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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair

Sen. Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Monday, March 25, 2013

10:30 a.m.

Room 016

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SCR 100/SR 66 - GENDER EQUITY

Aloha Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies for more than a decade. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 5,800 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars, always mindful that approximately 1,500 individuals are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Native Hawaiians, far from their ancestral lands.

SCR 100/SR 66 urges the governor to strive to achieve or maintain gender equity in the nominations and appointments of members to state boards and commissions.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this measure.

One of the questions always at the forefront of the debates about gender equality consist of wondering whether women have to be considered as different than men (having their own qualities) or whether they have to be considered as equal to men (and granted equality as a consequence of this mentality). Siri Terjesen and Val Singh posit that the presence of women on boards of directors is beneficial due to their specific qualities.¹ Among these qualities, they identify:

- Their ability to bring new ideas and improve communication
- Their use of influence and inspiration instead of command and control
- Having more women on boards and commissions is beneficial as they represent career opportunities for potential women (as we have previously seen, a lack of women in high level positions can prevent other women from aspiring to move up).

¹ Terjesen, Siri and Singh, Val (2008) Female Presence on Corporate Boards: A Multicountry study of Environmental Context. *Journal of Business Ethics*. <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/6803/1/6803.pdf>

Judith B. Rosener, also underlines that women are useful on corporate boards because they bring new ideas, but above all, they bring a new way of seeing things. Because of their different background, women tend to see the problems and their respective solution differently. Moreover, thanks to their quality as “outsiders”, they do not hesitate to ask questions as much as men might.²

In the United States, Women represent 47% of the American workforce (data of 2009)... but only 14% of executives. They occupy 11% of Fortune 1000 companies board seats less than 16% of board seats at public companies. 25% of Fortune 1000 companies do not have any women on their boards.³

“Although women have made great strides in law and in society as a whole, they remain grossly underrepresented in positions of power, influence and leadership. For example, did you know that despite the fact that close to half of law students are now women and more than half of judicial clerks are women, the percentage of women equity partners has remained static at 16 percent or less?⁴”

A vibrant democracy depends on gender equity and diversity. Social justice demands it!

Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.

Kofi Annan

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

² Women on Corporate Boards Makes Good Business Sense, Written by Judy Rosener, 02 April 2009.
<http://www.womensmedia.com/lead/87-women-on-corporate-boards-makes-good-business-sense.html>

³ 2010 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Women Board Directors

⁴ New ABA president will advocate for gender equity, among other issues, September 2012.
<http://www.americanbar.org/newsletter/publications/youraba/201209article01.html>

hee2 - Kathleen

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SCR100

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Testimony for JDL on Mar 25, 2013 10:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
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