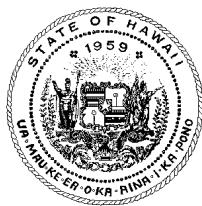


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
**CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION
COMMISSION**

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TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 606

Consideration and Confirmation of MARI BELLINGER
to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission
by
Pamela Ferguson-Brey, Executive Director
Crime Victim Compensation Commission

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 30, 2021; 1:00 PM
Via Videoconference

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair English, and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs:

Thank you for providing the Crime Victim Compensation Commission (Commission) with the opportunity to testify before you today. The Commission strongly supports the confirmation of Mari Bellinger to serve as a Commissioner for a term to expire on June 30, 2025.

Ms. Bellinger's dedication to victims spans nearly thirty (30) years. She is a knowledgeable, experienced, and compassionate advocate for crime victims with specialized expertise in the provision of services to underserved victim populations, and in the treatment of sexual assault and domestic violence abuse survivors with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The Commission is a quasi-judicial body that assists victims of violent crime by providing compensation for crime-related expenses. The Commission also administers a Restitution Recovery Project for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative to collect court-ordered restitution from inmates and parolees and disburse the collected funds to their crime victims. Commissioners hear appeals from administrative decisions ordering or denying compensation, and set policy for the determination of claims submitted to the Commission. Special areas of concern in the past have been the treatment of sexual assault and domestic abuse victims, and enhancing the delivery of compensation services to underserved victim populations. Meanwhile, an ongoing concern remains the sustainable fiscal self-sufficiency of the Commission. The Commission's core

mission is solely funded through special funds and federal matching Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds.

Victims of violent crime who apply for compensation are often traumatized and angry about what has happened to them, and frustrated about the way the criminal justice system treats victims. Commissioners must be knowledgeable about the impact of violent crime on individuals and be sensitive and compassionate in dealing with these individuals.

Ms. Bellinger is a knowledgeable, experienced, and compassionate advocate for crime victims. She served for over twenty (20) years as a Victim/Witness Counselor at the City and County of Honolulu, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, providing counseling and support to victims, witnesses, and surviving family members in cases involving murder, assault, domestic abuse, sexual assault, and other violent crimes.

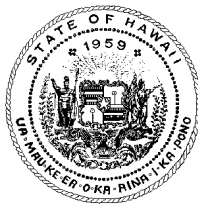
Another area of commitment for the Commission is improving the delivery of compensation services to underserved victim populations. The Commission was part of a strategic planning project to develop a strategic plan to address the needs of underserved populations. Four populations of underserved victims were identified by the project: the elderly, individuals with limited English proficiency, the disabled, and visitors/tourists. Ms. Bellinger's expertise in promoting access to compensation on behalf of visitor/tourist victims will assist the Commission in meeting its commitment to assist this underserved victim population. Ms. Bellinger previously served as the Director of the Visitor Assistance Program at the City and County of Honolulu, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney. The Visitor Assistance Program provided comprehensive victims services to crime victims who were victimized during their stay as visitors to Hawai'i.

The Commission's Mass Violence and Terrorism Response Project has been working to ensure that the Commission and other victim service providers are integrated into the County and State Incident Command Response Models to provide timely crime victim services and to ensure access to compensation services for victims and incident survivors. The Commission continues to work with community victim service providers to ensure that, if there is a mass violence incident, victims and survivors will have the support and resources available to assist them. Ms. Bellinger's experience working with traumatized victims will help inform the Commission's planning and training. Additionally, she would be an invaluable resource in assisting and providing guidance to the Commission's response team in an actual mass violence incident.

Ms. Bellinger is affiliated with the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress and has expertise in the treatment of PTSD suffered by survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault. After working as a research therapist with domestic abuse and sexual assault survivors, she co-authored an article (under Mari McCaig) entitled *Cognitive Trauma Therapy for Battered Women with PTSD (CTT-BW)*, and authored a book (under Mari McCaig), *Healing the Trauma of Domestic Violence*, in 2004. Ms. Bellinger's expertise in this area will support the Commission's ongoing efforts to provide consistently excellent services to victims of violent crimes.

Ms. Bellinger's background, training, and expertise will be invaluable to the Commission in its efforts to provide high quality service to Hawai'i's violent crime victims. The Commission strongly urges you to confirm Ms. Bellinger's appointment as a Commissioner of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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Deputy Director
Corrections

Jordan Lowe
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 606 -
RELATING TO CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE CRIME
VICTIM COMPENSATION COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE
MARI BELLINGER.

By: Max Otani, Director

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair
J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

March 30, 2021: 1:00pm
Hawaii State Capitol

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair English, and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully request your support in moving forward to the full Senate Governor Ige's appointment of Mari Bellinger to serve on the Crime Victim Compensation Commission (CVCC). Ms. Bellinger has worked for decades with crime victims and witnesses in various capacities and previously served as chairperson of the CVCC from 2011 to 2019, where she tirelessly advocated for crime victims and their families.

Ms. Bellinger's reappointment is welcome news to the victim community, and I join with them in supporting her confirmation to the CVCC.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

GM-606

Submitted on: 3/24/2021 4:50:01 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/30/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PAUL LACUESTA	Individual	Support	No

Comments: