a licensed mental health professional, to provide mental health treatment or counseling services to minors without parental or legal guardian consent.

Adolescent mental health is a public health priority and growing issues. Approximately 20% of teens experience a serious mental health disorder during their lifetime.[1] The number of adolescents who experienced major depressive episodes increased by almost a third from 2005 to 2014.[2] Mental health disorders can impact a variety of daily activities and functioning (e.g., relationships, schoolwork, sleeping, and eating).[3] Access to appropriate mental health services can make a difference in the lives of adolescents with mental disorders.[4] This measure will improve such access for adolescents. Early intervention and treatment can improve their health and well-being over the course of their lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on important health issues affecting people in Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire Townsend Ing", is written over a horizontal line.

Claire Townsend Ing
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawai'i Public Health Association



Literature Cited:

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health. (2017). *Mental illness*.
2. Mojtabai, R., Olfson, M., & Han, B. (2016). National trends in the prevalence and treatment of depression in adolescents and young adults. *Pediatrics*, 138(6).
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health. (2016). *Child and adolescent mental health*.
4. US Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration & Maternal and Child Health Bureau. *Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General*.