
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the federal Violence
2 Against Women Act (VAWA) is targeted toward ensuring that women
3 who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault,
4 including undocumented immigrants, are protected from their
5 perpetrators.

6 The United States Department of Justice, through the Office
7 on Violence Against Women, encourages nonprofits, community-
8 based organizations, and other social service organizations to
9 aid victims of violence by providing legal and social services
10 to enable women to report abuse and cooperate with law
11 enforcement without fear of being legally reprimanded due to
12 their immigration status. VAWA makes undocumented immigrants
13 who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault eligible
14 to apply for a work permit and a U-visa, which provides
15 immigration status to noncitizens willing to assist authorities
16 investigate crimes.

17 However, despite the provisions of VAWA, many victims do
18 not report perpetrators or help to prosecute them because of



1 fear of deportation. Many victims are unfamiliar with the laws
2 that may protect them and their children. Additionally, women
3 who have cooperated with authorities have been unable to
4 financially support their families because of a lack of job
5 experience, job training, and interviewing skills.

6 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot project to
7 enable community-based organizations to provide legal advice and
8 social services to victims of domestic violence or sexual
9 assault who are undocumented immigrants, in accordance with the
10 goals of VAWA.

11 SECTION 2. (a) The department of human services shall
12 establish a pilot project to assist undocumented immigrants who
13 are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault, including
14 assistance with helping victims to achieve federal Violence
15 Against Women Act status. The department may contract with a
16 nonprofit organization to operate the pilot project and shall
17 only contract with a nonprofit organization providing services
18 that has expertise relating to the federal Violence Against
19 Women Act.

20 (b) The pilot project shall provide the following services
21 to undocumented immigrants who are victims of domestic violence
22 or sexual assault:



- 1 (1) Assistance with restraining orders;
- 2 (2) Assistance with applications for U-visas, petitions
- 3 under the federal Violence Against Women Act, and work
- 4 permits;
- 5 (3) Workshops on building self-esteem and self-confidence;
- 6 (4) Instruction on appropriate workplace etiquette and
- 7 appearance;
- 8 (5) Training in effective job search techniques;
- 9 (6) Career assessments, when appropriate, to identify
- 10 marketable skills and assess employability;
- 11 (7) Information about current labor market trends for
- 12 employment and training;
- 13 (8) Placement with employers who agree to hire a
- 14 prearranged number of victims;
- 15 (9) Post-employment services;
- 16 (10) Legal assistance with divorces, child custody and
- 17 support, housing and consumer issues, and other family
- 18 law issues; and
- 19 (11) Programs to help with addressing the lack of English
- 20 skills and case management needs, including
- 21 information and assistance with using public



1 transportation, obtaining identification, and other
2 skills.

3 (c) Funds received by an organization under this Act shall
4 only be used for services described in subsection (b).

5 (d) The department of human services shall submit a report
6 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
7 convening of the regular session of 2010 that shall include the
8 following:

9 (1) A description of the process used to award contracts
10 to nonprofit organizations that received funds
11 pursuant to this section;

12 (2) A list of nonprofit organizations that were awarded
13 contracts and the amount of funds awarded to each of
14 the nonprofit organizations; and

15 (3) The number of victims that received services and the
16 types of assistance they received.

17 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval
18 and shall be repealed on June 30, 2010.



Report Title:

Domestic Violence; Pilot Project

Description:

Requires the Department of Human Services to establish a pilot project to assist undocumented immigrants who are victims of domestic violence. (HB2140 HD1)

