



HR57 HD1

DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2021 AS SUICIDE PREVENTION AND ACTION MONTH
Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Ho‘okolokolo a me ke Kuleana Hawai‘i
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Apelila 5, 2021

2:00 p.m.

Lumi 325

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HR57 HD1, which would designate September 2021 as Suicide Prevention and Action Month, in alignment with the National Alliance on Mental Illness’ national designation.

Recent data has highlighted the negative impacts of suicide, attempted suicide, and suicidal ideation on the Native Hawaiian community. **Alarmingly, Native Hawaiian youth are substantially more likely to ideate and attempt suicide than their peers.**¹ About 24% of Native Hawaiian females in public high schools have seriously considered attempting suicide, compared to 18.7% of non-Hawaiian females.² Statewide, the percentage of 10th grade Native Hawaiian males that previously attempted suicide (11%) was more than double that of their non-Hawaiian peers (5.2%).³ Anecdotal reports have also suggested an apparent increase in suicide attempts and deaths among Native Hawaiian youth in recent months, possibly influenced by the abrupt lifestyle changes and social isolation brought on by the pandemic. Tragically, suicide and suicide attempts do not just impact the individuals involved, but carry long-lasting consequences for families and the broader community as well.

HR57 HD1 may facilitate the implementation of OHA recommendations made over recent years to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians, and that may specifically address the higher incidence of youth suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and suicide deaths within the Native Hawaiian community. For example, in “Haumea: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Women and Empowering Wāhine Well-Being,”⁴ OHA recommended specific mental health interventions for our keiki in schools, by: (1) creating and improving mental health screening programs, (2) **addressing self-harm with gender-sensitive and grade-appropriate strategies in public schools**, (3) working with trained professionals in mental and behavioral health fields to ensure appropriate treatment and follow-up, (4) providing assessments of drug alcohol use disorders among

¹ OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, HAUMEA—TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING 19-25 (2018).

² *Id.* at 19-20.

³ *Id.* at 22.

⁴ *Id.* at 19-25.

adolescents, and (5) improving educational programs that address the risks and consequences of substance abuse.⁵ By designating September of 2021 as Suicide Action and Prevention Month, this resolution will help raise awareness of the need to take more proactive action, such as the fulfillment of the Haumea report's recommendations, that can address the prevalence and risk of suicide, suicide attempts, and suicide ideation by Native Hawaiian youth and within our larger population.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HR57 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

⁵ *Id.* at 25.



ONLINE SUBMITTAL
Hearing on Monday, April 5, 2021 @ 2:00 p.m.
Videoconference

DATE: April 2, 2021

TO: Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Rep. Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair

FROM: Eva Andrade, President

RE: Strong Support for HR57 HD1 Designating September as Suicide Prevention and Action Month

Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening life, family and religious freedom in Hawaii. We support this bill that establishes a Suicide Prevention and Action Month.

Many people in our community are concerned about suicide, because it affects the vulnerable people in our community, especially our youth and elderly. We applaud the hard work of professionals in the community who are working hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of community members who are experiencing a mental health crisis. In fact, several of our pastors have dealt with mental health and suicide issues over the course of the past year.

In their 2020 Report, the United Health Foundation reported¹ two issues of concern with respect to Hawaii: Income inequality increased 12% between 2007 and 2019 from 3.88 to 4.36 and frequent mental distress increased 31% between 2011 and 2019 from 8.5% to 11.1% of adults. These statistics should concern all of us.

Experts rightly point out that suicidal behaviors, for people of any age, are usually rooted in many different factors, with mental health issues playing an important role in the overall mix. It is a "perfect storm" of emotional issues and the only way to begin making a difference, is by identifying and treating each person.

As we work together to improve education, awareness, support services, and outreach, we believe that the members of our community who are at risk will find hope, healing and support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

¹ <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/learn/reports/2020-annual-report/state-summaries-hawaii> (accessed March 20, 2021)

HR-57-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2021 7:08:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/5/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Aloha ?Aina Party	Support	No

Comments:

On behalf of the Aloha 'Äina Party, its organization and membership, we hereby support suicide prevention for all 12 months of the year, recognizing that both suicide and addictions are deeply rooted in disenfranchisement, or communal displacement. This is why the State of Hawai'i also has so many problems with Kanaka Maoli - because the State of Hawai'i continuously commits to displacing a people, even after the successful illegal acquisition of our country.

Furthermore, the State of Hawai'i is now displacing most of its residents by maintaining an ongoing and medically dangerous position of allowing tourists to enjoy the freedoms of Hawai'i as their own home, while committing to the imprisonment, oppression, suppression and repression of taxpaying residents. As long as the disease is flying in, residents are not free. This also constitutes perpetual prejudice against the very people who voted you into office.



Hearing Date: April 5, 2021
Hearing Time: 2:00 PM
Location: Via Videoconference Conference Room 325

Re: HR57 HD1 Designating September 2021 as Suicide Prevention and Action Month

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

On behalf of Sutter Health Kāhi Mōhala, we are writing in support of HR57 HD1, designating September 2021 as Suicide Prevention and Action Month. In Hawaii, one person dies by suicide every two days. That translates to an average of 190 suicides among Hawaii residents each year. Another nine non-residents die from suicide in the islands annually.

Sutter Health Kāhi Mōhala is a psychiatric hospital located in Ewa Beach, embracing an interdisciplinary perspective of care and incorporating an integrative approach to emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral healthcare treatment. We are committed to serving the mental health needs of our community.

We are in support of HR57 HD1.

Mahalo,

Claudia Crist
Chief Executive Officer
Sutter Health Kāhi Mōhala

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