

SCR10 / SR10

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE REPEAL OF COMBAT
EXCLUSIONARY RULES.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Rep. Marilyn B. Lee
38th District
Ph: 586-9460 Fax: 586-9466
Email: repllee@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Marilyn B. Lee Remarks on SR10 PGM Senate Committee Hearing 3/29/2012

PGM Committee Chair Espero and Vice Chair Kidani:

I would like to offer my comments in support of SR10 and its companion bill SCR10, RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE REPEAL OF COMBAT EXCLUSIONARY RULES.

Women have a proud history of military service to our beloved country. Today, they serve alongside men in hazardous environments, yet are barred from reaping the same career advantages earned by their male counterparts.

The present-day combat exclusionary policy of the US military dates back to 1994, when the Pentagon declared female service members ineligible for assignments whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground. After February of 2012, women were currently ineligible to serve in 238,000 positions, about a fifth of the armed forces. As such, they are deprived of the position to further their military careers and obtain promotion.

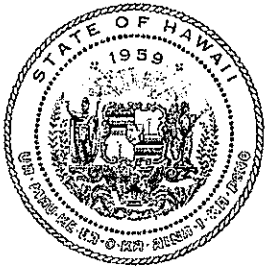
Servicewomen often serve in combat conditions, although they are not recognized for doing so. They ought to be given the same opportunities to serve their country bravely, and earn advancement in the military for their courage.

On behalf of the Women's Caucus, I heartily endorse these resolutions and urge your support of them as well. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marilyn B. Lee
State Representative
District 38, Mililani/Mililani
Mauka/Waipio Acres

HAWAII
STATE
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF
WOMEN



Chair
LESLIE WILKINS

COMMISSIONERS:

ELENA CABATU
ADRIENNE KING
CARMILLE LIM
AMY MONK
LISA ELLEN SMITH
CAROL ANNE PHILIPS

Executive Director
Catherine Betts, Esq.

Email:
DHS.HSCSW@hawaii.gov
Web:
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HSCSW

235 S. Beretania #407
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 808-586-5758
FAX: 808-586-5756

March 28, 2012

Testimony in Support of SR 10/SCR 10

To: Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations and
Military Affairs

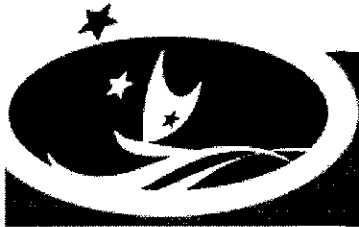
From: Catherine Betts, Esq., Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the
Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support of SR 10/SCR 10, Resolution to Support the Repeal of Combat
Exclusion Rules

On behalf of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to express my support of this resolution, which calls for the repeal of combat exclusion rules based on gender. This practice restricts the career fields for women within the military and prevents promotion in rank. Women in the military often lose key assignments because of the practices and policies that prevent them from seeing combat. This constitutes gender based discrimination and should be stopped. The Commission supports the passage of this resolution.

Thank you for this opportunity,

Catherine Betts, Esq.



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

March 29, 2012

To: Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military
Affairs

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Co-Chair, Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus

RE: SCR 10/SR 10
RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE REPEAL OF COMBAT EXCLUSIONARY
RULES

Hearing: March 29, 2012, 2:50 p.m., Room 224

Position: Support

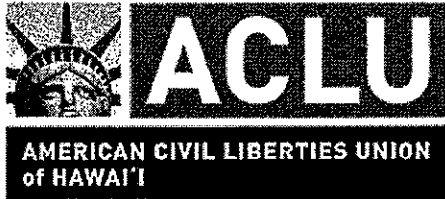
The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support of these resolutions.

As of September 2011, there were 214,098 women on active duty in the military, representing 14.6% of all active duty military personnel. There were 118,781 (19.5%) women in the reserves and 72,790 (15.5%) women in the national guard. More than 90% of all career fields in the armed forces are now open to women; and 41,000 women served in theater in Desert Storm.

The current policy has not kept women out of combat areas, they have served valiantly and under fire, next to their male team members. However, the combat exclusionary rule does hamper their ability for promotion, as certain combat roles are pathways for promotion.

This discrimination keeps women out of senior positions and out of decision-making roles that could advocate for the fair treatment of women and policies related to women in the military such as sexual harassment, sexual assault and reproductive health care.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawai'i's women and girls. It is because of this mission, the Women's Caucus supports these measures. We urge the committee to pass these resolutions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Committee: Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 2:50 p.m.
Place: Room 224
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of S.C.R. 10/S.R. 10

Dear Chair Espero and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii ("ACLU of Hawaii") writes in support of S.C.R. 10/ S.R. 10.

Besides being cumbersome, confusing, and dangerous, the so-called combat exclusion policy is outdated and harmful. It is rooted in archaic stereotypes about women's capacities and their role as the center of the family, and does not reflect the courageous work that women currently perform in the military. The Constitution requires the armed services to evaluate each candidate for service, irrespective of sex.

For decades, the ACLU has been arguing, in courts and in Washington, that the artificial exclusion of women from military service assignments based solely on their sex is unconstitutional, irrational, discriminatory, and a bad idea.

In February, Pentagon officials got a few steps closer to recognizing what those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have known for years: servicewomen fight on the battlefield alongside their male counterparts, despite a longstanding rule barring them from being assigned to units that engage in direct ground combat. The Defense Department didn't altogether scrap the rules officially banning women from being assigned to such units, but it did loosen them. Under the new rules, women will be allowed to serve in some jobs — though not infantry, armor, or special operations forces — at the battalion level — that is, closer to combat than had previously been permitted. To the Pentagon's credit, it scrapped the infamous ban on women serving in units that are physically "co-located" with ground combat units, recognizing that the policy has become "irrelevant" on the modern battlefield. Now, 14,000 new jobs and assignment opportunities are open to servicewomen, though 238,000 positions still remain closed across all the armed services.

While the shifts in policy may seem like small steps, they represent a welcome change — one that recognizes the reality that women are already serving in combat. The Iraq and Afghanistan wars clearly demonstrated there is no "front line." Everyone serving is exposed to danger. And

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
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Chair Espero, Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
and Members Thereof

March 29, 2012

Page 2 of 2

in the modern military, commanders need the flexibility to select the best servicemember for any assignment, regardless of artificial barriers like sex. This is why commanders have been dealing with the wholesale exclusion of women from combat units by “attaching,” rather than “assigning” women to those units when they need them. This practice caused confusion and is problematic because it means that the women serving with the unit in combat in some cases have not trained with that unit and do not have the same administrative command.

While we applaud the Department of Defense's moves to limit the reach of this outdated policy, we urge it to go further and eliminate these exclusionary, cumbersome rules once and for all. Please add the state of Hawaii's voice in support of eliminating these rules by passing S.C.R. 10/S.R. 10.

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 45 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laurie Temple
Staff Attorney

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
P.O. Box 3410
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801
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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 27, 2012 4:06 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: jbsestak@prodigy.net
Subject: Testimony for SCR10 on 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM SCR10

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Betty Sestak
Organization: AAUW Windward Branch
E-mail: jbsestak@prodigy.net
Submitted on: 3/27/2012

Comments:

Women have been there but not gotten the advances in rank that are given to soldiers that are "officially" there.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 28, 2012 8:41 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: jadamsesq@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SR10 on 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM SR10

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jo-Ann Adams
Organization: GLBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii
E-mail: jadamsesq@aol.com
Submitted on: 3/28/2012

Comments:

The GLBT Caucus supports all efforts on behalf of the Women's Caucus to remedy the plight of women and the LGBT community. Our causes are so often interlinked.

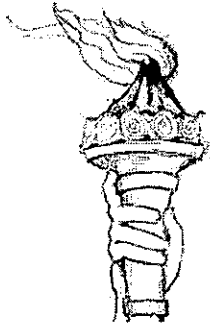
Lt. Col. Ann Freed (Ret.), has made a forceful case that the exclusionary rule results in fewer female officers in war zones, which in turn results in increased exploitation of female service members.

Further, we have noted that LGBT service members are also sexually exploited far too often. We have typically found that women, more often than men, understand their plight. Therefore, the GLBT Caucus would like to see more women officers in the field.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2012 1:15 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: annfreed@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR10 / SR10 on 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM SCR10 / SR10

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Ann S Freed
Organization: Hawai'i Women's Coalition
E-mail: annfreed@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 3/29/2012



Hawai'i Women's Coalition

March 28, 2012

To: COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

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

Hearing: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 2:50 PM

Position: The Coalition is in **strong support** of this measure.

Dear Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani and committee members,

As a former Army career officer I can tell you that this rule has been an insult to women who serve, a thorn in the side of military leadership and a hoax perpetrated on the American public.

Here are a few sobering statistics:

- More American women have fought and died in Iraq than in any war since World War II
- Over 191,000 have served in the Middle East
- By September 2008, 592 military women were wounded in action and 102 died in Iraq
- Women comprise 14 percent of active duty and 17 percent of the Guard and Reserves.
- Although women are supposedly banned from combat specialties like infantry, Special Forces and armor, they are routinely handling 84 lb machine guns (M60s and the like). They are working atop tanks, HUMMVs, trucks, guarding convoys, flying attack helicopters and bomber planes, killing and being killed. They have been doing so for decades.
- A female soldier in Iraq was more likely to be attacked by a fellow soldier than killed by enemy fire.

This fraudulent policy has serious consequences. First, it puts military leaders in the difficult position of having to mislead the public when every woman fulfills vital combat roles in this era of two major wars.

The Hawai'i Women's Coalition was formed to further legislation that will help elevate the status of women and girls in Hawai'i.

Page 2 Hawai'i Women's Coalition Testimony

Second, it serves to demoralize and isolated women by delegitimizing the roles that they play as essential parts of their military teams.

Finally, since the combat arms are fast-tracked for promotion, women do not reach in numbers the higher ranks.

This last consequence in turn contributes to the high rate of rape in the military since the predominantly male NCOs and officers are less likely to investigate and punish the male perpetrators of sex crimes. (One in three women are raped during the course of their military career and 90 percent of military women experience some form of sexual harassment according to a number of DOD studies and reports.)

We ask you to pass this bill out of committee so that Congress may be urged to act swiftly to rectify the grave injustice being done to military women in the United States Armed Forces.

Mahalo,

Ann S. Freed
Co-Chair Women's Coalition
95-227 Waikalani Dr. A403
Mililani, HI 96789
808-623-5676

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 27, 2012 10:00 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: maguinger@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR10 on 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 3/29/2012 2:50:00 PM SCR10

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mary A. Guinger
Organization: Individual
E-mail: maguinger@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/27/2012

Comments:

Rape in any situation is a crime.

With 1 out of 3 women being raped during their US military service shows an authority that perpetuates rape.

To change this culture, women need to be in command rank in our military authority.

We, as a country, must model democracy, justice, and equality to the world.