



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/03/2021

**Time:** 03:00 PM

**Location:** 229

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0518, SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the department of education to establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention education program to educate public and charter school students on sexual abuse prevention, provide relevant training to teachers and staff, and inform parents and guardians about important child sexual abuse topics. Requires the board of education to adopt policies to effectuate the program. Requires reports to the legislature. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on SB 518, SD1. The Department recognizes the important role of public education in addressing sexual violence prevention and, as such, has several efforts moving forward to address this issue.

Currently, the Department implements Board Policy 103-5, Sexual Health Education, and is in the process of updating a list of vetted instructional materials for sexual health education and sexual violence prevention education, which includes developmentally appropriate instruction on healthy relationships that are based on mutual respect and affection and are free from violence, coercion, and intimidation.

Additionally, from October 2018 to June 2020, the Department established a collaborative multi-agency work group to explore, develop, and communicate an array of strategies, activities, and resources around sexual violence prevention in Hawaii's public schools. The work group included representatives from the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Department of the Attorney General, Hawaii Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sex Abuse Treatment Center, Hawaii Youth Services

Network, Pacific Survivor Center, Young Women's Christian Association of Kauai, and Catholic Charities. The resulting website, "Sexual Violence Prevention Resource for Schools," ([bit.ly/HIDOE-SVP](https://bit.ly/HIDOE-SVP)) was published in October 2020 and shared with all Department staff via a memo as well as the public through various committees and working groups.

Along with these efforts, the Department provides annual mandatory reporter training (child abuse reporting) to all faculty and staff, including contracted providers, paraprofessionals, substitutes, and temporary hires.

Due to the expansive scope of establishing and implementing a statewide program for students, teachers and staff, and parents and guardians, the Department anticipates that additional time will be needed for the initial planning, preparation, and evaluation for the subsequent training and implementation. Teachers and school staff would need professional development prior to implementing the proposed education program with students. The Department appreciates the appropriation in the measure for this program's operations, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact the priorities in the Department's budget. Should the measure move forward, the Department respectfully recommends that the activities and appropriations be extended over three years of phased activities with the first year focused on preparing for phased training and implementation.

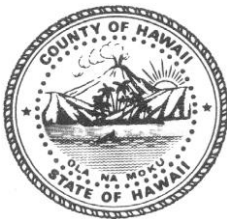
It is worth noting that the Department's ongoing work and commitment to supporting students' health, well-being, and safety currently address the issue highlighted by this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 518, SD1.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).

**KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN**  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

**STEPHEN L. FRYE**  
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**OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 518 SD1**

A BILL RELATING TO EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Friday, February 12, 2021 at 10:05 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means. The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 518 SD1.

Sexual violence is a serious problem that can have lasting, harmful effects on victims and their families and the community. To stop sexual violence, we must take on a proactive role in prevention by educating not only the students but Department of Education Staff and parents/guardians with an evidence-based curriculum. Implementing an evidence-based prevention program in our schools will not only educate but build protective factors and resiliency in our community and future generations to come.

The County of Hawai'i Office of the Prosecuting Attorney supports the passage of Senate Bill No. 518 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

**SB-518-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 4:10:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2021 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Field	Testifying for Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports SB 518.



February 10, 2021

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 518, Thursday, February 11, 2021, 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211, by Zoom

Aloha,

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus strongly supports SB518 SD1, Relating to Education that would require the Dept of Education to establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention education program to educate public and private school students on sexual abuse prevention, provide relevant training to teachers and staff, and inform parents and guardians about important child sexual abuse topics. We note that the Senate is also considering SB1347 that would require the Dept of Education to offer training for teachers, educational officers, and school-based behavioral health specialists on sex trafficking prevention and response.

We believe that these initiatives are needed and may help to mitigate sexual abuse and sex trafficking, especially of Native Hawaiian women, girls, and members of the lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer community.

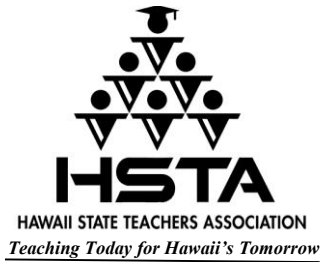
Sexual abuse and sex trafficking are serious and ongoing threats to the safety, health, and well-being of children in the State of Hawai'i. As noted in SCR 8, the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, in partnership with Arizona State University, surveyed sex trafficking victims and found that in 2018, 77% were Native Hawaiian, and then subsequently found that 64% were Native Hawaiian in 2019; and from 2017 to 2019, one out of every three child sex trafficking victims reported to the Child Welfare Services child sex trafficking hotline were Native Hawaiians, and 95% were girls.

Given these alarming statistics, we urge you to pass SB518, S.D. 1 because education helps to mitigate sexual abuse and sex trafficking.

Me kealoha pumehana

JUANITA MAHIENAENA BROWN KAWAMOTO, Chair





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President  
Osa Tui Jr.  
Vice President  
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Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 518, SD1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2021

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 518, SD1** relating to education. This bill requires the department of education to establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention education program to educate public and charter school students on sexual abuse prevention, provide relevant training to teachers and staff, and inform parents and guardians about important child sexual abuse topics. Requires the board of education to adopt policies to effectuate the program. Requires reports to the legislature. Appropriates funds

Schools are, perhaps, the main social institution outside of the family in which children have constant contact with adults and their peers. It is an optimal place, then, to identify children in danger of sexual maltreatment.

Teachers are naturally empathetic toward their students. Yet, studies have shown that up to 81 percent of teachers receive little pre-service information about abuse and neglect and only 66 percent have been given in-service (on the job) information. While programs currently exist to train teachers and staff in handling sexual trauma that often accompanies abuse and neglect, implementation of these programs is woefully inconsistent.

It is important for teachers to be informed on how to prevent sexual trauma and handle related incidents on campus. At a time when the number of sex trafficking victims being identified in our state's childcare and education systems is on the rise, sex abuse prevention lessons are especially crucial to combat student exploitation and effectively implement new protocols coordinated by the Hawaii Department of Education, Department of Human Service's Child Welfare System, and Family Courts.



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Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

Sex trafficking is differentially defined as the use of “force, fraud, or coercion” to compel someone into the commercial sex trade. Public school students—or children who should be in school, but are instead sexually enslaved—can and have been found working as prostitutes at local massage parlors, strip clubs, hostess bars, and the streets of high-risk areas, and are advertised daily on websites like Backpage.com.

**The average age of a victim’s entry into sexual exploitation is in the early to middle teenage years, with vulnerability to exploitation heightened by prior traumatic incidents, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.** Since schools are primary gathering locations for children, they are also targets for pimps, johns, and traffickers, so much so that in 2011, lawmakers added the crime of “solicitation of prostitution near schools or public parks” (HRS 712-1209) to our criminal code. As we increase departmental capacity for intervening in cases sexual abuse, so must we safeguard against the related crime of sex trafficking and provide educators with the tools needed to provide trauma-informed care in their classrooms.

To protect our keiki from sexual abuse and exploitation, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.





## SB 518, SD 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 12, 2021 · SENATE WAYS AND MEANS  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** Imua Alliance **supports SB 518, SD 1**, relating to education, which requires the Department of Education to establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention education program to educate public and charter school students on sexual abuse prevention, provide relevant training to teachers and staff, and inform parents and guardians about important child sexual abuse topics; requires the Board of Education to adopt policies to effectuate the program; and requires reports to the Legislature.

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. **During the pandemic, demand for victim services to our organization has skyrocketed by 330 percent, driven in part by a fivefold increase in direct crisis calls from potential trafficking victims.**

We are also a leading provider of anti-sexual-exploitation education, teaching over 10,000 students each year about the perils of sex trafficking and the commercial sex trade. When we provide anti-trafficking instruction in the Department of Education schools, students report that themselves or someone they know are being or at risk of being trafficking at a 2:1 ratio—two victims

for every class we teach. Teachers, in turn, frequently request information and assistance in meeting the needs of traumatized students and preventing their children from being ensnared by our state's prolific slave trade.

Each of the victims we have assisted has suffered from complex and overlapping trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, dissociation, parasuicidal behavior, and substance abuse. Trafficking-related trauma 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. Yet, sadly, many of the victims with whom we work are misidentified as so-called "voluntary prostitutes" and are subsequently arrested and incarcerated, with no financial resources from which to pay for their release.

Sex trafficking is a profoundly violent crime. At least 23 percent of trafficking victims in Hawai'i report being first exploited before turning 18, according to a recent report, with the average age of trafficked keiki's initial exposure to exploitation being 11. Based on regular outreach and monitoring, we estimate that approximately 150 high-risk sex trafficking establishments operate in Hawai'i. In a recent report conducted by the State Commission on the Status of Women, researchers from Arizona State University found that 1 in every 11 adult males living in our state buys sex online. When visitors are also counted, that number worsens to 1 in every 7 men walking the streets of our island home and a daily online sex buyer market of 18,614 for O'ahu and a total sex buyer population for the island of 74,362, including both tourists and residents.

ASU's findings are grim, but not surprising to local organizations that provide services to survivors of sex trafficking. Imua Alliance, for example, has trained volunteers to perform outreach to victims in high-risk locations, like strip clubs, massage parlors, and hostess bars. More than 80 percent of runaway youth report being approached for sexual exploitation while on the run, over 30 percent of whom are targeted within the first 48 hours of leaving home. With regard to mental health, sex trafficking victims are twice as likely to suffer from PTSD as a soldier in a war zone. Greater than 80 percent of victims report being repeatedly raped and 95 percent report being physically assaulted, numbers that are underreported, according to the United States Department of State and numerous trauma specialists, because of the inability of many victims to recognize sexual

violence. As one underage survivor told Imua Alliance prior to being rescued, “I can’t be raped. Only good girls can be raped. I’m a bad girl. If I *want* to be raped, I have to *earn* it.”

Accordingly, we support measures to advance our state’s ability to stop sexual slavery, including this measure’s effort to increase school-based prevention education and training about sexual abuse. While this measure does not specifically cover the issue of sex trafficking, we note that childhood sexual abuse is a strong indicator of and leading precursor to sexual exploitation. **Relatedly, we urge your committee to pass SB 1347, which requires the Hawai’i Department of Education to offer training for teachers, educational officers, and school-based behavioral health specialists on sex trafficking prevention and response.** Together, these two measures will significantly strengthen our state’s response to childhood sexual abuse and child sex trafficking, while enhancing our ability to prevent exploitation before it begins.

Slavery has no place in paradise. Together, we can end exploitation on our shores.

**Kris Coffield · Executive Director, Imua Alliance · (808) 679-7454 · [kris@imuaalliance.org](mailto:kris@imuaalliance.org)**



## **SENATE BILL 518, SD 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION**

FEBRUARY 12, 2021 · SENATE WAYS AND MEANS  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports SB 518, SD 1**, relating to education, which requires the Department of Education to establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention education program to educate public and charter school students on sexual abuse prevention, provide relevant training to teachers and staff, and inform parents and guardians about important child sexual abuse topics; requires the Board of Education to adopt policies to effectuate the program; and requires reports to the Legislature.

Sex trafficking is a profoundly violent crime. At least 23 percent of trafficking victims in Hawai'i report being first exploited before turning 18, according to a recent report, with the average age of trafficked keiki's initial exposure to exploitation being 11. Based on regular outreach and monitoring, Imua Alliance, a nonprofit victim service provider for survivors of sex trafficking and sexual violence, estimates that approximately 150 high-risk sex trafficking establishments operate in Hawai'i. In a recent report conducted by the State Commission on the Status of Women, researchers from Arizona State University found that 1 in every 11 adult males living in our state buys sex online. When visitors are also counted, that number worsens to 1 in every 7 men walking the streets of our island home and a daily online sex buyer market of 18,614 for O'ahu and a total sex buyer population for the island of 74,362, including both tourists and residents.

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Slavery has no place in paradise. Together, we can end exploitation on our shores.

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

**SB-518-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 8:53:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2021 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ann S Freed	Testifying for Women's Caucus, Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:



Aloha,

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair.

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB518 know as Erin's Law**

The Hawaii State Democratic Women's Caucus continues to support this important piece of legislation. Age-appropriate training for students, teachers and parents may well prevent the horrific abuse children have suffered, and continue to suffer, throughout our society. The Sex Assault Treatment Center (SATC) reports that more than half of the many thousands of survivors on Oahu that have historically received SATC's services were younger than 18 years old at the time they were assaulted.

In recent years the Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Health (DOH), and SATC worked together on the Erin's Law Task Force and gathered a group of stakeholders to review and improve the delivery of sexual violence prevention education and training in Hawaii. The effort yielded a resource hub in which teachers can learn of sexual assault prevention education programs available in the State and can reach out to the resources if interested.

Unfortunately, nothing of significance has resulted to ensure that Hawaii's children receive the knowledge and skills needed in this area, nor has anything resulted to ensure those on the front line in schools working with our children have the knowledge they need to provide appropriate intervention in this area.

Given that the current approach has vetted little results, we agree that a mandate is necessary. However, due to the difficult fiscal environment that the State and DOE are currently experiencing, we ask that the bill be amended to include a phased in approach to training. This would entail training the trainers first (District leaders, principals, Title IX Coordinators, and select staff identified as key designees at each school) on talking about/responding to the issue as reflected in Section 2 (1) (F). The need for trained, designated persons at each school is needed to ensure appropriate response and guard against further trauma when a child takes the step to disclose victimization. These individuals would in turn train the teachers. Once the institutional foundation is in place, the teachers would then teach the students and parents.

Without trained designated adults in our schools, children with the courage to report are left high and dry, vulnerable to the perpetrator who may still be in the school, suffering no consequences as there is no policy/training in place to mandate action.

In addition we are aware that bills requiring funding are unlikely to pass this session. However, if funds cannot be found for this long-overdue program we ask that you pass the bill with zero funding, keeping

it as a place holder until such time that funds become available. We defer to the Sex Assault Treatment Center on this and all proposed policies in regards to the implementation of Erin's Law.

Finally, as the bill says laws requiring that public school systems implement a program on sexual abuse prevention education for students, teachers and staff have passed in 37 states and the Territory of Guam.

Our public schools can no longer occupy the role of bystanders complicit in silence with the perpetrators'. As have previously testified, we must give teachers, parents and children, the tools to detect and prevent these acts aimed at degradation and control. We must all be upstanders. It's the least we can do. Please pass this bill out of committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Hawaii State Democratic Women's Caucus

Contact: Amy Monk or Nicole Woo: [hidemwomen@gmail.com](mailto:hidemwomen@gmail.com)



**TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)**

**DATE/LOCATION: February 12, 2021; 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211/Video Conference**

**RE: TESTIMONY FOR SB 518 SD 1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION**

**We support SB 518 SD 1 relating to education and encourage Hawaii to join 37 other states by implementing Erin’s Law, which will help to protect our children through implementation of a prevention-oriented sexual abuse program.**

**The statistics are daunting:**

- 1 in 4 girls will be the victim of child sexual abuse by their 18th birthday.
- 1 in 6 boys will be the victim of child sexual abuse by their 18th birthday.
- 1 in 5 youth receive a sexual approach or solicitation over the internet.
- The average age for first abuse is 9.6 years of age.
- Only 12% of child sexual abuse is reported to police.
- 29% of forcible rapes occur when the victim was under 11 years of age.
- 44% of sexual abuse victims are under the age of 18.
- 93% of juvenile sexual assault victims know their attacker.
- Our Children’s Justice Centers support over a 1,000 children each year. That’s about 3 new children every day (which is still a fraction of all those who are impacted by sexual abuse).

This is a matter that is often kept silent and as a result if left unaddressed (most people do not even realize that this is a significant issue or that they are a victim). In almost every case, the only witnesses to this crime are the perpetrator and the victim. Perpetrators often tell the child this is a secret and no one will believe them. Children rarely report abuse and are meant to feel that the abuse was their fault. Most victims never tell anyone until several years after the abuse, if they ever tell at all.



**We feel that implementing age appropriate child sexual abuse training immediately is critically important.** Each second we delay, a child is forever hurt and traumatized. We cannot do this to our keiki. If we do not take strong measures to address the matters that impact child sexual abuse, this issue will continue to impact our community and will only negatively impact Hawai'i's future, people, keiki, communities, culture, economy, reputation, commerce, and industries. Let's put protection in place against those who take advantage of the most vulnerable, as they are the culprits and drivers of this criminal enterprise. This is cutting into the fabric of the Aloha State and is not acceptable here in Hawai'i.

The children who endure this traumatic sexual abuse have a long list of adverse issues. These issues include:

- Poor academic performance
- Dropping out of high school
- Self mutilation
- Persistent post traumatic stress disorder
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Increased risk for abuse in subsequent relationships
- Difficulty in forming meaningful and trusting relationships
- Cognitive deficits
- Depression
- Dissociative symptoms
- Suicide

With the **full implementation of Erin's Law in place**, we can focus on prevention-oriented education that will empower victims and those who care for them. It is critical to educate students, educators and parents about how to recognize and identify child sexual abuse so that victims can be identified early and so that support can be put in place to significantly reduce the likelihood of the long-term adverse issues and costs of the above listed items.

We support the full implementation of Erin's Law because it will provide:

- Child sexual abuse prevention education for children in grades as early as pre-kindergarten through high school.
- Tools to help children speak up and seek help.
- Intentional and age-appropriate programming in schools regarding child sexual abuse.
- Training for school staff and faculty regarding child sexual abuse prevention and the handling of sexual abuse disclosures.
- Education for parents on how to recognize the signs, communicate with their children and seek help.

Erin's Law leverages the relationship between schools and the child. Schools are primary connections to our communities that also share strong relationships with our parents and keiki. It would only be natural that we take advantage of those trusting relationships to provide the services they need and further benefit from. The teachers who spend time with the students on a daily basis should be able to recognize signs of unhealthy influence and link resources to their families. Students may also feel more comfortable talking with a trusted teacher than their own caring parents due to the complicated circumstances that could exist. School personnel should no longer wonder out of suspicion or feel hopeless in attempts to help students in need. We strongly believe our time should be invested in direct action in order to provide students with the services they need, before they are further affected by the negative impacts of sexual abuse.

**37 States have passed Erin's Law, and Hawaii is one of the remaining states yet to pass this law. We would like to see Erin's Law implemented immediately and hope that you consider supporting the full implementation of the law through SB 518.**

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding **SB 518 SD 1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

**LATE**

Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of West Hawaii

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and

Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

February 11, 2021

To: Senator Ryan Yamane, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Human Services  
and Homelessness

## Testimony in Support of SB 518 SD 1 Relating to Education

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 518 SD 1 Relating to Education.

One in five girls and one in twenty boys have been victims of child sexual abuse. Three out of four adolescents who have been sexually assaulted were victimized by someone they knew well. (National Center for Victims of Crime data).

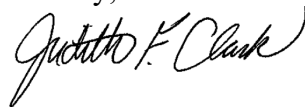
The only education I received about sexual abuse or trafficking as a child was to beware of strangers. But it was not a stranger who sexually abused me and five other girls in my fourth grade class – It was my school bus driver. Every child on the bus witnessed the abuse daily for a month or more until someone finally reported it to the school. When we were questioned about it, we all entered the Principal's office believing that we were the ones who had done something wrong.

If we had received education about sexual abuse, we would have recognized it immediately, known how to seek help, and understood that we were not to blame for what occurred. It could have been stopped after the first time with the first child.

This bill will equip students, school personnel, and parents with the skills they need to keep our children safe from sexual abuse.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director

Executive Director  
Cindy Shimomi-Saito

**ADVISORY BOARD**

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**Date:** February 12, 2021

**To:** The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

**From:** Cindy Shimomi-Saito, Executive Director  
The Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
A Program of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children

**RE:** Testimony in Support of SB 518 SD1  
Relating to Education

**Hearing:** Friday, February 12, 2021, 10:05 am

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Good morning Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) is in strong support of SB 518 SD1 with amendments.

Given the high incidence of sexual abuse perpetrated against minors, it is important that children and young people in Hawaii be taught the knowledge and skills they need to protect themselves against sexual assault and obtain help to end abuse as quickly as possible. It is critical that those who interact the most with children and young people, including parents, other guardians, educators and school staff, receive sufficient training to understand key sexual violence issues and how to respond appropriately.

Recognizing this need, the Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Health (DOH), and SATC worked together on the Erin's Law Task Force and gathered a group of stakeholders to review and improve the delivery of sexual violence prevention education and training in Hawaii. The effort yielded a resource hub in which teachers can learn of sexual assault prevention education programs available in the State and can reach out to the resources if interested.

Unfortunately, without a measure that mandates implementation, this effort does little to ensure Hawai'i's children receive the knowledge and skills needed in this area, nor does it ensure those on the front line working with our children have the knowledge they need to provide appropriate intervention in this area.

While a mandate is necessary, we are cognizant of our challenging fiscal environment. We are aware that bills requiring funding are unlikely to pass this session. However, we ask that you pass the bill with zero funding, keeping it as a place holder until such time when funds become available, and amending the bill to include a phased-in training approach.

Phased-in training would provide education on sexual assault prevention and response to sexual assault disclosures first to key administrators (District leaders, principals, Title IX Coordinators, and select staff identified as key designees at each school) as reflected in Section 2 (1) (F). It is important to start here to ensure appropriate response and to guard against further trauma when a child takes the step to disclose victimization. This not only lowers risk to children; it can also lower liability risk for entities with a duty to care for our children.

The next phase would encompass these trained key individuals/designees training the teachers on this information. Once the institutional foundation is in place, the final phase would include the teachers teaching students and parents.

The training phases need not be lengthy, taking away from educational time for core subjects. Training can be targeted and concise; a small amount of time commitment providing specific information can serve to avoid years of ongoing suffering and millions of dollars in punitive damages.

Laws requiring school systems implement a program on sexual abuse prevention education for students, teachers and staff have passed in 31 states and the Territory of Guam, and have been introduced in the legislatures of 17 others. We ask that Hawai'i ensure such protection for the children of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SB-518-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 2:55:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2021 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. When I was a student at a public school, one of my best friends was sexually abused by her relative. I did not know this until I was much older. If she had some kind of education around sexual abuse in school, she may have been more aware of what was happening to her at the time. We need to protect our keiki from the consequences of sexual abuse that carry on way into adulthood.

**SB-518-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 3:38:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2021 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kristen Koba-Burd	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

I support SB 518 SD1 requiring the department of education establish and implement a sexual abuse prevention program. Sadly, Hawai'i is one of the few remaining states yet to require this, despite the availability of federal funds. Please support our keiki by passing this important bill.

Mahalo,

Kristen Koba-Burd, BCBA, LBA

Maui

**SB-518-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 5:24:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2021 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

Adding... will this give the BOE powers to enforce as well? As we've seen recently with Acellus and other policies by the BOE not everyone follows them.



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**SHERYL HAUK**

248-935-7721  
shauk62@aim.com

Aloha Honored Committee Members and Chairman,

I am writing in support of SB518. I am a child of Hawaii and a victim of sexual abuse as a minor. I was abused for 18 years physically, sexually, and emotionally. I don not just claim this, but through Law 98 I won a large settlement from my abuser. I am also a product of Hawaii schools, from learning to read in pidgin at Pearl Harbor Elementary, taking the da bus to the Pali , via hotel street, for HBA, and graduating from Radford High School in 1980.

My answer to my abuse was run away, but as I grew older I knew I couldn't run away from my nightmares, my PTSD, or my HAWAII. I have come back and testified the last 5 years on extending the civil suits of minor victims of sexual abuse. It is important work for victims healing, but many of these victims could have been saved from the trauma that follows them through mandated education. However this must not be done just for the keikis but the adults around them.

As I began the painful journey of suing my abuser, I found there were many adults that either looked the other way or didn't know the signs or how to help. And there were many signs that I exhibited. I did poorly in school, had social challenges, and even sat in the bathroom (with unknown chronic UTIs) without any adults helping me.

As a mandated reporter in Michigan I know that many of my teacher colleagues are unaware of the signs, overwhelmed with testing, discipline, and now COVID. This bill will take care of our keikis but also Ohana. I understand budgets and money. Statistically it takes more financial resources to care for trauma victims through out their lives than to educate. It was estimated that in my 58 years and 5 chronic neurological conditions caused by PTSD, it has cost myself and the insurance companies over a million dollars. Please pass SB518 for the keikis of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

*Sheryl Hauk*

Sheryl Hauk

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Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members:

I am a survivor of childhood sex abuse and I support SB 518 SD1.

Hawaii needs to provide consistent and accurate sex abuse education and prevention to help prevent child sex abuse (CSA). CSA is confusing, creates feelings of shame, guilt and anger, and destroys your ability to trust. Your ability to connect with other people is crippled since you feel alone and that the abuse was your fault. Many people's lives have been ruined by sex abuse; destructive effects include depression, addiction, and suicide.

As a survivor, talking about the abuse is hard, especially if we don't have the words to describe the confusing and terrifying actions being committed against us. The earlier we provide education and training to students and teachers, counselors and other adults in charge, the better chance we have in preventing another unfortunate victim of sex abuse

I ask the respected committee members today to please consider SB 518 SD1 and pass "Erin's Law" that has already been implemented in 37 states. Please help Hawaii catch up with the rest of the country with education that will help protect children from predators. Thank you.

Andre Bisquera

**LATE**

February 12, 2021

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
And the members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: SB 518; Relating to Education; “Erin’s Law”

Date/Location: February 12, 2021; 10:05 A.M; Conference Room CR211 and  
Videoconference.

My name is Olivia Boucher and I support SB 518.

I urge the Senate Committee on Ways and Means to pass Erin’s Law and join the 37 other states who also believe that early education is key in the prevention of child sex assault (CSA). The issue of CSA is hard because it is silent; perpetrators are silent and survivors are urged to be silent. However, we too cannot be silent on an issue we can help to prevent. Most survivors don’t get help for years after the abuse for feelings of guilt, shame, or confusion, and this stems from a society that remains silent.

One in four girls and one in six boys will experience CSA by their 18th birthday. These are the children sitting in our classrooms, these children deserve every opportunity to learn, grow, and play without fear or silence. This bill will provide our children as well as their parents and teachers with the information, resources, and skills needed to keep children safe from CSA.

I remained silent for nearly 10 years after a CSA because I believed I had done something wrong, I believed that I had to bear that burden alone. I wish someone would have taught me what was and wasn’t acceptable and given me a safe place to speak out. If I had received this education I would have been able to recognize what was going on and seek help. This is our opportunity now to do everything we can to prevent CSA, and I fully support Erin’s Law to do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 518. Please contact me at (808)895-5083 or by email at [oliviaeb@hawaii.edu](mailto:oliviaeb@hawaii.edu) if you have any questions.

Olivia Boucher