



April 8, 2009

Education Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HCR 246, Resolution Concerning Teen Dating Violence

Dear Chairman Takumi, Vice-Chair Berg, and Members of the House Education Committee:

On behalf of the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL) and NFWL's National Policy Committees on Crime, Justice, Terrorism & Substance Abuse and Education & Training, I would like to thank you for placing **HCR 246, a resolution addressing teen dating violence education**, on the Education Committee Hearing Agenda.

This past November elected women from every level of government nationwide gathered at NFWL's Annual Conference to raise awareness about the issue of teen dating violence and solutions to curb the spread of this silent threat.

In a recently released survey, commissioned by Liz Claiborne Inc., the data revealed that one in five teens between the ages of 13 and 14 (20%) say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly half of all tweens (11- 14 year-olds) in relationships say they know friends who are verbally abused. This survey sparked national recognition that a surprising number of young adolescents are experiencing significant levels of dating violence and abuse.

Subsequently, NFWL's National Policy Committees on Crime, Justice, Terrorism, & Substance Abuse and Education & Training introduced and passed a Resolution on teen dating abuse during the conference. The Resolution specifically encourages women legislators in every state to introduce and adopt legislation that requires each public school district to implement a policy against teen dating violence and abuse, and incorporate information on the issue into health education curricula in middle and/or high schools.

The elected women who serve on these National NFWL Policy Committees are so pleased that Hawaii State Representative Lynn Finnegan has introduced and many of her esteemed colleagues have signed on to legislation in support of teen dating abuse education and awareness.

Dating violence is at epidemic proportions, resulting in thousands of preventable deaths. All of our children deserve a chance to grow and prosper and to be empowered with the information they need to make good choices. Elected women across the nation appreciate the attention that your Committee is giving to HCR 246 and this critical issue. Thank you for considering Representative Finnegan's efforts to protect Hawaii's teens.

Sincerely,

Robin Read
President & CEO, NFWL

Enclosure: NFWL Resolution on Teen Dating Violence Education

THE POWER TO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE FOR YOU

WWW.WOMENLEGISLATORS.ORG * ROBIN READ, PRESIDENT & CEO * NFWL@WOMENLEGISLATORS.ORG
910 16TH STREET, NW, SUITE 100 WASHINGTON, DC 20006 202-293-3040 FAX 202-293-5430
The Foundation qualifies as a tax-exempt organization under 501-c-3 of the Internal Revenue Code, Tax ID number 52-1480785

**National Policy Committee on Crime, Justice, Terrorism, & Substance Abuse
National Policy Committee on Education & Training**

Joint Resolution In Support of Teen Dating Violence Education

(Passed November 2008)

WHEREAS, Teen dating violence is a pattern of controlling and abusive behavior of one person over another within a romantic relationship including verbal, emotional, physical, sexual and financial abuse; and,

WHEREAS, Lack of dating experience allows teens to be more vulnerable to dating violence where they are less likely to recognize the abuse; and,

WHEREAS, Teen dating violence has become a prevalent problem in high schools, junior high schools and middle schools throughout our country, with one in three teens experiencing some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships; and,

WHEREAS, Girls and women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence and of the young murdered each year between the ages of 15 to 19 thirty percent are killed by their boyfriend or husband; and,

WHEREAS, Recent studies have shown that teen dating violence is starting at an early age with 11 to 14 year olds able to identify aspects of teen dating abuse in their social lives; and,

WHEREAS, Early sexual experiences can be a precursor to dating violence and abuse among older teens and can perpetuate a culture of acceptance of this type of behavior; and,

WHEREAS, Abuse and violence in intimate partner relationships not only causes great individual pain, but also breaks down families, communities and society at large; and,

WHEREAS, Education is the best mechanism to stop teen dating violence and is crucial to create a culture of intolerance for teen dating abuse;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, NFWL's National Policy Committees on Crime, Justice, Terrorism, & Substance Abuse and Education & Training encourage every state to adopt legislation that provides that each public school district implement a policy against teen dating violence and abuse and incorporate dating violence education into health education curriculum in middle and high schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, These Committees recommend that these school policies include a mission statement emphasizing that dating violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated as well as the establishment of procedures, guidelines and disciplinary actions to respond to incidents taking place at school or on school grounds.

HAWAII STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

TO: Representative Tagumi, Chair, Representative Berg and members of the Committee on Education

RE: HCR246 REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO DEVELOP, AND IMPLIMENT A POLICY AGAINST TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.

FROM: Ana Maring, Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Aloha, my name is Ana Maring and I represent the Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV). HSCADV is a private non-profit agency which serves as a touchstone agency for the majority of domestic violence programs throughout the state. For many years HSCADV has worked with the Hawaii Legislature by serving as an educational resource and representing the many voices of domestic violence programs and survivors of domestic violence.

HSCADV supports HCR246.

Becoming a tween and teenager should be an exciting time of intellectual and emotional growth. Many of our youth instead experience violence at the hands of a partner. It is confusing and painful. Like adult victims they experience isolation and fear. Our society, by its silence, tolerates this abuse. By working to create teen dating policy and implementing training we give tweens and teens better options for their future.

Research shows:

- 62% of tweens (age 11-14) who have been in a relationship say they know friends who have been verbally abused (called stupid, worthless, ugly, etc) by a boyfriend/girlfriend. (Liz Claiborne Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2008.)
- 1 in 3 teenagers report knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped, choked or physically hurt by their partner. (Liz Claiborne Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.)
- Women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest per capita rates of domestic violence (CALIF MARIE RENNISON AND SARAH WELCHANS, U.S. DEP'T. OF JUSTICE, SPECIALREPORT: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (2000).
- Nearly 80 percent of teenage girls who are abused remain in the abusive relationship. (Liz Claiborne, Inc. Women's Work. Love is Not Abuse, Fact Sheet, Fast Facts.)

HSCADV supports Hawaii's schools in adopting model policy regarding dating violence and will participate in a task force to achieve that goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

April 8, 2009

RE: HCR 246 In Support of Teen Dating Violence Education & Awareness

Dear Chairman Roy Takumi and Members of the Education Committee:

I am Carolyn Mosley, the mother of Ortralla Mosley. I am writing on behalf of my daughter and in regards to protection, training and education for the faculty of all schools on Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness.

I am speaking on this subject because of the death of my angel Ortralla Mosley. If these programs and education on Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness would have been in place just maybe Trellas' life would not have been lost this way and her life could have been saved. Once education of Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness has been established in schools and in the communities we will then be able to protect and save our babies and parents like myself and others would not have to experience the loss of our angels.

The lack of educational support of our faculty, police officers and everyone involved in her situation at that time caused her to lose her life. If you are in any way connected to a child let's get together as our children's saviors and help save them from the abuse that has corrupted the whole world.

Our children look up to us on a daily basis for guidance and support. Let's help take the anger and tension out of households that leads to abuse. Bring care, consideration, and compassion to our schools and teach our children that abuse at homes and abuse in their surroundings can stop.

Mothers, let us use the knowledge and wisdom that God has given us to care for our children. It all begins with protection, training and education. I ask that this Bill be past to prevent this tragedy from happening to our babies. After Trella was taken from our family, God has left me with one daughter and three grandbabies along with millions of children all over the world. I ask that you please help me to protect the children of our future.

This bill would provide the protection and education that is needed in every state to help prevent teen dating violence. My mothers' dying wish was for this bill to come in focus to protect and educate our babies and their families. I pray that you oblige me and my mother and parents of the world to help educate and protect our children by the passing of this bill and stopping teen dating violence.

Gracefully thankful,

Carolyn Mosley

Carolyn Mosley
MADE State Action Leader, Texas
Mother/Founder/President
The Ortralla LuWone Mosley Foundation Inc.
P. O. Box 143024
Austin TX 78714
Tel: (512) 299-2953
Email: cmosley@ortrallafoundation.org
<http://www.ortrallafoundation.org>

HCR 246, HDI (HSCR1474), HR 214, HDI (HSCR1473)
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH A
TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A POLICY AGAINST TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Wednesday, April 8, 2009 2:00pm Conference Room 309

Aloha Chair Roy M. Takumi and the members of the Committee on Education:

My name is Kristen Cleary and I am a master's student at The University of Hawaii Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. Upon my own investigation I have come to the conclusion that **I strongly support HCR 246, HDI (HSCR1474), HR 214, HDI (HSCR1473)**. According to the National Youth Violence Prevention Center, approximately 10% to 20% of high school students in the United States experience physical or sexual dating violence. A recent study found that 9.8% of females and 9.1% of males reported that they have been slapped, hit, or hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend. In March 2009 Hawaii received a grade of "C" by Break the Cycle in regard to teen dating violence. It is evident that teen dating violence is an issue which should be addressed especially since research has found that females who experience dating violence can lead to higher rates of alcohol/tobacco/cocaine use, unhealthy weight gain, risky sexual behavior; intercourse before the age of 15 with multiple partners, pregnancy, and suicidal ideation. There is hope, prevention programs have shown promise, these programs typically have teachers implement a violence and sexual assault curriculum into the classroom. I believe that this task force will allow us to properly investigate the problem in Hawaii and it will enable us to develop a plan which is unique to Hawaiian youth concerns. Mahalo for your time and mahalo for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,
Kristen Cleary

Anna M. Burke
Christopher F. Burke
27 Sylvan Court
Saunderstown, RI 02874

April 8, 2009

Education Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HCR 246

Dear Chairman Takumi, Vice-Chair Berg, and Members of the House Education Committee:

We are the parents of Lindsay Ann Burke, a college graduate with a degree in elementary and special education, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend at the age of 23. Chris is a culinary arts teacher at our state's vocational high school and Ann is a health teacher in South Kingstown, Rhode Island. **We ask you to consider the following and we urge you to pass HCR 246 which requires teen dating violence education in your schools**, although we do so with a heavy heart.

Like most people, we knew little of abusive relationships, and Lindsay was never educated about this major health issue in school either. Despite support from family and friends, she was murdered after leaving the relationship for the third time. After her death we began to research the what, how, and why this happened to her and we were outraged by what we learned. We were sickened to learn how much control one romantic partner could have over the other and how much psychological devastation takes place within the victim, regardless of their prior self-esteem or confidence. Most importantly, it was the alarming statistics for teen dating violence that caught our attention (please see attached) along with the fact that the federal government had previously urged states to encourage public schools to take the issue of dating violence education upon themselves.

Domestic violence was declared to be an epidemic in our country twenty years ago by Surgeon General Dr. Koop. The American Journal of Preventive Medicine wrote "Domestic abuse is an epidemic. But it flies under the radar, because of the stigma and shame associated with it". Twenty years ago we recognized HIV to be a serious health problem and our government made sure that we educated a nation, starting with our children in school. Our children continue to be educated about HIV through our health classes as this has been mandated. The teen dating violence statistics are alarming (please see attached stats). Dating violence destroys people and kills people too. Why aren't we educated about this health topic as well? This has to end.

Health teachers teach about many other important health topics, like drugs and family life education. We teach these topics through our comprehensive health education curriculum, all in

an age-appropriate manner. We believe teaching about teen dating violence and the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships is just as important, if not more important than any of these topics. It also leads to other health problems such as teen pregnancy, eating disorders, depression, and drug abuse. And as such, teen dating violence needs to be taught through our comprehensive health curriculum. Teen dating violence, just like domestic violence, cuts across all lines of race, socio-economic status, educational background, etc. That is why EVERYONE needs to know ALL the facts about this topic. Teens have a right to know this information and parents have a right to know this information. Lindsay had a right to know this information too. It's too late to help her, but not too late to help others.

HCR 246 will do just that. It will provide our youth, school staff, and parents with the knowledge and skills to help themselves and others. And it will lift the surrounding stigma allowing victims to come forward more easily, and abusers to recognize their behaviors and seek help.

How many more daughters must we lose at the hands of an abusive partner? How many more teens have to suffer silently in an abusive relationship, fearing for their lives, yet afraid to tell anyone? Most people know little about the dynamics of teen dating violence; most people don't know how to help or respond properly to a victim. This has to end. We have school policies and provide education for bullying and harassment. The same needs to be done for dating violence. In fact, dating violence is the third piece of a comprehensive violence prevention package.

Passage of HCR 246 will be a giant step forward in providing the necessary and proper education for teens, school staff, and parents. We cannot protect ourselves against that of which we do not know. Education is prevention. We urge you to pass HCR 246. It is the right thing to do. It is long overdue.

Sincerely,



Ann Burke



Chris Burke

Enclosure: Teen Dating Violence Statistics

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- Girls and women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence.
- Teen girls face relationship violence 3 times more than adult women.
- 1 in 5 high school girls is physically or sexually hurt by a dating partner.
- 1 in 3 teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships.
- 1 in 3 teens report knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped, or physically hurt by a partner.
- 45% of teen girls know someone who has been pressured or forced into having intercourse or oral sex.
- Nearly 1.5 million high school students report physical dating violence each year.
- Only 33 % of teens who have been in or known about an abusive dating relationship report having told anyone about it.
- 25% of victims say they have been isolated from family and friends.
- More than half of victims say they have compromised their own beliefs to please a partner.
- A third of teens worry about their physical safety.
- Many teens think this is normal.
- Teens report dating abuse via cell phones is a serious problem.
- Cell phone calls and texting mean constant control: 1 in 3 teens say they are text messaged 10, 20, and 30 times an hour by a partner keeping tabs on them.
- 82% of parents whose teens were emailed or text messaged 30 times an hour were not aware of this.
- The majority of parents of teen victims are unaware of the abuse.

Statistics are from the US Dept. of Justice, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Liz Claiborne Inc. teen dating violence survey. They have been compiled by Lindsay Ann Burke Memorial Fund for www.labmf.org.