

**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 2602, RELATING TO THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SERVICES FUND.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEES ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY AND ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2024 **TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 016 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Julie Ebato, Administrator, Crime Prevention and Justice
Assistance Division

Chairs Aquino and Rhoads and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General supports this bill that changes the administration of the Human Trafficking Victim Services Fund from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to the Department of the Attorney General.

The Department of the Attorney General is committed to combatting all forms of human trafficking and sex trafficking in Hawai'i. The Department's Special Investigation and Prosecution Division was created to fulfill this purpose, as it is a mission-driven unit that investigates and prosecutes human-trafficking and sex-trafficking crimes. As the Department comes into contact with victims of human trafficking, the human trafficking victim services fund may be used to supplement programs, grants, or purchase of service contracts that support or provide comprehensive services to victims of labor trafficking or sex trafficking.

We respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JOVANIE DOMINGO DELA CRUZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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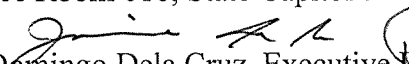
IN REPLY, REFER TO:
OCS 24.1047

February 6, 2024

To: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair,
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, and

The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair,
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology

Date: Thursday, February 8, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 016, State Capitol & Videoconference

From: 
Jovanie Domingo Dela Cruz, Executive Director
Office of Community Services – OCS

Position: Support

Re: S.B. 2602 RELATING TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

This bill would transfer the human trafficking special fund from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, where it is being administered by the Office of Community Services (OCS), to the Department of the Attorney General.

II. CURRENT LAW

The Office of Community Services has had a special fund for serving human trafficking victims since 2014. However, the sum that was collected was never sufficient to administer services for trafficking victims.

III. COMMENTS ON THE BILL

This bill would transfer the special fund to the Department of the Attorney General where any funds could be consolidated with funds from other sources, in order to provide for reparations to trafficking victims. OCS supports the measure and thanks the committee for the opportunity to testify.



SB2602

RELATING TO THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SERVICES FUND

Senate Committee on Labor & Technology

Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 8, 2024

9:30 AM

Conference Room 325

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB2602, which would move the human trafficking victim services fund from the department of labor and industrial relations to the department of the attorney general. This reallocation of resources is crucial for addressing the urgent needs of vulnerable individuals who have been subjected to exploitation and abuse.

Sex trafficking is a reprehensible crime that inflicts profound physical, psychological, and emotional harm on its victims. It is a violation of human rights that undermines the safety and well-being of our communities. Despite ongoing efforts to combat this scourge, sex trafficking remains a persistent problem in Hawai'i, with victims often facing significant barriers to accessing the support and services they desperately need. Studies have shown that Native Hawaiian women are especially vulnerable to trafficking. The majority (43%) of sex trafficking cases are kānaka maoli girls trafficked in Waikīkī, O'ahu. And, more than half of participants served through the Mana'olana Program at Child & Family Services are Native Hawaiian females who have experienced human trafficking.

By shifting funds from the Department of Labor to the Attorney General's Office, we can better equip law enforcement agencies and victim service providers with the resources necessary to effectively respond to cases of sex trafficking and provide comprehensive assistance to survivors. The Attorney General's Office plays a central role in prosecuting traffickers, coordinating victim services, and implementing prevention initiatives. By bolstering their capacity, we can enhance our collective response to this complex issue.

Moreover, reallocating funds to the Attorney General's Office can facilitate the expansion of specialized services tailored to the unique needs of sex trafficking victims. This includes trauma-informed care, legal advocacy, housing assistance, and medical support. These services are essential for empowering survivors to rebuild their lives and pursue paths to healing and recovery.



SB2602

RELATING TO THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SERVICES FUND

Senate Committee on Labor & Technology

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Furthermore, investing in initiatives aimed at combating sex trafficking aligns with our state's commitment to upholding justice, protecting human rights, and fostering a safe and supportive environment for all residents. By prioritizing the well-being of sex trafficking victims, we send a clear message that exploitation and abuse will not be tolerated in our communities.

OHA urges the committee to support the proposed allocation of funds for sex trafficking victims by approving the necessary budgetary adjustments. This critical investment will enable us to better serve survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, and work towards creating a future where all individuals can live free from exploitation and injustice.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs urges the Committees to **PASS** SB2602. Mahalo piha for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-2602

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 6:27:03 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/8/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members,

I am in support of this common sense measure, which will hopefully give survivors the assistance they need in a timely fashion,

Ann S. Freed

Mililani, HI

SB-2602

Submitted on: 2/4/2024 8:38:38 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/8/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Paltin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

TO:
The Honorable members of Labor and Technology Committee
and Honorable members of Judiciary Committee



FROM: Kira Dante, BSW
University of Hawaii at Manoa,
MSW Graduate Student

RE: SB 2602- RELATING TO THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SERVICE FUND
HEARING: February 8, 2024 at 9:30AM
POSITION: **Support** SB 2602

Aloha, my name is Kira Dante, and I am a Social Work student in the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I also am a Case Manager for Children Welfare Services on Big Island Hawaii. I am testifying in support of SB 2602 with suggestions. Section 1 suggests that human trafficking victim services fund impose a human trafficking victim services fee upon individuals convicted of certain trafficking offenses and to provide support and services to human trafficking victims. However the types of services and support is unclear and it leaves a lot of room to question how this will be accomplished.

Section 1 also states the need for a source of revenue to support and provide services to human trafficking victims who often require access to basic and life-sustaining services, including toiletries and food, and may require long-term access to stable and supportive environments, such as licensed residential treatment facilities. Although this goes more into detail on what the goal is I do question rather this is enough to support sex trafficked victims.

I would like to throw a suggestion of also providing therapy sessions, support groups, or counselors for these victims as well. These victims have experience deep trauma and need to be provided with resources to help them move forward with their lives and overcome their trauma.

I am in support of SB 2602 and hope to see it passed with additional resources and clarifications.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kira Dante, BSW
Kdante@hawaii.edu

LATE

SB-2602

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:54:59 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/8/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn M Golojuch	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Senate LBR/JDC Chairs and Committee Board Members

From: Rainbow Family 808 – Non-Profit Organization

RE: Support of Sex Trafficking Survivors – SB2602

Aloha Senate Chairs and Committee Board Members,

Rainbow Family 808 dedicates this testimony in the memory of Acacia Brown who died on the streets after years without lack of basic daily needs. She ended up on the side of the road into Kailua and was discovered in the bushes. She was another Sex Trafficking victim who was a victim of societal crimes that have gone on for decades.

We support SB2602 in hopes that this Support measure will be a turning point for the benefit of the Survivors of Sex Trafficking and prevent future victims of this crime.

I am concerned that this moving from one Department to another will lose time and effectiveness with this change. Every year of change is a loss for the survivors with another delay while a new crew set up the new program for another department.

SB2602 is not just another bill in the system because it's a life and death situation for these human beings. It is somewhat comforting knowing that there will be required reporting before the next legislative session. Time lost is counted by survivors who go unserved. A real concern for myself.

Please do what is best for the survivors and victims of Sex Trafficking at every step of these departments. Lives depend on it.

Thank you for hearing SB2602 for the benefit of the people of Hawaii.

Carolyn Martinez Golojuch, MSW

Founder/President, Rainbow Family 808

Activist, Social Worker