



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the House Committee on
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair

Friday, February 5, 2016, 10:15 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

By

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

R. Mark Browning
Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge
Family Court of the First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 2357, Relating to Age of Consent for Adolescent Mental Health Services

Purpose: Lowers the age of consent to receive mental health treatment or counselling services.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports this bill.

Unfortunately, trauma and increasingly stressful living conditions are realities facing the youth of today. Lowering the age of consent to mental health services would increase the opportunities for the young people to reach out for help. This bill does not overlook parents. The mental health service provider has an affirmative duty to contact and involve parents unless the provider determines that such contact is inappropriate. We believe that this strikes a balance between the rights and responsibilities of the parents, the growing need for such services to youth, and all parties' constitutional right to privacy.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.