The Judiciary, State of Hawaii

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary
Representative Karl Rhodes, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 29, 2016, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

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

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 2886, S.D.2, H.D.1, 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 writes in support of 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.