

# hawaii family forum

Email to: [HUSstimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HUSstimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Hearing on: January 31, 2011 @ 9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room # 329

**DATE:** January 28, 2011

**TO:** House Committee Human Services  
Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Jo Jordon, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Allen Cardines, Jr. , Executive Director

**RE:** Strong Support for HB 946 Relating to Human Trafficking

Honorable Chairs and members of the House Committee on Human Services, I am Allen Cardines, representing the Hawaii Family Forum. Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii, representing a network of various Christian Churches and denominations. We strongly support passage of HB 946.

It is estimated by the U.S. State Department that as many as 17,500 human beings each year are trafficked into the United States to work in the sex trade or as slave labor. Women and children have been forced to work in prostitution and child pornography rings, while men, women, and children have been forced into different types of manual labor, without pay or protection. As an organization that cares about the ohana, we find this both apprehensible and unacceptable.

Victims of human trafficking are commonly linked by poverty and lack of opportunity. Often they seek to escape their impoverished life with the hope of finding opportunity and a brighter future in Hawaii. It is in these types of environments that human traffickers flourish, promising unsuspecting victims an opportunity to travel, at no immediate expense, for employment and housing. When they reach Hawaii, they find coercion, abuse, entrapment, and exploitation in a brothel, a massage parlor, or an agricultural outpost. By the time they are rescued, if ever, they are shattered by physical, mental, and psychological abuse. Many become ill and some have even lost their lives.

Hawaii Family Forum has placed the elimination of trafficking as an important priority in the areas of public advocacy and education both to the wider community and to trafficking victims. Let me add that faith-based organizations are uniquely positioned to identify and provide assistance to victims of human trafficking.

First, faith-based organizations act from a theological and philosophical perspective. Commitment to these principles gives the issue of human trafficking a sense of urgency to many faiths and religious communities.

Second, most faith-based organizations have networks that enhance their capacity to give voice and volume to the cry for justice. They have access to a cross-section of agencies which offer an expertise that expands the possibilities for outreach and service, an asset not to be underestimated.

Finally, faith-based organizations have resources which can assist in the fight against human trafficking. Organizations like Catholic Charities Hawaii, Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery and others. While we see the effort as a partnership with the government and the faith-based community, please know that those of us in the faith-based community will be performing this work regardless, particularly because of the moral gravity of the issue and the ongoing suffering of its victims.

Please pass this measure. Mahalo!

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**TO:** House Committee on Human Services  
Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Jo Jordon, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director

**RE:** Strong Support for HB 946 Relating to Human Trafficking

Honorable Chairs and members of the House Committee on Human Services, I am Walter Yoshimitsu, **representing the Hawaii Catholic Conference**. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii, which under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva, represents over 200,000 Catholics in Hawaii. We strongly support this bill that would strengthen the laws in Hawaii regarding human trafficking.

The Catholic Church has placed the elimination of trafficking as an important priority in the areas of public advocacy, public education, and services to trafficking victims. We have begun working to raise awareness within the Catholic community about the problem, including education to help people in the community identify and understand the problem of human trafficking.

Trafficking victims also need, first and foremost, safety and security. According to recent news stories, many are terrified of the traffickers who brought them to Hawaii. Providing them with a secure, safe, and nurturing environment is crucial to ensuring their return to society as contributing members. The Church and its service organizations, particularly Catholic Charities, does all that it can to provide support services to both adult and child victims of trafficking, including health and mental health services, employment assistance, English-language training, counseling, housing and other material assistance needs.

The themes of Catholic social teaching—the protection of human dignity and human rights; the option for the poor; the call to family and community; the rights of workers; solidarity and care for creation—all address evils inherent in human trafficking. These principles of justice are not unique to Catholicism but are manifest in most religions. Commitment to these principles gives the issue of human trafficking a sense of urgency to many faiths and religious communities. For this reason we strongly support passage of this measure.

Please support HB 946. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



# LIFE OF THE LAND

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## COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair

Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, January 31, 2011

TIME: 9:00am

PLACE: Conference Room 329

re: HB 946 Human Trafficking **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jordan and Members of the Committee

My name is Henry Curtis and I am the Executive Director of Life of the Land, Hawai'i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for four decades. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

**Hawai'i has the distinction of having horrible examples of trafficking slave labor for agricultural activities and for sexual exploitation.**

**Yet we lack adequate laws to go after those who exploit people.**

**Please pass this bill**

Mahalo,

Henry Curtis

SANDRA G. Y. YOUNG

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January 29, 2011

Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Jo Jordon, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Human Services

Re: Strong Support for HB 946 (Human and Sex Trafficking)  
Committee on Human Services Hearing: Monday, January 31, 2011 @ 9:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jordon and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for serving our community, and putting families and children on your list of priorities.

I respectfully request that you pass HB 946 (Human and Sex Trafficking). It is a comprehensive bill that covers both human and sex trafficking, and provides for criminal penalties, as well as civil penalties for the victims. It will provide law enforcement with the mechanism to punish wrongdoers and prevent the exploitation of women, children and the poor. With civil and criminal penalties, the bill will serve as a much-needed deterrence for this type of exploitative behavior, and protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

Again, we appreciate your hard work for our community, and wish you a productive legislative session. Please vote in favor of this bill.

Very truly yours,

SANDRA YOUNG