

‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke
Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine

Testimony on behalf of the
Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women
Khara Jabola-Carolus, Executive Director

In support of HCR11 HD1
April 5, 2021

Dear Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women supports HCR11 HD1, wherein the Legislature requests the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women co-convene a task force to conduct a study on missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls and to submit a report on the study to the Legislature.

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women is committed to noncarceral, community-driven solutions to women’s safety. We understand that each taskforce member named by the Legislature in this resolution was selected for the data they collect so that data sharing is possible.

HCR11 HD1 seeks to address the absence of information around the international and national crisis “missing and murdered indigenous women and girls” (MMIWG) in Hawai‘i. SCR8 was inspired by First Nations organizing in Canada and across Indian country in United States. The Commission is concerned about the high rate of gendered violence against Native Hawaiian women and believes a similar, invisible may exist across Hawai‘i.

Women’s advocacy in Hawai‘i has not adequately addressed the unique experiences of Native Hawaiian women. MMIWG is a conversation about sexualization and colonization of Native women. There is a nexus between MMIWG and sex trafficking— a crime which has an intense impact on individual and community well-being. Sexual trafficking and rape are an assault on human dignity.¹ Yet until 2019, there was no state data on the prevalence of sex trafficking victimization among Native Hawaiians or even on the sex market in Hawai‘i.

¹ See Christine Boyle, *What Makes “Model” Sexual Offenses? A Canadian Perspective*, 4 BUFF. CRIM.L. REV. 487, 492 (2000).

The Commission functions as the state's information center on women and girls. In 2018, the agency in partnership with Arizona State University's Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention and Research embarked to produce the first comprehensive research on sex trafficking in the state's 61-year history. The pre-inquiry process of interviews with social service providers and criminal justice personnel indicated that Native Hawaiian women and girls are being sex trafficked in Hawai'i, over state lines, and even across international borders.

In addition, initial peer-reviewed, empirical data shows that Native Hawaiian women appear to be disproportionately victimized:

- 77% of 22 sex trafficking victims were Native Hawaiian, and 100% identified as women²
- 64% of 97 sex trafficking victims were Native Hawaiian, and 75% identified as women³
- Current overrepresentation of Native Hawaiian women and girls in sex trafficking at present may be directly linked vulnerabilities that trace to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i—that is, land dispossession, exposure to sexual violence, hypersexualization, incarceration, cultural dislocation, intergenerational trauma, mental and emotional distress, racism, poverty, and ongoing inequities.⁴

Our research has also found that sex trafficking victims were more likely to report negative experiences with law enforcement, and that law enforcement has been complicit in sex trafficking in Hawai'i. Sexual exploitation by law enforcement and the threat of criminal sanction of survivors along with few services available has prevented many survivors of sexual exploitation from getting help. This measure allow a new approach to take hold that centers gender equity, racial justice and indigenous sovereignty.

Accordingly, the Commission supports HCR11 HD1 as an important step to radically improve the safety of Native Hawaiian women and children in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Khara Jabola-Carolus

² Jabola-Carolus, K. & Roe-Sepowitz, D., *Sex Trafficking in Hawai'i Part II: The Stories of Survivor*, Arizona State University, Jan. 2019.

³ Jabola-Carolus, K. & Roe-Sepowitz, D., *Sex Trafficking in Hawai'i Part III: Sex Trafficking Across Hawai'i*, Arizona State University, Feb. 2020.

⁴ *Id.* at 1.



HCR11 HD1

REQUESTING THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kuleana Hawai‘i
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Apelila 8, 2021

1:01 p.m.

Hālāwai Keleka‘a‘ike

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs **SUPPORTS** HCR11 HD1. Particularly given recent indications that Native Hawaiians may be disproportionately represented among sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, and sex abuse victims – who in turn may be at a heightened risk of being murdered or going missing – **OHA supports the improved data collection, reporting, and analyses envisioned in this measure, as a critical first step to identifying and preventing what may be a serious problem affecting the Native Hawaiian community.**

Recent data indicate that Native Hawaiian women and girls may be disproportionately represented among victims of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation.¹ Most recently, the Hawai‘i Commission on the Status of Women, in partnership with Arizona State University and Child and Family Services, published the third part of a multi-part report examining sex trafficking in Hawai‘i. Although the survey underlying this most recent publication could rely on only a limited sample of 363 willing participants, nearly 27% of participants surveyed were identified as having been sexually trafficked, with 64% of these trafficking victims identifying as Native Hawaiian.² Alarming, 23% of the trafficking victims were first trafficked before the age of 18.³

This recent report supplements data that further demonstrate the high risk for sexual victimization within the Native Hawaiian community. For example, the Sex Abuse Treatment Center has indicated that, between 2001 and 2010, Native Hawaiians represented the largest ethnic group among their intake of sex abuse victims.⁴ Further, a more recent OHA study also revealed that Native Hawaiian girls are vastly

¹ ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION & THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, SEX TRAFFICKING IN HAWAI‘I PART III: SEX TRAFFICKING EXPERIENCES ACROSS HAWAI‘I 5 (2020).

² *Id.* at 4.

³ *Id.*

⁴ DAWNA NELSON, EVELYN YANAGIDA & CAROL PLUMMER SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS IN HONOLULU: A 2001-2010 STATISTICAL PROFILE 24 (2012).

overrepresented among juvenile runaways,⁵ and data show that one third of runaway youth will be approached for sexual services within 48 hours of being on the street.⁶ In addition to—and perhaps partially due to—“land dispossession, exposure to sexual violence, hypersexualization, incarceration, cultural dislocation, intergenerational trauma, mental and emotional distress, racism, poverty, and going inequities”⁷—Native Hawaiian youth may, therefore, be particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse.

The potential prevalence of sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, and sexual abuse of Native Hawaiians heightens concerns that Native Hawaiians, and particularly Native Hawaiian women and girls, may be at a higher risk of being murdered or going missing. However, as described in OHA’s report *Haumea: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Women and Empowering Wāhine Well-Being*, there is a need for much better data collection generally on violence perpetrated against Native Hawaiian women, especially young women and girls, including through data disaggregated by age, race, and gender. Such data may be critical to better understanding and addressing the social and systemic contexts of violence against Native Hawaiian women and girls, including their murder or disappearance.⁸

OHA looks forward to participating in this Task Force to better protect and uplift the most vulnerable of Native Hawaiian women and girls. **OHA accordingly appreciates and supports the improved data collection, reporting, and analyses envisioned by this measure, which constitute critical first steps to understanding and addressing the potentially heightened risk of Native Hawaiian women and girls going missing, being murdered, or being otherwise subjected to violence or abuse.**

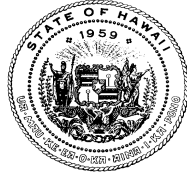
Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HCR11 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

⁵ OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, HAUMEA: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING 74 (2018).

⁶ Ho‘ōla Nā Pua, Re/imagine: A Capital Campaign to Rebuild Pearl Haven, <https://hoolanapua.org/re-imagine/> (last accessed Feb. 3, 2020).

⁷ ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION & THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, SEX TRAFFICKING IN HAWAI‘I PART II THE STORIES OF SURVIVORS 9 (2019).

⁸ THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS HAUMEA: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING 7, 84 (2018).



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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Testimony in SUPPORT of H.C.R. 11 HD 1

**REQUESTING THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE ON
MURDERED AND MISSING NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS**

REPRESENTATIVE MAILE S.L. SHIMABUKURO, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Hearing Date: 4/8/2021

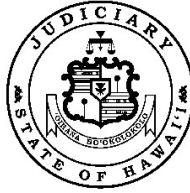
Room Number: Via Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports this measure requesting
3 the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW) to convene a task force to
4 improve the health of Native Hawaiian women and girls at-risk for all forms of violence
5 including domestic violence and involvement in sex trafficking and the sex industry.

6 The DOH agrees for the director or designee to serve on the task force. The task force objectives
7 support the DOH with information and data that will assist in developing and distributing
8 information to prevent violence, sexual trafficking, and the promotion of healthy outcomes for
9 Native Hawaiian females. The DOH currently provides trainings and resources to domestic
10 violence partners on teen dating, developing respectful healthy relationships, and a sexual
11 violence prevention train-the-trainer curriculum for educators of middle and high school
12 students. Additionally, the DOH-supported statewide network of family planning providers
13 conduct annual trainings on identifying and screening for domestic violence and abuse of
14 adolescents and women of reproductive age.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-First Legislature, 2021 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 8, 2021, 1:01 pm

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

by

Rodney A. Maile

Administrative Director of the Courts

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Measure No. and Title: House Concurrent Resolution No. 11, H.D. 1, Requesting the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to Convene a Task Force to Study Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary respectfully supports the intent of House Concurrent Resolution No. 11, H.D.1, which requests that the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women convene a task force to conduct a study regarding missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls.

The Judiciary is committed to participating in the newly-created task force to effectuate its purpose as stated in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 3:31:40 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Field	Testifying for Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates - Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates supports HCR 11, HD1. Thank you!



Hawaii
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Re: **HCR 11, HD1 - Requesting the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women to Convene a Task Force to Study Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls**

Hawai'i State Capitol, via videoconference

April 8, 2021, 1:01 PM

Dear Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in SUPPORT of HCR 11, HD1. This resolution requests the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to convene a task force to study missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls.

Before reports on sex trafficking in Hawai'i were published, very few people thought sex trafficking was a problem here. The studies revealed just how large the problem is and started our community dialoguing on what we need to do to protect the lives of women and girls.

In addition, this month's *Data Justice* report¹ by Papa Ola Lokahi, a Native Hawaiian health advocacy organization, and the Hawai'i Budget & Policy Center highlighted the lack of adequate data about the Native Hawaiian community and called for the state to improve its collection of ethnic and racial data.

Similarly, at this time we do not have information on missing and murdered indigenous girls and women (MMIWG). The task force requested by these resolutions would be an important first step toward filling these gaps in data about Native Hawaiian women and girls.

However, we do know that rates of gender-based violence are higher for indigenous women. We know that Native Hawaiian women are more economically vulnerable because of inequity in their pay. We know that trafficking is a contributing factor to MMIWG. We need better information to learn where we our failing indigenous girls and women so that we may, as a community, better protect them.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this resolution.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo

Director, Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.hibudget.org/projects/data-justice>

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 10:43:55 AM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikki-Ann Yee	Testifying for Ma'i Movement Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

As an organization run by Native Hawaiian women, Ma'i Movement Hawai'i supports HCR11.

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 1:29:27 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 4:51:44 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaikea K. Blakemore	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 6:18:16 PM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha HWN Committee Members,

As a concerned community member and public health professional, I urge you to pass resolution HCR11, which requests to convene a task force to study the issue of missing/murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls. The disparities among this community is startling, and it is a matter of both justice and health to better understand and immediately address this preventable crisis.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 8:47:32 AM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support hcr11 hd1

LATE

HCR-11-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 10:32:20 AM

Testimony for HWN on 4/8/2021 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shyanne Castillo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Shyanne Castillo and I am currently a student with UH Manoa obtaining a Social Worker degree. I am a full-time distance student and a full-time worker. The measure I am testifying in favor of HCR 11 HD1, REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS.

There are few reasons as to why I support this proposed bill:

1. More and more native hawaiian women and girls are being mistreated and led up to becoming missing.
2. We need to start thinking and advocating why is it that women/girls are going missing/murdered. We need to advocate for more support in these efforts, normalize that it is okay to reach out for help.
3. Conducting research is very important because that way we can start to see what is it that led up to the point of a missing women/girl.

Again, I am in support of this proposed bill and hope you find my testimony helpful in the decision making process. I believe this proposed bill will have a great impact for all Native Hawaiian Women and Girls to stand up for themselves.

Shyanne Castillo