



## Testimony in SUPPORT of SR35 and SCR47

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 1, 2024

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) is in support of SR35 and SCR47, which urges the Department of Law Enforcement to develop and implement a U Visa certification policy.

HCIR is a statewide coalition of immigrant and migrant-led and -serving organizations—some of whom are legal providers— working to promote the full inclusion and social justice of immigrants and migrants in Hawai'i.

The implementation of a U visa policy has far-reaching effects. A U visa certification would serve as a helpful tool for law enforcement by encouraging undocumented victims of crime or witnesses to crime to step forward without the fear of deportation. Fostering this trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities would strengthen public safety and ensure perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. For victims of crimes, this certification provides hope and a remedy, incentivizing cooperation with law enforcement while offering the possibility of a more secure future.

The U visa certification also benefits attorneys and service providers by providing another possible defense strategy against removal orders. Although the process takes time and effort, it offers a potential pathway toward legal status for out-of-status residents. This strategy empowers advocates to serve their clients better and ensures that they have access to all available legal avenues for protection and relief.

Lastly, implementing a U Visa certification policy protects our immigrant community and benefits our wider community. Such a policy could contribute to public safety for all, and a possible path to legal status for some.

I urge you to support the development and implementation of the U visa certification policy.

Thank you for your support and consideration,  
Maria Rallojaj  
Policy & Communications Coordinator

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 1, 2024

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SR35 and SCR47, which urges the Department of Law Enforcement to develop and implement a U Visa certification policy.

As a child, I was a victim of a crime, and I vividly remember the fear I felt when going to the police station. Being a first-generation immigrant added more to my fear since being in any state and government building felt so daunting. Reflecting on my experience, I cannot fathom how much more daunting it would have been without any legal status at all. That is why I am in full support of this resolution.

The implementation of a U visa policy has far-reaching effects. A U visa certification would serve as a helpful tool for law enforcement by encouraging undocumented victims of crime or witnesses to crime to step forward without the fear of deportation. Fostering this trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities would strengthen public safety and ensure perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. For victims of crimes, this certification provides hope and a remedy, incentivizing cooperation with law enforcement while offering the possibility of a more secure future. The U visa certification also benefits attorneys and service providers by providing another possible defense strategy against removal orders. Although the process takes time and effort, it offers a potential pathway toward legal status for out-of-status residents. This strategy empowers advocates to serve their clients better and ensures that they have access to all available legal avenues for protection and relief. Lastly, implementing a U Visa certification policy protects our immigrant community and benefits our wider community. Such a policy could contribute to public safety for all, and a possible path to legal status for some.

I urge you to support the development and implementation of the U visa certification policy.

Thank you for your support and consideration,  
Maria Rallojaj

**LATE**

**SR-35**

Submitted on: 4/1/2024 9:25:54 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/1/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Crystal Kionia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of SR35 and SCR47, which urges the Department of Law Enforcement to develop and implement a U Visa certification policy.

The implementation of a U visa policy has far-reaching effects. A U visa certification would serve as a helpful tool for law enforcement by encouraging undocumented victims of crime or witnesses to crime to step forward without the fear of deportation. Fostering this trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities would strengthen public safety and ensure perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. For victims of crimes, this certification provides hope and a remedy, incentivizing cooperation with law enforcement while offering the possibility of a more secure future.

Implementing a U Visa certification policy protects our immigrant community and benefits our wider community. Such a policy could contribute to public safety for all, and a possible path to legal status for some.

I urge you to support the development and implementation of the U visa certification policy.

Thank you for your support and consideration,

Crystal Kionia