

hscadv
HAWAII STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Date: January 28, 2009

To: Representative Faye P. Hanohano, Chair and Representative Henry J. C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

From: Carol Lee, Executive Director

Re: HB 335 Relating to an Automated Victim Notification System

Hearing Date and Time: Thursday, January 29, 2009, 8:30 a.m.

Good morning Representative Hanohano, Representative Aquino, and Committee members. The Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of an automated Victim Notification System.

Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence has participated in planning for the proposed victim notification system and supports it. Victim safety is paramount and will be enhanced by this system.

Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence would like to see the automated victim notification system expanded to include notification of releases from cell block. These frequent, yet unpredictably timed, releases pose a huge danger to victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Last year was a particularly devastating year for domestic violence victims. There were more domestic violence homicides and suicides than in any recent year. Keeping registered victims notified of the whereabouts of the perpetrators of violence will enhance victim safety and will hopefully diminish the loss of precious lives.

We appreciate your consideration of our testimony.



Domestic Violence Action Center

Formerly the *Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline*

PO Box 3198 ● Honolulu, Hawaii 96801 ● Ph:808/534-0040 ● Fax:808/531-7228

TO: Chair Faye. P. Hanohano
Vice Chair Henry J.C. Aquino
Members of the Committee

FR: Nanci Kreidman, M.A.
Chief Executive Officer

RE: H.B. 335

Aloha. It is very important for victims to be notified about the presence or return of their abusers into the community. We have been in discussion for many years about strategies for keeping victims informed, while tracking movement of perpetrators throughout our criminal justice system.

This bill goes part of the way towards victim notification. Without the capacity of a system to inform victims about the posting of bail or the release from law enforcement after arrest, we cannot support this Bill. Police departments are responding to calls for protection from domestic violence victims every day. Arrests are made and victims may feel safer after such an arrest is made. If she/he is not made aware of the release, she/he is back in danger.

At this time of economic uncertainty, it seems unlikely that we can afford to design a comprehensive system. It is critical that core community services are preserved. Thank you for continuing to give consideration to new ideas for keeping victims safe and our community responsive.

LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Representative Hanohano, Chair
Representative Aquino, Vice-Chair
Members of the Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Dara Carlin, M.A.
VOICES
716 Umi Street, Suite 210
Honolulu, HI 96819
(808) 832-9318 X106

DATE: January 29, 2009

RE: Support for HB335

Hawaii VOICES, The Formerly Battered Womens Caucus, under the Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence would like to ask for the committee's support of this bill. One of the most difficult tasks I find as a Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate is trying to explain the experience of domestic violence to those who haven't experienced the firsthand terror of it.

Strange as this may sound, when an abuser is taken into custody there is a mixed feeling of relief and dread; you KNOW you're beyond his immediate reach but what will happen while he's serving a sentence for a crime he's committed against you? Will he "see the error of his ways", find religion, welcome anger management or embrace the services offered to him while he's serving his term or will he use the time to think about how YOU got him into this mess and how this is really all YOUR fault? The ultimate test to that arrives when he's reached his scheduled release from custody, which is an extremely nerve-wracking and tense time for a survivor. Until the offender has proven himself to no longer be a threat, it's in the survivor's best interests to be precautious and safety plan - but what happens when an offender is released ahead of schedule? How is a survivor supposed to know to safety plan if she doesn't know she's even at-risk?

The statewide notification system would provide such a courtesy, acting as an "early warning" system that would afford the survivor the benefit of an alert to this specified potential threat. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of intervention" which is the approach this notification system subscribes to. Supporting this bill would be another step closer towards ensuring safety for those who are at an increased vulnerability for an act of vengeance or "crime of passion".

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully, Dara Carlin, M.A.

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