



**SB477 SD1**  
**RELATING TO EDUCATION**  
Ke Kōmike Ho'okolokolo  
Ke Kōmike Ki'ina Hana a me nā Kumuwaiwai

Pepeluali 26, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Lumi 211

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB477 SD1, which would improve educators' access to resources regarding trafficking prevention and enable them to better identify and protect youth sex trafficking victims and those at risk of being trafficked.

According to the Hawai'i Commission on the Status of Women's recent qualitative study on sex trafficking in Hawai'i, Native Hawaiian girls may have a heightened risk of being sexually abused and trafficked, potentially due to intergenerational trauma, mental and emotional distress, poverty, and other ongoing inequities.<sup>1</sup> The study found only a limited sample of trafficking victims willing to participate, but 77.3% of these participants were Native Hawaiian. 77.8% of the participants were children under the age of 18 and were in school in Hawai'i when they were trafficked, and most of these girls also reported childhood physical abuse, sexual molestation, and rape.<sup>2</sup> A recent OHA study also revealed that Native Hawaiian girls are vastly overrepresented among juvenile runaways, and Ho'ōla nā Pua—an organization focused on treating underaged victims of sex trafficking—has indicated that within 48 hours of being on the streets, one third of runaways will be approached for sexual services,<sup>3</sup> leaving Native Hawaiian girls especially exposed to the risks of sexual exploitation.

Sex trafficking training for educators and other school staff, who may have the most frequent contact with youth outside of their families, can facilitate interventions with young girls who are exhibiting risk factors for exposure to future trafficking, as well as identify and triage those who are already sex trafficking victims. For example, sex trafficking prevention training can familiarize teachers, counselors, and administrators with perpetrators' tactics, such as using social isolation, removal from the home, and cultivation of dependency, allowing them to recognize indicators of sex trafficking or potential sex trafficking among their students. Improving early identification of these common indicators of the "grooming process" will in turn facilitate earlier intervention and greater protection for children who are being exploited or who may be at risk for future sexual exploitation through sex trafficking.

Therefore, we urge the Committees to **PASS** SB477 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

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<sup>1</sup> ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION & THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, *SEX TRAFFICKING IN HAWAII: THE STORIES OF SURVIVORS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5* (2019).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 9, *citing* OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, HAUMEA: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING (2018).

<sup>3</sup> Ho'ōla nā Pua, *Re/imagine: A Capital Campaign to Rebuild Pearl Haven*, <https://hoolanapua.org/re-imagine/> (last accessed Feb. 25, 2019).



**LATE**

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/26/2019  
**Time:** 10:00 AM  
**Location:** 211  
**Committee:** Senate Judiciary  
Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0477, SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Allows the Department of Education to provide sex trafficking prevention training to certain staff. Requires DOE to make available to certain staff explanatory information about protocols that DOE has approved for providing services to victims of sex trafficking.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of SB 477, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Board of Education approved budget. The Department supports efforts to disseminate information to its employees that supports the health and welfare of all its students.

In addition, should the Committee move the bill forward, the Department recommends the following language change in the bill:

Page 1, Line #5: "department may offer ~~voluntary training~~ information on resources for ~~teachers~~ employees."

Page 1, Line #6: "~~educational officers, and school-based behavioral health~~"

Page 1, Line #7: "~~specialists~~ on sex trafficking prevention and response,"

Page 2, Line #6 – #10: DELETE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 477.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan

which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

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Ho'ola Na Pua

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Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services & Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

February 21, 2019

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Judiciary

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 477 SD 1 RELATING TO EDUCATION WITH RECOMMENDATION FOR AMENDMENTS

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 477 SD 1 Relating to Education..

HYSN believes that it is important to prepare school personnel to prevent sexual abuse and sex trafficking and meet the needs of victims or survivors.

One in five girls and one in twenty boys have been victims of child sexual abuse. Three out of four adolescents who have been sexually assaulted were victimized by someone they knew well. (National Center for Victims of Crime data).

The only education I received about sexual abuse or trafficking as a child was to beware of strangers. But it was not a stranger who sexually abused me and five other girls in my fourth grade class – It was my school bus driver. Every child on the bus witnessed the abuse daily for a month or more until someone finally reported it to the school. When we were questioned about it, we believed that we were the ones who had done something wrong.

If we had received education about sexual abuse, we would have recognized it immediately, known how to seek help, and understood that we were not to blame for what occurred. It could have been stopped after the first episode.

My teachers were not prepared to prevent or respond to sexual abuse. Most teachers and counselors have received limited, if any, training on sexual abuse and sex trafficking. They are often not comfortable talking about

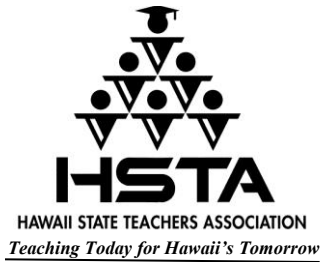
sexual health topics.. In order for schools to respond effectively to the needs of students at risk of or experiencing sexual abuse, the Department of Education needs to address this training need.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
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Corey Rosenlee  
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Osa Tui Jr.  
Vice President

Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
JUDICIARY AND THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 477, SD1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 477, SD1** relating to education.

SB 477, SD1, would allow the Hawaii Department of Education to provide sex trafficking prevention training to certain staff. It also requires HODOE to make available to certain staff explanatory information about protocols that HODOE has approved for providing services to victims of sex trafficking.

Schools are, perhaps, the main social institution outside of the family in which children have constant contact with adults and their peers. It is an optimal place, then, to identify children in danger of sexual maltreatment.

Teachers are naturally empathetic toward their students. Yet, studies have shown that up to 81 percent of teachers receive little preservice information about abuse and neglect and only 66 percent have been given inservice (on the job) information. While programs currently exist to train teachers and staff in handling sexual trauma that often accompanies abuse and neglect, implementation of these programs is woefully inconsistent.

It is important for teachers to be informed on how to prevent sexual trauma and handle related incidents on campus. At a time when the number of sex trafficking victims being identified in our state's childcare and education systems is on the rise, anti-trafficking lessons are especially crucial to combat student exploitation and effectively implement new protocols coordinated by the Hawaii Department of Education, Department of Human Service's Child Welfare System, and Family Courts.



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Sex trafficking is differentially defined as the use of “force, fraud, or coercion” to compel someone into the commercial sex trade. Public school students—or children who should be in school, but are instead sexually enslaved—can and have been found working as prostitutes at local massage parlors, strip clubs, hostess bars, and the streets of high-risk areas, and are advertised daily on websites like Backpage.com.

The average age of a victim’s entry into sexual exploitation is in the early to middle teenage years, with vulnerability to exploitation heightened by prior traumatic incidents, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Since schools are primary gathering locations for children, they are also targets for pimps, johns, and traffickers, so much so that in 2011, lawmakers added the crime of “solicitation of prostitution near schools or public parks” (HRS 712-1209) to our criminal code. As we increase departmental capacity for intervening in cases sexual abuse, so must we safeguard against the related crime of sex trafficking and provide educators with the tools needed to provide trauma-informed care in their classrooms.

To protect our keiki from sexual exploitation, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** SB 477, SD1.



## SB 477, SD 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 26, 2019 · SENATE JUDICIARY AND  
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEES · CHAIRS SEN.  
KARL RHOADS AND SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** IMUAlliance supports SB 477, SD 1, relating to education, which allows the Department of Education to provide sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention training to certain staff, and requires DOE to make available to certain staff explanatory information about protocols that DOE has approved for providing services to victims of sexual abuse and sex trafficking.

Sex traffickers prey on our state's school children, often loitering around public school campuses to target our children. Traffickers are experts in observing and selecting their victims, and often infiltrate public schools by using students to recruit their peers. One of the largest child sex trafficking rings discovered on Hawai'i's shores was unearthed in 2014. It included 16 students, most whom were students at Mililani High School and Moanalua High School, two of our state's top performing schools.

We are one of the state's largest victim service providers for survivors of sex trafficking, for which childhood sexual abuse is frequently a precursor. Over the past 10 years, we have provided comprehensive direct intervention services to 130 victims, successfully emancipating them from slavery and assisting in their restoration, while providing a range of targeted services to over 1,000 victims in total. We are also a leading provider of anti-sexual-exploitation education, teaching over 10,000 students each year about the perils of sex trafficking and the commercial sex trade. When



we provide anti-trafficking instruction in the Department of Education schools, students report that themselves or someone they know are being or at risk of being trafficking at a 2:1 ratio—two victims for every class we teach. Teachers, in turn, frequently request information and assistance in meeting the needs of traumatized students and preventing their children from being ensnared by our state’s prolific slave trade. Each of the victims we have assisted has suffered from complex and overlapping trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, dissociation, parasuicidal behavior, and substance abuse. Trafficking-related trauma can lead to a complete loss of identity. A victim we cared for in 2016, for example, had become so heavily bonded to her pimp that while under his grasp, she couldn’t remember her own name.

Sex trafficking is a profoundly violent crime. The Average age of entry into commercial sexual exploitation is 13-years-old, with 60 percent of sex trafficked children being under the age of 16. Approximately 150 high-risk sex trafficking establishments are operational in Hawai’i. An estimated 1,500-2,500 women and children are victimized by sex traffickers in our state annually. Over 110,000 advertisements for Hawai’i-based prostitution are posted online each year, a number that has *not* decreased with the recent shuttering of Backpage.com’s “adult services” section. More than 80 percent of runaway youth report being approached for sexual exploitation while on the run, over 30 percent of whom are targeted within the first 48 hours of leaving home.

With regard to mental health, sex trafficking victims are twice as likely to suffer from PTSD as a soldier in a war zone. Greater than 80 percent of victims report being repeatedly raped and 95 percent of report being physically assaulted, numbers that are underreported, according to the United States Department of State and numerous trauma specialists, because of the inability of many victims to recognize sexual violence as such. As one underage victim—now a survivor—told IMUAlliance prior to being rescued, “I can’t be raped. Only good girls can be raped. I’m a bad girl. If I *want* to be raped, I have to *earn* it.”

To stop slavery in Hawai’i, we must prevent victimization before it begins by training teachers to respond to signs of sex trafficking and sexual abuse.



*1431 Ehupua St. Honolulu, HI 96821 · (808) 854-1148*

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**SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND WAYS AND MEANS**

**TESTIMONY—SB 477, SD 1, Relating to Education**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019**

**Jeanné Kapela, UNITE Hawaii Executive Director**

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, and committee members,

Hawai'i is home to over 150 high-risk sex trafficking establishments, with the average age a victim is first exploited being only 13-years-old. We are also a target for “cybertrafficking,” with over 110,000 ads for local prostitution posted online each year, even after the passage of the federal FOSTA law to curb online prostitution activity. Yet, these numbers fail to fully capture the human toll of the commercial sex trade, a tragedy we witness each day in the eyes of the survivors we serve.

UNITE is an educational organization devoted to ending sex trafficking. Through outreach and awareness in local schools, we provide students with the skills necessary to prevent exploitation by building healthy relationships and learning communities. Our program, “It Ends With Us,” explains how trafficking works in the 21st Century, preparing students to recognize threatening situations and respond to potential abuse. To date, we have provided anti-trafficking education to thousands of keiki in our state’s public schools. Working with UNITE’s strategic partner, IMUAlliance, we have also helped to emancipate sex trafficking victims from local brothels in the Ala Moana area. For both victims who self-identify at schools we visit and those for whom we’ve provided direct intervention services, sexual abuse is often noted as a precursor to sex trafficking.

Sex trafficking is the compulsion of a person into prostitution by force, fraud, or coercion. Traffickers often use intermediate and high school students to build their fortunes, preying upon teenage insecurities, sexual impulses, socioeconomic impoverishment, and, more recently, social media access to recruit, groom, and “break in” our youth for the sex trade. Victims of sex trafficking are highly traumatized to the point that they lose their sense of identity, sometimes becoming so dehumanized that they can no longer understand the concept of rape. Moreover, modern technology has made it easier to reach and threaten victims, as information is readily available on the internet. Online technology can also be weaponized to humiliate individuals through the rapid distribution of nonconsensual pornography.

UNITE employs a standards-based anti-trafficking curriculum that includes a post assessment and service learning component. **At each school we visit, students have identified themselves or their peers as in danger or in the midst of being trafficked.** Our model is under constant revision to maximize its compliance with best educational practices and newly enacted education policies, is overseen by professional educators and education specialists, and comports with the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



**TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)**

**DATE/LOCATION: February 26, 2019; 10:00 a.m., Conference Room 211**

**RE: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 477 SD 1 WITH ADDITIONAL COMMENTS– RELATING TO EDUCATION**

**We ask you to support SB 477 SD 1 which would allow the Department of Education to provide sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention training to certain staff. Requires DOE to make available to certain staff explanatory information about protocols that DOE has approved for providing services to victims of sexual abuse and sex trafficking.** We thank the legislature for including sex abuse in the language in addition to sex trafficking. While this bill is certainly a step in the right direction, we strongly feel that these trainings should be *required* by all school staff, students and parents. We also encourage the legislature to include Erin’s Law language in the bill to include age-appropriate education for students and parents. The minimal time that trainings like these will take can yield a HUGE return on investment in the form of protecting and saving the lives of our keiki.

**Childhood sex abuse statistics are daunting:**

- 1 in 4 girls will be the victim of child sexual abuse by their 18th birthday.
- 1 in 6 boys will be the victim of child sexual abuse by their 18th birthday.
- 1 in 5 youth receive a sexual approach or solicitation over the internet.
- The average age for first abuse is 9.6 years of age.
- Only 12% of child sexual abuse is reported to police.
- 29% of forcible rapes occur when the victim was under 11 years of age.
- 44% of sexual abuse victims are under the age of 18.
- 93% of juvenile sexual assault victims know their attacker.
- Our Children’s Justice Center support over a 1,000 children each year. That’s about 3 new children every day (which is still a fraction of all those who are impacted by sexual abuse).

Children and youth who endure traumatic sexual abuse and/or are trafficked have a long list of adverse issues. These issues include:

- Poor academic performance
- Dropping out of high school
- Self-mutilation
- Persistent post-traumatic stress disorder
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Increased risk for abuse in subsequent relationships
- Difficulty in forming meaningful and trusting relationships
- Cognitive deficits
- Depression
- Dissociative symptoms
- Suicide

This is a matter that is often kept silent and as a result if left unaddressed (most people do not even realize that this is a significant issue or that they are a victim). In almost every case, the only witnesses to this crime are the perpetrator and the victim. Perpetrators often tell the child this is a secret and no one will believe them. Children rarely report abuse and are meant to feel that the abuse was their fault. Most victims never tell anyone until many years after the abuse, if they ever tell at all.

We feel that implementing child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training in schools immediately is the appropriate course and should be made available to not only staff but students and parents as well. Each second we delay, a child is forever hurt and traumatized. We cannot do this to our keiki. If we do not take strong measures to address the matters that impact child sexual abuse and sex trafficking, this issue will continue to impact our community and will only negatively impact Hawai'i's future, people, keiki, communities, culture, economy, reputation, commerce, and industries. Let's put protections in place to increase knowledge by implementing trainings in schools to combat against those who take advantage of the most vulnerable, and protect our keiki from this criminal enterprise. This is cutting into the fabric of the Aloha State and is not acceptable here in Hawai'i.

We also encourage the legislature to include **Erin's Law** in this legislation so we can focus on prevention-oriented education that will empower victims and those who care for them. It is critical to educate students, educators and parents about how to recognize and identify child sexual abuse so that victims can be identified early and so that support can be put in place to significantly reduce the likelihood of the long-term adverse issues and costs of the above listed items.

We support Erin's Law because it provides:

- Child sexual abuse prevention education for children in grades as early as pre-kindergarten through high school.
- Tools to help children speak up and seek help.
- Intentional and age-appropriate programming in schools regarding child sexual abuse.
- Training for school staff and faculty regarding child sexual abuse prevention and the handling of sexual abuse disclosures.
- Education for parents on how to recognize the signs, communicate with their children and seek help.

**35 States have passed Erin's Law, 15 states have introduced it, including Hawaii. We hope that you consider implementation of Erin's Law to protect our Keiki.**

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 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, and poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 477 SD 1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

Executive Director  
Adriana Ramelli

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**Date:** February 26, 2019

**To:** The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela-Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**From:** Justin Murakami, Manager, Prevention Education and Public Policy  
The Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
A Program of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children

**RE:** Testimony in Strong Support of S.B. 477 S.D. 1  
Relating to Education

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Good morning Chairs Rhoads and Dela-Cruz, Vice Chairs Wakai and Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary and on Ways and Means:

The Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) strongly supports S.B. 477 S.D. 1.

Sex trafficking – the commercial sexual exploitation of a minor or the coercive commercial sexual exploitation of any person – is a form of modern-day slavery and an extreme form of sexual abuse, with significant and often lifelong medical, psychological, and social consequences for victims.

According to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Confronting Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex trafficking of Minors in the United States (2013), “identifying risk factors for commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors is necessary to understand the etiology of these problems and to inform interventions for preventing and addressing them.”

Chief among these risk factors is a history of childhood abuse, neglect, or maltreatment, particularly sexual abuse and assault experienced in childhood. Additionally, a key feature of sex trafficking is the frequent use of sexual abuse by traffickers and buyers (also referred to colloquially as “Johns”) to first groom and then dominate and control victims.

This is further supported by the results of a 2018 study conducted by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Arizona State University's Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention, which engaged in a qualitative review of the experience of nearly two dozen sex trafficking victims in their families in Hawai'i.

In relevant part, the study found that one of the greatest risk factors for sex trafficking found in the group of victims was the experience of sexual abuse and assault in childhood, with 72.7% reporting childhood sexual molestation with an average age at the time of the first incident of 8 years and 3 months old.

Consequently, one of the study report's key recommendations was that our state's response to sex trafficking should include sexual abuse prevention programming in public schools.

Therefore, we ask that the Committees please pass S.B. 477 S.D. 1 in order to support the Department of Education's efforts to ensure that educators receive appropriate training to understand sexual abuse and sex trafficking, and the impact these crimes have on children and young people; to identify victims and respond to their needs in a trauma-informed and appropriate manner; and to implement preventative programs.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. 477 S.D. 1.



**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 9:22:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Julie Yurie Takishima-Lacasa	Testifying for Hawai'i Psychological Association	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 3:05:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 3:54:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shirley David	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is very important that school personnel have the tools they need to help children who are being sex trafficked. There are documented incidents of in Hawaii of youth being trafficked. Often it happens through the internet and children are groomed over the internet before they ever meet the trafficker in person. Teachers, counselors and principles must know and understand these and other risks. They can keep a child from being trafficked.

I have a sister who was trafficked while still school age. She still experiences the trauma of the many years she spent under the thumb of a pimp. Please do every thing you can to keep our children safe. Vote yes on SB477 SD1.

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 4:26:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leila Riahi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

S.B. No. 477

**A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION**

Aloha. I am an MSW intern within the Department of Education. I work with youth who were once called “at-risk”, and who are now being referred to as “at-promise”. They are often born into situations or brought up in environments that do not have the means to access essential resources for overall safety, health, and wellbeing, which includes physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual safety. They deserve advocacy for their basic human rights to safety, and then to be given the means to live lives worth living as that fits within their own goals.

I work with a team of behavior health specialists on the Tier 1 (classroom) and Tier 2 (early intervention) levels, integrating social emotional learning, suicide and bullying prevention trainings, and youth mental health first aid trainings into high schools on the Central School District of Oahu. I have worked as a Part-Time teacher at Jefferson Elementary School, and I am also a facilitator of mindfulness workshops and anger management group sessions at The Institute for Human Services.

I understand that educating social services support staff, as well as everyone and anyone who is in the lives of our youth provides the potential for their recovery from trauma and prevention from trauma, such as sexual abuse and sex trafficking which is being addressed today. When we know how to recognize the signs of sexual abuse, of sex trafficking, of neglect and all forms of abuse, we are able to intervene. When we know of what resources are out there for our youth who are survivors of trauma, we are able to use a trusting alliance we have hopefully built with them to guide them to these appropriate and effective referrals, while remaining their support networks during the process of healing, which is on a continuum of care. When we understand how to talk to someone who has survived horrid abuses, we provide a safe space where misunderstandings are minimized and youth are validated in their existences.

There is so much potential for healing when education is made accessible. The education for those adults in the lives of youth being advocated for through this bill is why I write to you today. I believe this is how we prevent trauma, how we prevent the cycle of trauma from continuing, and how we do our part in igniting the healing process that is possible when education, understanding, and resources are made possible.

Trauma is not a faraway concept to many of our youth in the State of Hawai'i. It is not merely a buzz word that is finally picking up attention by the public eye in using language to validate the ongoing experiences of many of our children. Their trauma never needed this validation to be real, because unfortunately, with or without outside recognition that trauma is happening and that trauma needs to become a community responsibility of advocacy in fostering healing for our youth, trauma still goes on, with or without resources for this necessary healing. It is now that we cannot turn our backs on trauma any longer. This bill calls for providing resources within the system of education in relation to sexual abuse and the traumas of sex trafficking for our youth, so that the faculty and staff they so intimately work with for most of their days are aware of what they could face or what they have already faced. It is though psycho-education and knowledge of resources and how resources are effectively used for each individual youth where hope for healing becomes reality.

It is within the department of education that many of our youth spend most of their time. Time provides space to grow or space to go neglected, depending on who is within these spaces of time and what they choose to do with it. It is with the people within this system that our youth interact with more than their own guardians. This is a privilege, to be able to spend so much time with our youth. This is a duty, to have the capability to influence our youth with this time and the hierarchy of power that comes from any helping relationship/ power dynamic within a relationship of these sorts with an imbalance of power. Because of this, it is our responsibility to be the advocates for these youth and their safety. If not those within the department of education, who will be able to prevent sexual abuse and sex trafficking, intervene in sexual abuse and sex trafficking, and know how to work towards recovery after sexual abuse and/or sex trafficking? If not us, then who?

This begins with understanding how we can help. Helping is about being the guide in empowering our youth to know they can turn to a trusting alliance with those adults around them when they are in need of support, that they are recognized as being survivors of sexual abuse and/or sex trafficking and/or at risk of becoming victims of this malicious exploitation and abuse.

This bill stands up to the neglect of allowing trauma to continue without early intervention, prevention, crisis intervention, and post-intervention, after a long time in the youth's life has been spent within sexual abuse and/or sex trafficking, which is sexual abuse. This bill addresses prevention, early intervention, intervention, crisis intervention, and post mention through its voluntary trainings for teachers, educational officers, and school-based behavioral health specialists on sexual abuse and sex trafficking. These include "methods used to lure children into sexual abuse and sex

trafficking, identifying victims of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, the effects of sexual abuse and sex trafficking on victim's social, mental, and physical health, strategies to assist in the prevention of it, trauma-informed strategies for responding to the abuse, informational resources, and information on agencies that provide services.

It is within these resource that lives can be saved and lives can be saved. Please, pass this bill and save the lives of our youth from continuing down the dark path of being deprived to a healthy life at the hands of potential trauma or the trauma of sexual abuse and sex trafficking that effects so many more youth than we want to comfortably think about. I beg you to stand up to oppression on the side of healing with backing to succeed. Here is our opportunity to truly be of service. Thank you.

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2019 10:48:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joshua Bohnet	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**I support SB477 RELATING TO EDUCATION.**

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2019 9:36:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Stone	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

*I strongly support SB 477. The lack of sex trafficking prevention education hinders the proper identification of victims and, in turn, their connection with services that they need to rebuild their lives and restore their futures. The average age of entrance into commercial sexual exploitation is 13 years old. We must make sure that our educators, who spend such significant time with our keiki, know what risk factors and warning signs to look for as well as how to get help. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 477.*

*I strongly support passage of stronger laws and fines to anyone caught engaging with sex trafficking as well as those caught buying services of minors to engage in sexual activities.*

*I also believe that the education aspect should extend beyond DOE, and be offered to our community at large to bring awareness that the State of Hawaii and its residents will not tolerate exploitation of humans into sexual trafficking. This is a social problem that must come out in the open and not be considered a taboo topic. The increase of homelessness and poverty makes Hawaii more attractive of a place to practice human trafficking if the State does not pass stricter laws and very large fines for those engaging in exploitation of human beings.*

*Thank you legislators, for doing the socially moral and ethical decision to pass laws to protect all human beings, especially those too young to speak out for themselves.*



**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 9:22:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brandon W Duran	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

*"As a person of faith, I strongly support SB 477. The Christian scriptures are clear that we are to protect and care for those who are vulnerable and marginalized. Victims of sex trafficking are among the most vulnerable in our community. This systematic oppression and abuse of our keiki must be confronted and dismantled. The lack of sex trafficking prevention education hinders the proper identification of victims and, in turn, their connection with services that they need to rebuild their lives and restore their futures. The average age of entrance into commercial sexual exploitation is 13 years old. We must make sure that our educators, who spend such significant time with our keiki, know what risk factors and warning signs to look for as well as how to get help. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 477."*

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2019 1:38:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Erica Scott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-477-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 9:57:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cheri Woods	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is important for students in the DOE as well as administrators to be made aware of sex trafficking prevention tools.