



February 23, 2016

To: Hawaii State Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, and the
Committee on Ways and Means
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 (10:00 a.m.)
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 211
Re: Testimony of American Association of University Women –
Hawaii in **support of S.B. 2366**, relating to sexual assault
evidence

Dear Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran (Chair), Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro (Vice Chair), Senator Jill N. Tokuda (Chair), Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees,

I am grateful for this opportunity to testify in **strong support of S.B. 2366** requiring an update on the status of sexual assault collection kits.

My testimony is on behalf of the approximately 400 members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in Hawaii, who list gender-based violence as an important current concern. My testimony is informed by many years of work in the field of domestic violence, and research conducted with survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV). It should be noted that typically IPV survivors also experience sexual assault. In addition, when I lived in New Zealand, I managed a 24-hour, 7-days/week domestic violence hotline, and I also trained hotline Advocates to respond skillfully and empathetically to survivors of violence. I provided extensive education to Advocates for Women, and also worked with police, courts, and other service agencies on behalf of survivors. In addition to working on the frontlines of gender-based violence in my advocacy positions, I also supported many university students in my classes, who were dealing with the after-effects of sexual assault.

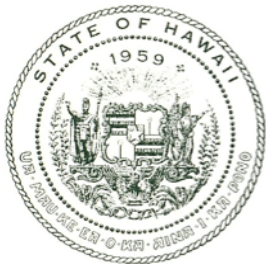
Based on these experiences, I argue that passage of S.B. 2366 is important. Survivors of sexual assault need to know what has happened to their rape collection kits, and need to be updated on how various agencies will deal with the backlog. Collection of evidence is a horrible process for an individual, typically a woman, and she undergoes it in the hope that a perpetrator may be stopped from attacking someone else. She does not permit this procedure so that evidence can languish on the shelves of a storage unit.

In conclusion, passage of S.B. 2366 is an important bill to pass now.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely
Susan J. Wurtzburg, Ph.D.
Policy Chair

HAWAII
STATE
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF
WOMEN



Chair
LESLIE WILKINS

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February 22, 2016

To: Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Cathy Betts, Executive Director
Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support, SB 2366, Relating to Sexual Assault Evidence

The Commission supports SB 2366, which would provide for all law enforcement agencies tasked with maintaining sexual assault forensic evidence kits to provide a written report to the legislature detailing the number of untested kits. Across the country, there is a problem with law enforcement agencies not testing all “rape kits”, leading to a back log of crucially important evidence. Rape kits collect forensic evidence of a rape or sexual assault, including the perpetrator’s DNA. Kits often serve as a vital tool in successful prosecutions.

Once tested, an offender’s DNA can be matched with other offender samples in the FBI’s national database, thereby identifying offenders and linking crimes. Many rape kits sit on shelves, ignored or waiting to be tested. The vast majority of rapists are repeat and serial offenders—rape is not a singular crime that is only committed once and then never re-committed. Self-reports of convicted rape and sexual assault offenders serving time in State prisons indicate that two-thirds of offenders had victims under the age of 18, and nearly 4 in 10 imprisoned violent sex offenders said their victims were age 12 or younger.¹ Victims deserve to have every rape kit tested and our community deserves to know how many rape kits go untested throughout the state. Additionally, our community deserves to know how many kits go untested. The Commission recommends some technical amendments to the definitions:

844 D (d) *Forensic medical examination*, eliminate “for use in a court of law”, as forensic examinations are used for other non-court purposes, including exclusion of suspects.

Sexual assault collection kit: should be replaced with *Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit*, which is the term used throughout the State Sexual Assault Response Teams.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2366.

¹ Bureau of Justice Statistics, An Analysis of Data on Rape and Sexual Assault



February 25, 2016

To: Senator Gilbert Keith Agaran, Chair
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: SB 2366 Relating to Sexual Assault Evidence
Hearing: Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 10:00 a.m., Room 211

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support of SB 2366 Relating to Sex Assault Evidence.

For many years we have been concerned about the number of unprocessed sex assault evidence kits. About a decade ago we were told that there were approximately 1,000 kits that had not been tested and that the cost to process them would be approximately \$1million and that the police department did not have the funds to process them. We have been told more recently that there was no backlog of unprocessed kits.

We would like to know the true status of the kits. Evidence obtained from survivors is precious. It is taken when they are most vulnerable they undergo the invasive examination with the hope that evidence gathered would help find and convict the perpetrator. Their brave efforts should not go to waste nor should the evidence be dismissed so easily. Sexual assault is a serious crime. Processing kits can help uncover serial rapists.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls. It is because of this mission, the Women's Caucus supports this important measure.

We ask that the committee pass the measure. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2366 on Feb 24, 2016 10:00AM
Date: Monday, February 22, 2016 11:03:33 PM

SB2366

Submitted on: 2/22/2016

Testimony for JDL/WAM on Feb 24, 2016 10:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Hawaii Women's Coalition	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair Tokuda, Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chairs and members, You have our testimony from the previous committee. We are still strongly in support of this initiative. Cost should not be a factor that stops a requirement to at least begin reducing the back-log of rape kits in police evidence rooms. That this problem has been covered up and denied by law enforcement is a disgrace. That it has gone unaddressed for so long, is reprehensible. Mahalo, Ann S. Freed Co-Chair, Hawaii Women's Coalition

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TO: Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)
DATE/LOCATION: February 24, 2016; 10:00 a.m., Conference Room 211

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2366 – RELATING TO SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE

I strongly urge you to support SB 2366, Relating to Sexual Assault Evidence. The federal government has estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of sexual assault evidence kits that have not been processed for pending cases. DNA collected for these forensic kits act as powerful evidence to identify and confirm offenders, who are likely to re-commit this crime as long as they are given the freedom to. Only 30% of sexual assault cases are reported by the brave victims who expect justice and security in return. If other matters shall explain the delay of results, the community should have the right to know the status and statistics of untested rape kits.

The backlog of untested evidence has led many victims to become hopeless, insecure, and constantly traumatized by their surroundings. No victim deserves to feel as if their best effort to ensure their own safety is put to waste by the insufficiencies of services they trusted. If we continue to let these collections kits become mere storage items, we fail to fulfill the purpose of justifying peace and safety in our communities. We support the passing of this bill.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 16 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, and community building programs. PACT provides the most comprehensive services in domestic violence ranging in services for survivors, children, and batterers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 2366**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2366 on Feb 24, 2016 10:00AM*
Date: Monday, February 22, 2016 11:55:06 AM

SB2366

Submitted on: 2/22/2016

Testimony for JDL/WAM on Feb 24, 2016 10:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Field	Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

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