



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTY- FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2021**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.C.R. NO. 100/H.R. NO. 83, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE PROGRAM TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, AND HOMELESSNESS

DATE: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 **TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 329, Via Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Clare E. Connors, Attorney General, or
Farshad M Talebi, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) supports this resolution.

The purpose of this resolution is to request the Department to create a statewide human trafficking program within the Department to (1) assist victims of human trafficking and child commercial exploitation, (2) assess the State's anti-trafficking response, (3) develop and implement strategies to address offender accountability through coordinated law enforcement efforts, (4) develop and implement plans to provide increased support to victims, and (5) provide reports to the Legislature, including any proposed legislation.

The Department notes that as stated in the resolution on page 2, lines 1 to 3, the Department has hired a statewide coordinator on human trafficking to assist with a statewide response to human trafficking.

Successfully combating human trafficking and child commercial sexual exploitation requires a comprehensive multidisciplinary response among law enforcement, state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Hawaii is in need of statewide leadership in order to thoroughly assess the current problems and develop strategic solutions.

This issue is a priority for the Department, and while we would have preferred to have the statewide human trafficking program codified in the Hawaii Revised Statutes

as proposed by the original draft of House Bill No. 722, we respectfully ask the Committee to pass this resolution.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-First State Legislature, 2021 Regular Session

House Committee on Health, Human Services & Homelessness

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 329

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

by

Christine E. Kuriyama

Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge

Family Court of the First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Concurrent Resolution No. 100/ House Resolution No. 83
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO ESTABLISH A
STATEWIDE PROGRAM TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF VICTIMS OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING AND THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary strongly supports H.C.R. No. 100/ H.R. No. 83. The Judiciary appreciates the Legislature’s recognition that human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children is a serious problem here in Hawai‘i.

The Judiciary supports this resolution for the following reasons:

1. The commercial sexual exploitation of our children has become more prevalent in cases before the Family Court. Youth involved in the foster care system are especially vulnerable to becoming involved in sex trafficking. These issues also arise in Family Court cases on the juvenile, domestic violence, child abuse, and other calendars.



2. This resolution recognizes that victims of human trafficking are some of the most vulnerable in our community and provides for increased support and assistance for victims of human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.
3. This resolution provides for the Department of the Attorney General to assess the current status of the State's efforts to address CSEC and prepare a comprehensive report to the Legislature prior to the 2022 session. This will be a significant step in gathering and analyzing information on the State's efforts. Much work has already been put forth while there is so much more to accomplish. Having a comprehensive report with the components stated in the resolution will provide a detailed inventory of resources, outlined best practices, and recommendations for moving forward.
4. This resolution provides for data specific to the commercial sexual exploitation of children to be included in the report by the Department of the Attorney General. This data piece is critical to understanding the true breadth and scope of the problem in the State of Hawai'i. Only with accurate data are we able to properly pursue needed funding and allocate resources to effectively respond.
5. This resolution provides that a plan for prevention, public outreach, and education be included in the program established by the Department of the Attorney General. Being aware of the indicators of human trafficking/sexual exploitation, and knowing what to do, is the first step in assisting victims.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

TESTIMONY

Harm Reduction Hawaii
c/o 1658 Liholiho St #205
Honolulu, HI 96822

RE: HCR 100/HR 83 to be heard on Tuesday March 23, at 9:00AM by video conference

Comments

To the House Committee on Human Services

The direction of legislative advice should be to tell the AG to gather evidence in an open minded way and not simply assume everything coming from anti-prostitution groups to be true. This resolution, whatever good intentions may lie behind it, outlines a series of alleged facts in various whereas' and follows with recommendations on what to do about it. This is putting the cart before the horse. The AG's office is already empowered to move ahead on addressing these issues. A resolution urging them to do so is unnecessary. One that makes so many conclusions rather than giving directives on how best to gather information is not at all helpful.

Numerous task forces have been set up, a number of ill-considered changes to our HRS 712-1200 statutes have been passed, and to date no honest effort has been made to understand these issues or consider how to address them. You can't solve a problem you don't understand. And you can't understand it if you continually exclude the most expert people from your various panels and task forces.

I am willing to give the AG's office the benefit of the doubt to try and bring people into the discussion other than the usual group of government agencies and angry advocates. So I will not oppose this resolution for now. There is a lot of capability in Hawaii among folks in harm reduction, academics, and public health which has not really been accessed in the past. Anyone in the legislature who is serious should be advocating for that.

Very Truly Yours;



Tracy Ryan

Executive Director, Harm Reduction Hawaii



March 23, 2021

Testimony in support of: HCR100/HR83

Submitted by:
Ho'ola Nā Pua

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and honorable committee members,

Ho'ola Nā Pua is in support of implementing a statewide coordinator and programs dedicated to case management strategies, protocols, and a victim-centered response in order to address the needs of survivors of human trafficking. Additionally, our organization supports the direct communication between the department attorney general to the legislator on State efforts assessing exploitation and human trafficking. Furthermore, our organization supports the continued efforts of the Children's Justice Center to coordinate investigations and case management of all youth trafficking cases.

Combining human trafficking efforts under the umbrella of the Attorney General's office will benefit multiple support organizations, including ours, to better assist human trafficking survivors and their families. In this way, we can effectively consolidate multi-disciplinary team efforts. Ho'ola Nā Pua, especially, can better coordinate treatment, program referrals, and individualized care through one comprehensive program as well.

It is imperative to develop and implement a dedicated program to assist victims of human trafficking led by a statewide coordinator. Aligning with the need for more comprehensive data and resources for the community, this program will benefit our state by the development of:

- Statewide strategies to prevent human trafficking.
- Plans that will provide assistance to victims of human trafficking.
- Comprehensive training on how to prevent, identify, and address human trafficking.



We are committed to the prevention of sex trafficking and providing care for children who have been exploited.

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- Awareness of human trafficking and the availability of state and national services.

Hopefully, through this program we can establish and maintain cooperation between agencies in coordination with investigations regarding human trafficking, reduce the revictimization of trafficking victims through multiple interviews, and organize therapeutic and treatment programs for victims of human trafficking and their families. We ask the legislature to consider and adopt this resolution.

Respectfully,
Ho'ōla Nā Pua



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