

# LATE TESTIMONY



## TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE, 2012

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2581, RELATING TO AN AUTOMATED VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM.

**BEFORE THE:**

PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND MILITARY

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 31, 2012

**TIME:** 3:15 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 224

**TESTIFIER(S):** David M. Louie, Attorney General, or  
Julie Ebato, Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division Administrator

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Chair Espero and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General supports this bill to continue and sustain the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification System (SAVIN) that is administered by the Department of Public Safety.

The bill creates a single point of shared services for victims to learn about the status of an offender convicted in Hawaii, from the point of arrest and incarceration, through disposition, release, and community supervision. This bill has elements consistent with other state SAVIN programs. The anticipated impact of the program is that SAVIN increases the safety of the victim and provides them with timely and accurate information that both enhances the victims' ability to protect themselves and ensures that they are able to fully participate in the criminal justice process if they so choose.

The Department of the Attorney General provided the initial start-up funds for Hawaii's SAVIN program with a \$390,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Victim of Crime Grant, which the Department administers. We feel that SAVIN provides a critical service to victims and their families. We respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill.

ALAN M. ARAKAWA  
Mayor



JOHN D. KIM  
Prosecuting Attorney

ROBERT D. RIVERA  
Prosecuting Attorney  
LENA LORENZO  
Director

# LATE TESTIMONY

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**  
**VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE DIVISION**  
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January 30, 2012

THE HONORABLE WILL ESPERO, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,  
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2012  
Tuesday, January 31, 2012, 3:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

RE: SB 2581  
Relating to an Automated Victim Notification System

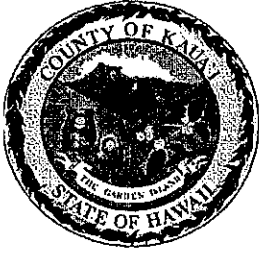
We are providing testimony in support of SB 2581, Relating to an Automated Victim Notification System. This bill is designed to establish the VINE/SAVIN as a permanent provision in the Hawaii Revised Statutes and would insure that the Department of Public Safety continues to fund the program.

As victim service providers, we have discussed the need of an automated victim notification with my colleagues for about a decade before the Statewide Automated Victim Information Notification (SAVIN) became a reality in February 2009. At the Maui Victim/Witness Assistance Division, we assist our victims register or check on inmates' status. Victims are very grateful they are able to register and check on inmates status on their own time. Oftentimes, victims think they are a bother to the criminal justice system staff assisting them if they keep calling for information. Victims are already missing a sense of safety that have been stolen from them so in registering and checking electronically and confidentially on their own, automated notification brings back a sense of control and empowerment.

Timely notification of victims also alleviates unnecessary fear and anxiety. In the past, Department of Public Safety personnel would notify the county victim/witness assistance programs who in turn would notify the victims. This is not a reliable method as there were cases when no notification were made. There were occasions when the victims would see the inmate out in the community without prior notification. Therefore, timely notification is a must so the victim can have the time to safety plan when an inmate is released.

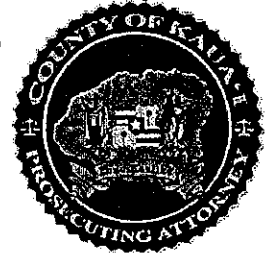
To not provide funding or discontinue SAVIN would be a major setback for the strides that have been made involving victim safety. How do we put a value to the peace of mind and a sense of safety to the victims and also to the community? We respectfully urge you to support SB 2581.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



## OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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**Shaylene Iseri-Carvalho**  
Prosecuting Attorney

**Sam Jajich**  
Second Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2581 RELATING TO A AUTOMATED VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs

Senator Will Espero, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, January 31, 2012; 3:15 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

Dear Senators Espero, Kidani, and Committee Members:

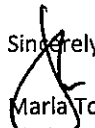
It is vitally important for you and your committee to pass Senate Bill 2581. For victims to be able to access information on the status of their offender, when hearings are set, where they are being incarcerated and when they are being released brings enormous comfort and relief to all victims. Knowing that they will be provided this information allows many victims to go on with their lives and not keep looking over their shoulder.

The SAVIN program has given hundreds of families advanced notification so that their input can be submitted or safety plans can be put in place. The service they provide is crucial to the protection of all victims as well as other involved and/or interested members of the community.

You can never put a price on the secure feeling the SAVIN program provides victims and it is my hope that the passage of this bill will continue to provide for the safety of our victims and all the people of Hawai'i.

Please do the right thing and support this bill. Thank you for time in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

  
Marla Torres-Lam  
Victim Witness Advocate

#### Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys:

Lisa R. Arin  
Jared Auna  
Lance Kobashigawa

Melinda K. Mendes  
Tracy Murakami

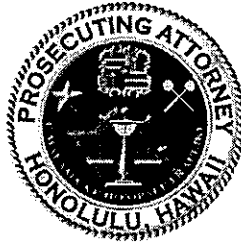
John H. Murphy  
Ramsey Ross  
Rebecca A. Vogt

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

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**THE HONORABLE WILL ESPERO, CHAIR  
THE HONORABLE MICHELLE KIDANI, VICE CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND  
MILITARY AFFAIRS**

**Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2012  
State of Hawai'i**

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

**RE: SENATE BILL 2581; RELATING TO AN AUTOMATED VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

Good afternoon Chair Espero and members of the Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs Committee, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney provides the following testimony **in support of S.B. 2581**, which proposes to establish a statewide automated victim notification system.

As provided for in *H.R.S CHAPTER 801D* our Department currently participates through a series of cooperative agreements with the Department of Public Safety in the process of notifying victims of changes in the custody status of inmates whose victims have submitted a written request for notification. The process, at times inefficient and complex, does function to fulfill the basic purposes of *H.R.S. 801D*. However, this bill represents a commitment to an automated victim notification system, which although we already have an operational system in place, provides hope that this system can now become the foundation upon which we can build.

Initially the Department of the Attorney General committed federal VOCA funds to help underwrite the start up costs for a notification system. And in a fashion all too uncommon in government today, the Department of Public Safety bravely volunteered their resources and commitment to making this system a reality in February of 2009. They have sought and successfully received U.S. Department of Justice grants, which have underwritten the costs of the system since its inception. Unfortunately federal funding for Automated Victim Notification Systems was designed to serve as start up funding to get the program of the ground. While this funding has been effective in the development of a very effective system, the time has come for a State funding commitment.

Although the anticipated implementation of our statewide notification system is an incredibly important accomplishment, the continuing availability of funding to cover the ongoing operational cost of this system is, however, uncertain, and remains one of the major obstacles to

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**ATTN: Senate Committee on Public Safety,  
Government Operations, and Military Affairs**  
Senator Will Espero, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: January 31, 2012  
HEARING TIME: 3:15 p.m.

## **IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2581 – creating a new part establishing a permanent statewide victim notification system in the Department of Public Safety**

Dear Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani and committee members,

The Coalition is in strong support of this measure that would continue to save many women and children from becoming revictimized when an offender is released and without notification.

We support the Crime Victim Compensation Commission in its advocacy for victims. Having successfully implemented the SAVIN program as the result of a grant, we believe that regularized funding should be given this program so critical to the safety of survivors of violent crimes.

Mahalo,

Ann S. Freed  
Co-Chair Women's Coalition  
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Mililani, HI 96789  
808-623-5676