



LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Chair Marcus R. Oshiro
Vice Chair Marilyn B. Lee
Members of the Committee on Judiciary

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

RE: H.B. 1800, HD1 Hearing: Wednesday, March 7, 2012, Rm #308, 9:00am

Good afternoon. We thought it important to offer for consideration budget information related to the Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC). The Domestic Violence Action Center provides specialized, unduplicated services to victims of domestic violence. The agency is the only one of its kind, exclusively dedicated to domestic violence, with the needs of victims in sharp focus.

This fiscal year (FY 2012), DVAC is thriving with Rainy Day Funds (\$390,000), appropriated to offset the enormous budget cuts the agency sustained in 2009. The loss of these funds are imminent – June 30, 2011, and catapults the agency and its services into a spin. The original loss of funding, \$570,000 was devastating.

More staff will be laid off and additional services will be eliminated.

At fiscal year end 2011, DVAC had 11,155 callers on its Helpline, with victims on our caseload and the community. We received 399 requests for legal representation, opened legal 215 cases, with attorneys making 366 appearances in court. Advocates opened an additional 189 cases, and staff completed 4,500 safety plans, as well as 3,514 risk assessments. At the half year point for FY 2012, domestic violence shows no signs of abating. Staff has had 2,635 contacts with agency clients, answered 741 Helpline calls, accepted 74 complex and potentially lethal cases, and closed an additional 61 cases.

It is our greatest hope for the community, that these unique program services can be maintained with an appropriation to the Judiciary for contracting with the Domestic Violence Action Center.

Thank you for allowing this comment and giving consideration to the importance of preserving these key services, bringing peace to island families.