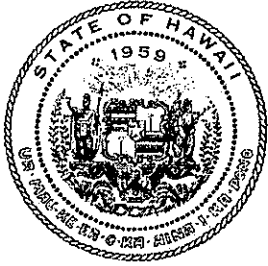


HAWAII  
STATE  
COMMISSION  
ON THE  
STATUS  
OF  
WOMEN



Chair  
LESLIE WILKINS

COMMISSIONERS:

ELENA CABATU  
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February 22, 2012

LATE

**Testimony in Support of HCR No. 12**

**To:** Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair  
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Health

**From:** Catherine Betts, Esq., Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

**Re:** Testimony in Support of HCR 12, Reproductive Rights Awareness Week

On behalf of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to express my support of this resolution designating January 22-28 as Reproductive Rights Awareness Week.

As a former health educator, I am keenly aware of the need for reproductive rights awareness, ranging from medically accurate sex education in our schools, to access to reproductive health care for girls and women in Hawaii. Reproductive rights encompass a broad range of rights and issues, including access to unbiased family planning information, access to basic health care information and access to contraception.

Encouraging public awareness and a dialogue about reproductive rights is crucial to sound public health policy. Our teens and youth suffer when we do not include them in this dialogue about reproductive rights and health. In 2004 alone, Hawaii taxpayers would have saved an estimated 22 million dollars by preventing teen childbearing.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, the younger the age at first sexual intercourse, the higher the incidence of non-voluntary first intercourse (i.e. sexual assault or rape). Further, the experience of having an unintended birth is closely associated with age, education and income. ½ of women surveyed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) who were near or below the poverty level reported they had experienced unintended birth, primarily due to the lack of resources and information about their reproductive rights and health.<sup>2</sup>

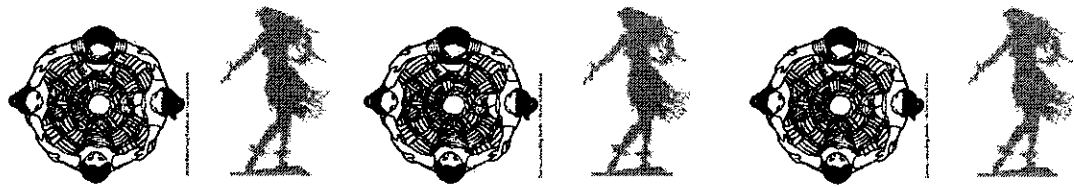
These statistics reveal a dire need for public awareness and education about reproductive rights. The Commission urges this Committee to pass HCR 12, thereby officially designating a reproductive rights awareness week to continue this very important discussion statewide.

Thank you for this opportunity,

Catherine Betts, Esq.

<sup>1</sup> The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. *By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing*, available at: <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/costs/national.aspx>, last visited on February 22, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control, Fertility, Family Planning and Reproductive Health of U.S. Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey on Family Growth, Series 23, December 2005, available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/reproduc.htm>, last visited on February 22, 2012.



# Hawai`i Women's Coalition

LATE

February 23, 2012

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee

From: The Hawai`i Women's Coalition

Re: HCR12  
Hearing: February 23, 2012

Position: **SUPPORT**

Thank you for allowing us to testify today, in support of HCR12.

The Hawai`i Women's Coalition was formed to further legislation that will help elevate the status of women and girls in Hawai`i. This resolution is in keeping with our values and goals.

Sad to say, women's rights to reproductive health care, including the most basic forms of birth control, are under vicious and persistent attack. This resolution restates the values of the vast majority of Hawaii's women.

Please pass this bill out of committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

Ann S. Freed, Co-Chair  
Hawai`i Women's Coalition  
95-227 Waikalani Dr. A403  
Mililani, HI 96789

[annfreed@hotmail.com](mailto:annfreed@hotmail.com)  
808-623-5676

February 23, 2012

**Testimony in Support: HCR 12 Reproductive Rights Awareness Week**

**To:** Chair Ryan Yamane, Vice Chair Dee Morikawa, and Members of the House Committee on Health  
**From:** Katie Reardon Polidoro, Director of Government Relations & Public Affairs  
**Re:** Testimony in Support of HCR 12, Reproductive Rights Awareness Week

Thank you for hearing HCR 12. Planned Parenthood of Hawaii strongly supports this resolution, which establishes Reproductive Rights Awareness Week.

Planned Parenthood of Hawaii (PPHI) was founded in 1966. Since then we have provided the people of Hawaii with compassionate, confidential and affordable reproductive health care, education and advocacy. PPHI advocates for the protection of reproductive rights locally and at a national level. We support and pursue public policy that ensures all people access to the resources and freedom they need to make the best choices about their reproductive and sexual lives.

We are proud that the state of Hawaii was the first in the nation to move towards reproductive freedom. In 1970 Hawaii was the first state to decriminalize abortion. Then Governor John Burns struggled with the issue but ultimately allowed it to become law stating that doing so was in the “best interest of all the people of Hawaii.”

Since then, Hawaii has made remarkable strides. Our state laws include health insurance parity in coverage of prescription contraceptives, access to Emergency Contraception at pharmacies, protections for minors seeking reproductive health care and treatment, improved sexual health education, and a Freedom of Choice Act.

However, in 2011, across the United States, reproductive rights came under some of the most serious attacks we have seen in decades. In 2012, threats persist in Congress to eliminate funding for women’s essential health care services for millions of Americans. The most recent national debate has become so extreme that some politicians are questioning whether women should have access to contraception, despite the fact that 99% of American women who have ever experienced sexual intercourse have used some form of contraception.<sup>1</sup>

The most recent political attacks on reproductive rights jeopardize women’s health and the wellbeing of Hawaii’s families. Now more than ever, it is important that we stand up for reproductive rights. We must make sure that Hawaii remains a place where our rights are protected and where we still care about “the best interest of all the people of Hawaii.” Please support reproductive rights and pass HCR 12. Thank you.

<sup>1</sup> *Facts on Contraceptive Use in the United States*, The Guttmacher Institute, June 2010, [http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_contr\\_use.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_contr_use.html)

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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L A T E



## COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Friday, February 24, 2012

9:15 a.m.

Room 329

## SUPPORT FOR HCR 12 - REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AWARENESS WEEK

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies for more than a decade. This testimony is respectfully offered, always being mindful that 6,000 Hawai'i individuals are living behind bars, including 1,800 men who are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Native Hawaiians, far from their ancestral lands.

HCR 12 designates January 22-28 as "Reproductive Rights Awareness Week" to encourage public awareness, conversation, and support for reproductive rights

Community Alliance on Prisons supports this resolution as a matter of public health, gender equity, and human rights.

### What are Reproductive Rights?

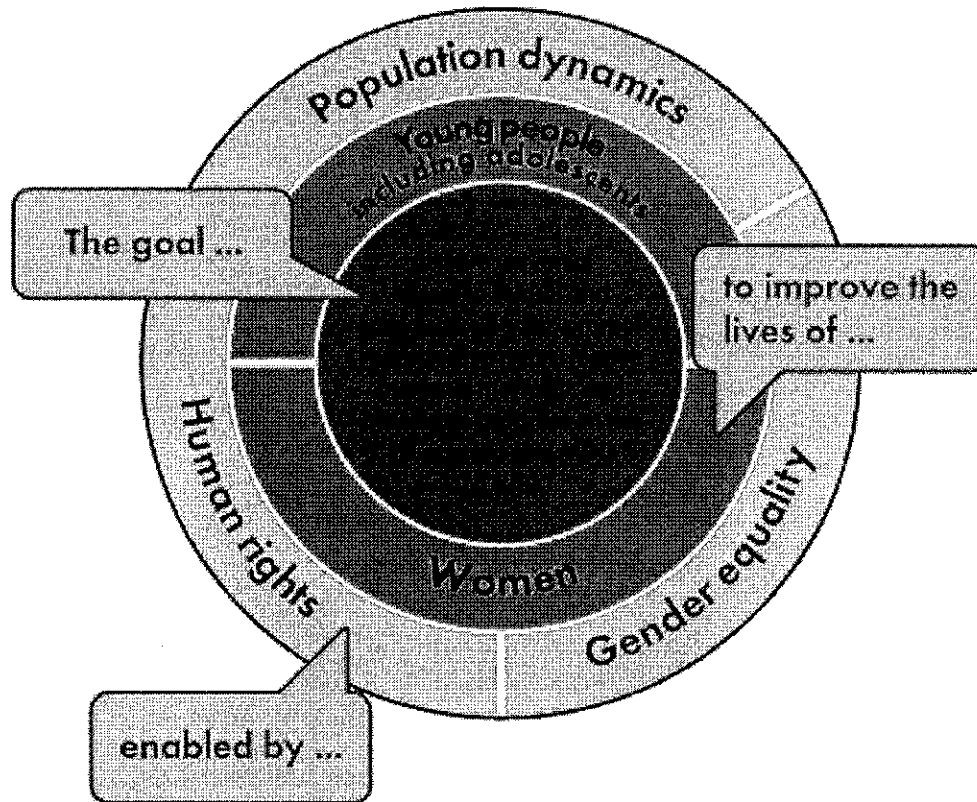
<http://www.unfpa.org/rights/rights.htm>

Attaining the goals of sustainable, equitable development requires that individuals are able to exercise control over their sexual and reproductive lives. This includes the rights to:

- Reproductive health as a component of overall health, throughout the life cycle, for both men and women
- Reproductive decision-making, including voluntary choice in marriage, family formation and determination of the number, timing and spacing of one's children and the right to have access to the information and means needed to exercise voluntary choice
- Equality and equity for men and women, to enable individuals to make free and informed choices in all spheres of life, free from discrimination based on gender
- Sexual and reproductive security, including freedom from sexual violence and coercion, and the right to privacy.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

The work of UNFPA encompasses a wide range of issues, ranging from the most intimate and personal decisions to the impact of those decisions on global population and development trends.



<http://www.unfpa.org/issues/>

Reproductive health in the broadest sense is the very heart of the UNFPA mandate. It is also an issue that lies at the intersection of human rights, gender equality and population dynamics. Lack of access to reproductive health and rights, including the ability to freely choose the number and spacing of births, places a disproportionate burden on two groups in particular: women and young people, especially those who are marginalized by poverty or other circumstances.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports Reproductive Rights Awareness and we believe that ongoing education is vital to building a strong and healthy community and we humbly ask the committee to pass this measure. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

## SUPPORT WOMEN'S & FAMILY HEALTH!

**morikawa2 - Grant**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 23, 2012 7:34 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR12 on 2/24/2012 9:15:00 AM

**LATE**

Testimony for HLT 2/24/2012 9:15:00 AM HCR12

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Brenda Kosky  
Organization: Individual  
E-mail: [Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com](mailto:Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2012

Comments: