

HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 411 HONOLULU, HI 96813 · PHONE: 586-8636 FAX: 586-8655 TDD: 568-8692

March 29, 2021
Room 325, 2:00 p.m.
Videoconference

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

From: Liann Ebesugawa, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.C.R. No. 12, H.D.1 / H.R. No. 13, H.D.1

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state funded services (on the basis of disability). The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5.

The HCRC supports H.C.R. No. 12 , H.D.1, and H.R. No. 13, H.D.1, which, if adopted, would convene a Task Force to address the implementation of the Hawai‘i state law corollary to Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972, renamed in 2002 as the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.

Act 110, L 2018, established a state corollary to Title IX by adding a new chapter to Title 20 of the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, now HRS chapter 368D, prohibiting discrimination based on sex, including gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation in any state educational program and activity or educational program or activity that receives state financial assistance. With Act 110, the legislature adopted a two-step process: 1) enactment of the basic statutory civil rights protection effective January 1, 2020; and, 2) an LRB study and report in the interim to inform the legislature on enforcement issues and mechanisms. This approach provided both a strong statement of the State’s commitment to eliminate sex discrimination, and an

opportunity to make measured and informed legislative decisions on the appropriate statutory enforcement scheme.

Effective January 1, 2020, the new statute, HRS § 368D-1, defines both “state educational programs and activities” and “educational programs and activities that receive state financial assistance.” It was critically important to include these definitions which make it expressly clear that the legislature did not intend to exclude educational programs and activities that also receive federal funds from coverage under the new state law.

H.C.R. No. 12 , H.D.1, and H.R. No. 13, H.D.1, discuss serious concerns over 2020 U.S. Department of Education rulemaking that had the intent and effect of eroding and dismantling Title IX protections against sex discrimination on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity, and protections against sexual violence, assault, and harassment as well. That rule was entitled “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance,” 85 Fed. Reg. 30026 (May 19, 2020),

On March 8, 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order expressing a policy commitment that all students should be guaranteed an educational environment free from discrimination on the basis of sex, including discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, which encompasses sexual violence, and including discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and ordering a review of all regulations, orders, guidance documents, policies, and agency actions that are inconsistent with that commitment, including the afore-mentioned 2020 USDOE rulemaking.

The shifting federal interpretation and enforcement of Title IX protections against sex discrimination, with about-face turns in conflicting rules, guidance, and executive actions and orders, serve to highlight the need for strong state law and the legislature’s wisdom in enacting the state law corollary to Title IX. Here, as a historical theme in Hawai‘i civil rights lawmaking, federal law is a “floor” beneath which state law protections against discrimination cannot drop, rather than a “ceiling” above which state law protections cannot rise. California Federal Sav. and Loan Ass’n v. Guerra, 479 US 272, 290-292 (1987).

As the legislature and the Act 110 Implementation Task Force that would be convened pursuant to this resolution address the implementation of our state corollary to Title IX, it should be noted, and we should be mindful, that Act 110 and HRS § 368D-1 already provide a basic enforcement mechanism – a direct cause of action in state court.

In relevant part, HRS§ 368D-1(a), (d) and (e) provide:

368D-1 State educational programs and activities; discrimination

prohibited. (a) No person in the State, on the basis of sex, including gender identity or expression as defined in section 489-2, or sexual orientation as defined in section 489-2, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under:

- (1) Any state educational program or activity; or
- (2) Any educational program or activity that receives state financial assistance.

* * * * *

(e) Nothing in this chapter shall preclude a student participating in any educational program or activity who is aggrieved by a violation of this chapter from filing a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction.

(f) A person, or an organization or association on behalf of a person alleging a violation of this chapter may file a complaint pursuant to this chapter.

The statute provides for more than an implied cause of action for violations of the new state Title IX corollary - it expressly provides for a statutory cause of action and standing to file for organizations and associations. In this respect, HRS chapter 368D is self-implementing, and the legislature and task force may face a challenge that is less daunting than first thought.

The HCRC supports H.C.R. No. 12, H.D.1, and H.R. No. 13, H.D.1.

HR-13-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 9:40:09 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports HR13, HD1. Thank you!



of Hawaii

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing Date/Time: Monday March 29, 2PM

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325

Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HCR12 HD1/HR13 HD1

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and the Members of Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HCR12 HD1/HR13 HD1 which would convene a taskforce to address implementation of Hawaii's state law corollary to Title IX in light of recent changes to federal Title IX regulations.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) systematically dismantled Title IX protections. After withdrawing Title IX protection for transgender students in February 2017¹ and reversing 2011 and 2014 Title IX guidance in September 2017², the USDOE's "Final Rule" which took effect on August 14, 2020 reverses the federal government's previous interpretation of the prohibition against discrimination based on "sex" that included discrimination based on sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. USDOE also rescinded its guidance on the investigation of campus sex assaults, and makes it harder for the students to come forward about sexual harassment or sexual assaults and receive the support they need. These changes impose harmful implications to students' civil rights.³

While Biden administration is expected to reverse the systematic dismantlement of Title IX protections, it is likely that the change will be implemented as USDOE rules or regulations, not as a federal law. It is also not guaranteed that all the protections provided by 2011 and 2014 Title IX guidance from USDOE will be implemented as USDOE rules or regulations.

Members of the AAUW of Hawaii are proud of our state and excited that Act 110, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018 which protects LGBT+ students under Title IX became effective

¹ <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-secretary-education-betsy-devos-issues-statement-new-title-ix-guidance>

² <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/department-education-issues-new-interim-guidance-campus-sexual-misconduct>

³ <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/position-title-ix/>

January 1, 2020. Act 110, however, still needs a meaningful enforcement framework which would involve AG's office and Civil Rights Commission in addition to UH and Hawaii DOE.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is a state-wide organization made up of six branches (Hilo, Honolulu, Kauai, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu) and includes over 3800 supporters statewide. As advocates for gender equity, AAUW of Hawaii promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons.

Please pass this important measure to ensure our students are protected from bullying, harassment, and assaults. We are also including additional information below. Mahalo.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Y. Overly', is positioned above the typed name.

Younghee Overly
Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net

Status on Progress Made by UH system and Hawaii DOE:

As you may already know, both UH system and Hawaii DOE have been found non-compliant with Title IX but have made progress. Since 2013, UH has been working on Voluntary Resolution Agreement it made with USDOE. UH has established Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX Offices to set and implement policies; offer trainings and resources to faculty, staff and students. UH has also conducted Campus Climate Survey. Since 2018, Hawaii DOE also has established Civil Rights Compliance Branch with Title IX coordinators, and updated its administrative rules to address bullying and harassment. Once and if implemented, USDOE's new Title IX rules would put schools in Hawaii between a rock and a hard place: between federal fund and protecting students who are assaulted and bullied, between federal fund and public backlash and lawsuits, between federal fund and progress both UH and Hawaii DOE have made, and between federal Title IX rules and Hawaii state's Title IX corollary.

Why We Need Stronger Title IX Protection:

There is no doubt our keiki still need Title IX protection. According to CDC 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey⁴:

- 22.6% of middle school students in Hawaii were cyber-bullied, 40% were bullied on school property, 23.1% seriously considered suicide, and 12.4% attempted suicide during past 12 months
- 14.6% of high school students in Hawaii were cyber-bullied, 18.4% were bullied on school property, 16% seriously considered suicide, and 10% attempted suicide during past 12 months.

Youth who report frequently bullying others and youth who report being frequently bullied is at increased risk for suicide; youth who report both bullying others and being bullied have the highest risk for suicide.⁵

Students in higher education in Hawaii also still need Title IX protection. According to the recent University of Hawaii Climate Survey Report, this polled 44,671 adult students across 10 UH campuses:⁶

⁴ <https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Results.aspx?LID=HI>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullying-suicide-translation-final-a.pdf>

⁶ Loui, P. "University of Hawaii Student Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Violence: Executive Summary," Sept. 11, 2017.

- Native Hawaiian students are particularly vulnerable to all forms of gender violence on campus;
 - 1 in 10 students reported experiencing sexual harassment at any time while enrolled at UH;
 - 14.7% percent of students at UH perceive sexual assault and harassment to be extremely problematic at UH;
 - 1 in 8 students felt that it was likely that they would experience sexual assault or sexual harassment while on campus, with 1 in 4 feel that an off-campus, university-sponsored event incident was likely;
 - 46% of students perceived that campus officials would treat students who experience sexually harassment or gender violence respectfully, and 49% believed their safety would not be protected;
 - 1 in 16 UH survey participants system-wide reported non-consensual sexual contact at any time while enrolled at UH;
 - Lesbian/gay/bisexual students had significantly higher rates of all forms of gender violence than those in other sexual orientation groups;
 - Transgender, genderqueer and non-conforming students were, by a large margin, the most likely to experience nonconsensual sexual contact;
 - Graduate students are most vulnerable to sexual harassment and non-consensual sexual contact by faculty;
 - High rates of students don't know what their rights are; where resources are located, etc.
-



Hawaii Women's Coalition

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing Date/Time: Monday March 29, 2PM

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 325

Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HCR12 HD1/HR13 HD1

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and the Members of Committees,

Members of Hawaii Women's Coalition thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HCR12 HD1/HR13 HD1 which would convene a taskforce to address implementation of Hawaii's state law corollary to Title IX in light of recent changes to federal Title IX regulations.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) systematically dismantled Title IX protections provided by the 2011 and 2014 Title IX guidance from USDOE. These changes impose harmful implications to students' civil rights.

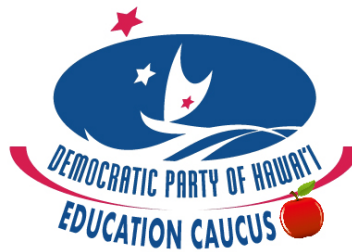
While Biden administration is expected to reverse the systematic dismantlement of Title IX protections, it is likely that the change will be implemented as USDOE rules or regulations, not as a federal law. It is also not guaranteed that all the protections provided by 2011 and 2014 Title IX guidance from USDOE will be implemented as USDOE rules or regulations.

We are very proud of our state and excited that Act 110, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018 which protects LGBT+ students under Title IX became effective January 1, 2020. Act 110, however, still needs a meaningful enforcement framework which would involve AG's office and Civil Rights Commission in addition to UH and Hawaii DOE.

The Hawai'i Women's Coalition is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls. Members currently include 29 organizations and agencies (private, public, membership) as well as individuals. The coalition encourages the inclusion of interested parties and in achieving equitable representation.

Please pass this important measure for our keiki. Thank you for your consideration.

Younghee Overly (on behalf of Hawaii Women's Coalition)



HCR 12/HR 13, HD 1, CONVENING A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS IMPLEMENTATION OF HAWAII'S STATE LAW COROLLARY TO TITLE IX TO STRENGTHEN HAWAII'S EFFORTS TO END CAMPUS-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION.

MARCH 29, 2021 · HOUSE JUDICIARY AND
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP.
MARK M. NAKASHIMA

POSITION: Strong support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **strongly supports** HCR 12/HR 13, HD 1, convening a task force to address implementation of Hawai'i's state law corollary to Title IX to strengthen Hawai'i's efforts to end campus-based sexual violence and gender discrimination.

We urge your committee to maintain the amendments made by the House Education Committee to this measure and pass the current draft of this resolution unamended, which will ensure that survivors' voices are included in task force discussions. The amendments also refocus the task force's deliberations on strengthening protections for survivors of campus-based sexual violence and gender discrimination, rather than simply using the heinous regulations imposed by former President Donald Trump and U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos as a guide for statutory and policy recommendations.

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, 11.2 percent of all college students experience rape or sexual assault

through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. Among undergraduate students, 23.1 percent of females experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. This issue is not specific to women, either. Male college-aged students (18-24) are 78 percent more likely than non-students of the same age to be a victim of rape or sexual assault.

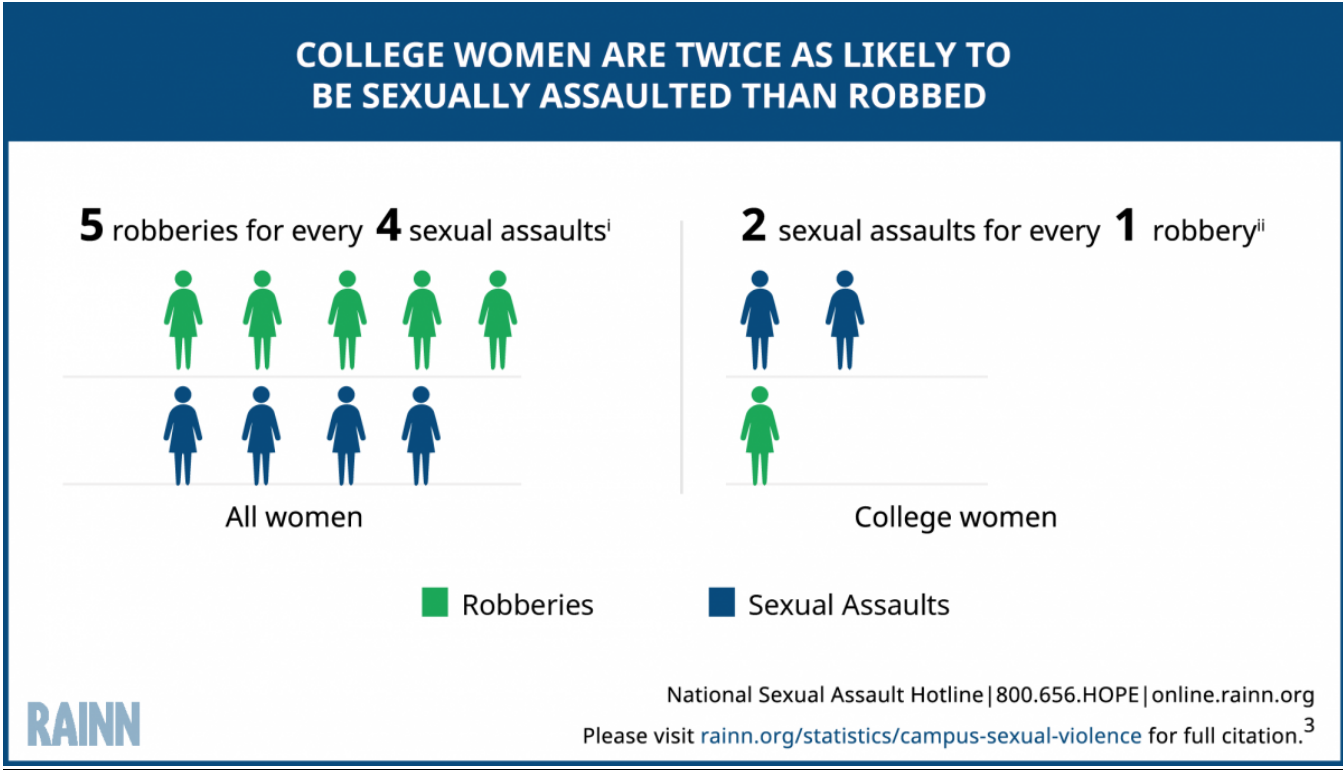
Sexual violence is pervasive on college campuses in Hawai'i. According to UH's most recent climate survey, conducted in 2019:

- Approximately 60 percent of students at the University of Hawai'i feel that the issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment are problematic.
- 12.7 percent of students at the University of Hawai'i experienced sexual harassment while at the university according to the 2019 campus climate survey, an increase of 37 percent since 2017.
- 21.3 percent of students at the University of Hawai'i experienced dating or domestic violence while at the university according to the 2019 campus climate survey, an increase of 11.5 percent since 2017.
- 7.2 percent of students at the University of Hawai'i experienced nonconsensual sexual contact while at the university according to the 2019 campus climate survey, an increase of 14 percent since 2017. **That equates to 3,598 students experiencing sexual assault at the University of Hawai'i systemwide.**
- 100 percent of students experiencing sexual harassment, 74 percent of those experiencing stalking, 77 percent of those subjected to stalking, and 59 percent of those subjected to nonconsensual sexual contact reported enduring serious consequences from the incidents, the most common of which were emotional trauma, social consequences, and adverse academic impacts.

Survivors of campus-based sexual violence often suffer from complex and overlapping trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, dissociation, parasuicidal behavior, and substance abuse. Many sex trafficking victims, moreover, are first exploited while

enrolled at of Hawai'i colleges or after experiencing sexual violence during their college years. These institutions provide little information about how to receive help and fail to deliver trauma-informed care, leaving survivors to fend for themselves after being victimized. While the University of Hawai'i has taken small steps to improve its response to sexual violence, its services remain inadequate, information sharing remains spotty (most students do not receive a copy of the Title IX handbook published by the university, for example), and personnel tasked with managing its sexual misconduct protocols remain badly in need of training in trauma-informed care, something that should be required for all staff tasked with handling cases of campus violence.

COLLEGE WOMEN MORE LIKELY TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED THAN ROBBED



**Kris Coffield · Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus ·
(808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com**



HCR 12/HR 13, HD 1, CONVENING A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS IMPLEMENTATION OF HAWAII'S STATE LAW COROLLARY TO TITLE IX TO STRENGTHEN HAWAII'S EFFORTS TO END CAMPUS-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION.

MARCH 29, 2021 · HOUSE JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP. MARK M. NAKASHIMA

POSITION: Strong support.

RATIONALE: Imua Alliance **strongly supports** HCR 12/HR 13, HD 1, convening a task force to address implementation of Hawai'i's state law corollary to Title IX to strengthen Hawai'i's efforts to end campus-based sexual violence and gender discrimination.

We urge your committee to maintain the amendments made by the House Education Committee to this measure and pass the current draft of this resolution unamended, which will ensure that survivors' voices are included in task force discussions. The amendments also refocus the task force's deliberations on strengthening protections for survivors of campus-based sexual violence and gender discrimination, rather than simply using the heinous regulations imposed by former President Donald Trump and U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos as a guide for statutory and policy recommendations.

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, 11.2 percent of all college students experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. Among undergraduate students, 23.1 percent

of females experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. This issue is not specific to women, either. Male college-aged students (18-24) are 78 percent more likely than non-students of the same age to be a victim of rape or sexual assault. Sexual violence is pervasive on college campuses in Hawai'i. According to UH's most recent climate survey, conducted in 2019:

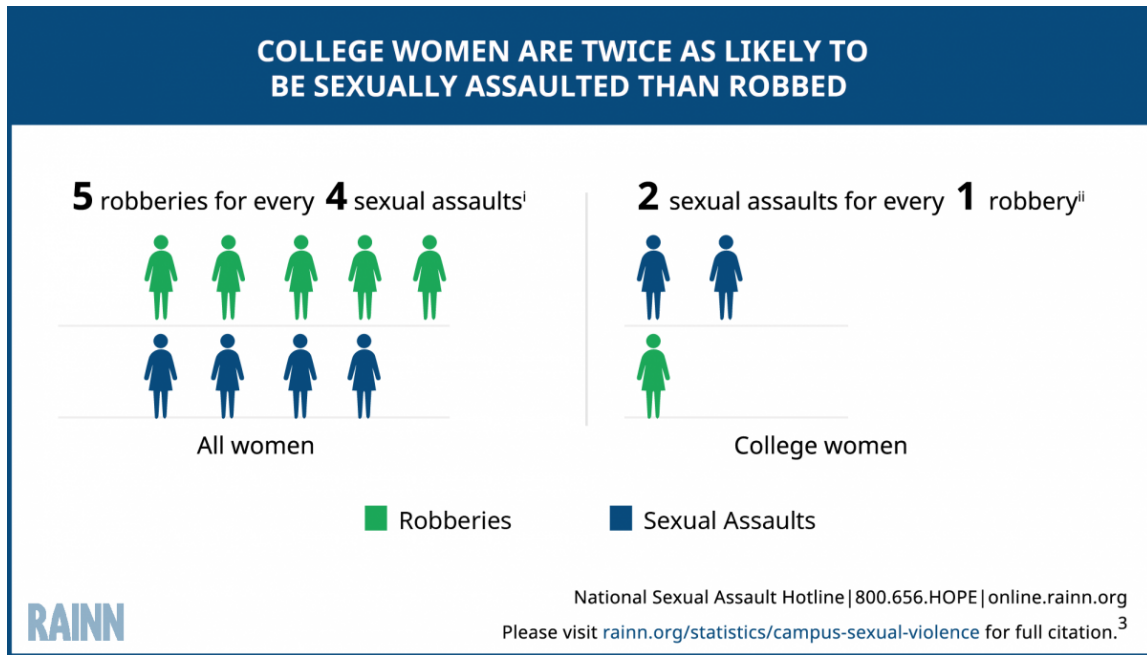
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- 100 percent of students experiencing sexual harassment, 74 percent of those experiencing stalking, 77 percent of those subjected to stalking, and 59 percent of those subjected to nonconsensual sexual contact reported enduring serious consequences from the incidents, the most common of which were emotional trauma, social consequences, and adverse academic impacts.

Imua Alliance is one of the state's largest victim service providers for survivors of sex trafficking. Over the past 10 years, we have provided comprehensive direct intervention (victim rescue) services to 160 victims, successfully emancipating them from slavery and assisting in their restoration, while providing a range of targeted services to over 1,000 victims and individuals at risk of sexual exploitation. Each of the victims we have assisted has suffered from complex and

overlapping trauma, which, in extreme cases, can lead to a complete loss of identity. A victim we cared for in 2016, for example, had become so heavily trauma bonded to her pimp that while under his grasp, she couldn't remember her own name.

Many of the victims with whom we work were first exploited while enrolled at of Hawai'i colleges or after experiencing sexual violence during their college years. These institutions provided little information about how to receive help and failed to deliver trauma-informed care, leaving our survivors to fend for themselves after being victimized. While the University of Hawai'i has taken small steps to improve its response to sexual violence in the last few years, its services remain inadequate, information sharing remains spotty (most students do not receive a copy of the Title IX handbook published by the university, for example), and personnel tasked with managing its sexual misconduct protocols remain badly in need of training in trauma-informed care, something that should be required for all staff tasked with handling cases of campus violence.

COLLEGE WOMEN MORE LIKELY TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED THAN ROBBED



Finally, on a personal note I, Kris Coffield, Executive Director of Imua Alliance, am heavily invested in this measure's success. When I was a student at the University of Hawai'i, in early 2008, I was

violently, penetratively raped by a professor and three graduate students. It happened during a late-night study session to which I was invited by someone who, at the time, I believed to be an academic mentor. I may have been drugged, given that I couldn't move as it happened, though I also could have experienced involuntary paralysis, my body reeling from the shock of the assault. During the attack, I was beaten with a belt, held down forcefully by the men involved, called an assortment of vulgar names (the *least* offensive of which were “f*** whore,” “sex slave,” and “rape slut”), and deliberately misgendered—I was referred to as female throughout the assault in an attempt to further degrade me—as they took turns orally and anally raping me.

I attempted to report the assault to a UH administrator. I was informed at the time, however, that the university wasn't prepared to take action on my case. When I asked why, I was told, "You're a political science major. You should understand that some people have more power than others." Since then, I've struggled with a persistent feeling of powerlessness. I've fought for years to overcome lingering depression and anxiety, along with the fear that my assailants will, at some point, come back to harm me. To be clear, I don't blame the current UHM administration for what happened to me. In fact, I applaud the university's leadership for taking steps to address sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus, following an audit by the U.S. Department of Education that revealed serious gaps in the school's compliance with Title IX's requirements for handling reports of sexual violence. Additionally, I'm not seeking anything, monetary or otherwise, from UH the university, or anyone involved in the incident.

I simply can no longer be silent. My justice must be obtained by sharing my story, so that other victims may feel less alone. I can be a lamppost in a dark and thorny forest, shining a light that makes trauma a little more bearable and hope a little easier to find for those who, like me, have suffered the pain of sexual violence. But I am no longer a rape victim. **I am a survivor.** I, and my organization, humbly ask you to validate the experiences of survivors by passing this measure and working to end the rape culture that continues to infect our state's college campuses.

Kris Coffield · Executive Director, Imua Alliance · (808) 679-7454 · kris@imuaalliance.org

HR-13-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 8:51:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Golojuch Jr	LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaii's oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization, fully supports HR 13 HD 1.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.

Chair

LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i



March 29, 2021

Aloha Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and honorable members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

We submit testimony in support of the totality of HCR12/HR13 and do urge you to pass this through the committee as is.

According to anonymous systemwide survey results from the University of Hawai'i in 2019, approximately 60% of students reported that sexual violence at the university is problematic AND reported an increase in students experiencing sexual assault and harassment since 2017. According to the Institutional Research, Analysis & Planning Office in fall 2019, there were 49,977 total students enrolled across UH campuses. From those survey statistics, 12.7% of students reported experiencing sexual harassment, therefore, 6,347 students are impacted. 21.3% of students reported experiencing domestic violence, therefore, 10,645 students are impacted. 7.2% of students reported experiencing domestic violence, therefore, 3,598 students are impacted.

Due to the complexities and roadblocks of reporting, only an estimated 10% of student survivors will come forward to report through official channels. Therefore, we must address the lack of resources readily available to ALL survivors and students both immediately and long-term following an incident of sexual violence. This resolution takes a clear step forward in addressing what your students and survivors need.

We cannot address sexual violence and subsequent policy solely through the lens of Title IX; we must understand how this violence happens in the first place, how to prevent it, and the options survivors need. We request that the amendments adopted to HCR12/HR13 remain as they currently stand as they carry the weight and power to address this violence as it must be.

Sexual violence impacts millions of students nationwide, and thousands of students here in Hawai'i. Students here are asking for these changes. They are seeking your help. You can make your campuses safer and healthier by passing through the totality of HCR12/HR13.

Sincerely,
Nora Gallo
co-Executive Director, The Every Voice Coalition

HR-13-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 8:14:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support hr13 hd1

HR-13-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:03:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha JHA Commmittee,

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, I write in support of HCR12/HR13, which will convene a task force to fight campus-based sexual violence and gender discrimination. We must ensure that all students in Hawai'i can learn and thrive in a safe and equitable environment.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

HR-13-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 7:09:49 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/29/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anna Chua	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice-Chair Matayoshi, and esteemed members of the committee,

My name is Anna Chua and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, majoring in Peace & Conflict Studies and Psychology. I am writing today in support of HR13: Convening a task force to address the implementation of Hawai'i's state law corollary to Title IX in light of recent changes to federal Title IX regulations. I would like to commend the work being done to address the changes happening on federal and state levels that significantly impact students and survivors of sexual violence and assault.

Trump's administration set significant setbacks to the protections that Title IX provided, but beyond that, it also ensured that those whose lives are most impacted by these decisions and policies are silenced and their experiences erased or diminished.

HB 691 provided opportunities to increase trauma-informed awareness and resources to support survivors of sexual assault and violence while reducing incidence rates. While it is disappointing that those bills did not move forward, they reveal larger cracks in our system whereby there is perpetual marginalisation of survivors and lack of care for those vulnerable to the shortcomings of federal regulation. HCR 12 is a window to centre student needs and ensure that trauma-informed and survivor-centred care and support are institutionalised. The implementation of a task force may not end rape culture and sexual violence that has become endemic on our college campuses, but it will make it loud and clear that violence and assault that occur in public and private spheres will be prioritised on a systemic level.

The need for systemic changes in regulations, perceptions and narratives towards ending sexual violence and protecting survivors call for discourse that goes beyond laws and institutional voice. While addressing Hawai'i's state law corollary to federal Title IX regulations is integral seeing as it directly impacts procedures surrounding cases of sexual violence, it is imperative to note that beyond Title IX, there are myriad layers of barriers and stigmas that complicate the process of reporting and attaining justice for survivors. The fact that such rampant and prevalent cases of sexual violence occur on college campuses— which, according to the 2019 UH Student Climate Survey on Sexual Harassment and Gender Violence, increased by 37% systemwide—shows that spaces where students should feel protected, supported and cared for and within which they should foster healthy community relationships are ironically, where immense violations are experienced. That same survey found that 100% of students who experienced sexual harassment reported enduring serious consequences from the incidents; commonly noted as emotional trauma, social consequences, and adverse academic impacts. It is no surprise that the convoluted and traumatising process of reporting, ensuring accountability on the end of the perpetrator and justice for the survivor results in the absence of official reports being made. As a woman of colour international student and survivor, the possibilities of undergoing heightened social and academic strains and the emotionally scarring process of recounting traumatic experiences upon entering the process of reporting are sufficient fears to avoid reporting. I know that my fears parallel many of my peers, thus, there must be a concerted effort to address and change the web of bureaucratic hurdles, lack of trauma-informed awareness and education, lack of transparency and open access to resources of support and care, all of which perpetuate the normalisation of sexual violence and rape culture on our college campuses.

In line with that, it is imperative that the Act 110 Task Force includes the voices of those directly affected and most impacted, that is, students and survivors of sexual violence. In a place where sexual violence occurs, survivors and students need to be centred in order for solutions that uphold justice to be carved out. Additionally, this means that experts from sexual and domestic violence prevention centres, coalitions that work to end rape culture and sexual violence, trauma-informed therapy and awareness, and cultural-sensitive forms of justice must also be included.

In our world today where movements such as MeToo and Herstory have pushed the prevailing force of centring survivors, womxn, LGBTQ+ folx and those vulnerable to deeply rooted issues of heteropatriarchy, sexism, racism and more in the discourse of ending sexual violence and rape culture, we must look beyond policies and legal procedures. We must move beyond being reactionary and instead push to uproot the multilayered sources of sexual and gender-based

violence in all spaces while ensuring that systemic and institutionalised silencing of survivors are no longer.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HR13.

Anna Chua

annachua@hawaii.edu

96826