
LORENN WALKER, J.D., M.P.H.
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Honorable Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Other Honorable Committee Members

Tuesday, February 5, 2013
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 016

STRONG SUPPORT SB60 - RELATING TO VICTIMS

Please vote yes to pass, as amended below, this measure giving crime victims the right to be informed of restorative justice processes. This provision sends a clear message to our community that the legislature cares about healing for people harmed by crimes.

The modern restorative justice movement developed in the United States as a community grassroots effort to recognize, and put resources into assisting, people harmed by crime. While our criminal justice system necessarily focuses on our community's needs to establish clear expectations for individual and group behavior, restorative justice focuses on healing for individuals. Most indigenous cultures, including Native Hawaiians, have continued to provide restorative responses to wrongdoing and conflict for centuries, while Western cultures renewed interest about 30 years ago. State legislatures, including California, Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, and Vermont, have begun passing statutes indicating their support for restorative justice.

My experience as someone who has worked in the justice system for over 30 years informs my support for the measure along with my personal experience being the victim of a serious assault and attempted murder by a stranger in 1976. The event propelled me into college and becoming a lawyer, but it was not until I had worked in restorative justice, when I was able to finally heal from the frightening experience. Please help other victims to experience this healing by passing the measure showing your support for them.

Suggested revisions to current bill:

"To be informed by the police or the prosecuting attorney of restorative justice processes that allow the victim and any loved ones who accompany them to discuss and address how they were affected by the wrongful act that harmed them, and what might possibly be done to try and help repair the harm or make things right. Victim participation includes the victim meeting directly with the defendant or perpetrator, if the defendant or perpetrator is identified and is willing to meet, or the victim or the victim's representative may meet with a representative of the defendant or perpetrator.

For the purposes of this paragraph, restorative justice processes include restorative dialogues, restorative conferences, restorative justice circles, restorative sessions, or any type of restorative justice group process where victims meet individually or with their loved ones, with a trained restorative justice facilitator. The restorative justice processes shall be held at places and times that are convenient and respectful for victims."

Please see my website www.lorennwalker.com for a description of my background and experience in criminal justice interventions for agencies including courts, police, and prisons.

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Thank you for your time and efforts in public service.