



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 8/HR 8

URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO INCLUDE HAWAII IN THE MISSING OR MURDERED INDIGENOUS PERSONS REGIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM.

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i State Capitol

April 1, 2025

2:00PM

Room 325

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on
Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HCR 8/HR 8 which urges the United States Department of Justice to include Hawai'i in the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Regional Outreach Program. OHA has long been concerned with the disproportionate impact of violence on Native Hawaiian women and girls, as highlighted in our work with the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women on the 2022 Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls (MMNHWG) Report.¹ This report underscored the urgent need for systemic changes, increased data collection, and enhanced federal coordination to address this crisis.

The inclusion of Hawai'i in the MMIP Regional Outreach Program would provide invaluable resources to assist in preventing, investigating, and addressing cases of missing and murdered Native Hawaiian individuals. It could also encourage collaboration with the Department of Defense, given the historic lack of military engagement on this issue. As the MMNHWG Report highlights, representatives from the U.S. military and tourism sectors were absent from the MMNHWG Task Force and not encouraged to participate in its findings, despite their significant presence in Hawai'i. Given the scale of these industries and their impact on local communities, their involvement in addressing the MMIP crisis is essential. Federal recognition of Hawai'i in this initiative would ensure that our state is not overlooked in national efforts to address the MMIP crisis and that Native Hawaiian families receive the justice and support they deserve.

Native Hawaiian women and girls continue to experience heightened vulnerability to violence due to systemic inequities, historical trauma, and socioeconomic factors.

¹ Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Commission on the Status of Women, Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls Task Force Report (2022), <https://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/MMNHWG-Report-Web.pdf>

Studies show Native Hawaiian women and girls are disproportionately affected by trafficking and violence, making it imperative that Hawai'i be included in federal programs aimed at addressing these issues. Therefore, OHA urges this Committee to **PASS HR8/HCR8** and advance justice for Native Hawaiian communities. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.



March 31, 2025

To: Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 **Time:** 2:00 pm

Place: Via videoconference and Conference Room 325

From: Health Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of HCR8 / HR8 - Include Hawai'i in the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Regional Outreach Program

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i submits this testimony in strong support of **HCR8 / HR8**, which urges the United States Department of Justice to include Hawai'i in the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Regional Outreach Program.

The Health Committee recognizes that the MMIP crisis has devastating consequences not only for affected families and communities but also for public health and well-being as a whole. This issue intersects with our mission to address systemic inequities, promote equity in justice and healthcare, and advance the holistic health of all individuals. Including Hawai'i in the MMIP Regional Outreach Program is an essential step in fostering healing and justice for Native Hawaiian families, who have endured significant harm and loss from this crisis.

Health Committee-Related Supporting Arguments:

- **Impact on Mental and Emotional Health:**
 - Families of missing or murdered Indigenous persons experience profound trauma and grief, which can lead to long-term mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

- The MMIP Regional Outreach Program can provide vital resources to support affected families with access to counseling, mental health services, and community support networks.
- **Public Health Implications of Violence:**
 - Violence against Indigenous persons—including Native Hawaiians—exacerbates health disparities and undermines efforts to create safe, thriving communities. Addressing MMIP cases as a priority would contribute to broader public health goals by reducing violence-related trauma and its cascading effects on families and communities.
- **Advancing Health Equity:**
 - Indigenous populations often face barriers to accessing justice, healthcare, and support services. Participation in the MMIP Regional Outreach Program would help eliminate these barriers, ensuring that Native Hawaiians have equitable access to resources that promote justice and healing.
- **Community Healing and Resilience:**
 - By addressing MMIP cases comprehensively and collaboratively, Hawai‘i can strengthen community resilience and foster trust in the justice system. This aligns with the Health Committee’s commitment to advocating for policies that enhance community well-being and support holistic health.

Additional Supporting Arguments:

- **Addressing the Disproportionate Impact on Native Hawaiians:**
 - Native Hawaiians face unique vulnerabilities that contribute to higher rates of violence, disappearance, and murder compared to other populations.
 - Including Hawai‘i in the MMIP Regional Outreach Program would provide targeted resources and support to address these systemic inequities.
- **Strengthening Law Enforcement Collaboration:**
 - The program would enable greater collaboration between state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies to develop effective strategies for preventing and addressing MMIP cases.
 - Enhanced coordination would improve investigative processes, case resolution rates, and access to justice for affected families.
- **Providing Critical Resources for Families:**

- Families of missing or murdered Indigenous persons often face barriers to accessing legal, financial, and mental health resources.
- Participation in the MMIP Regional Outreach Program would help ensure that families in Hawai‘i receive comprehensive support during these crises.
- **Promoting Awareness and Prevention:**
 - By including Hawai‘i, the MMIP Regional Outreach Program could facilitate community outreach efforts to raise awareness about the issue and educate communities about prevention strategies.
 - This would empower local communities to play an active role in combating the MMIP crisis.

Conclusion:

The Health Committee strongly supports the passage of **HCR8 / HR8**, recognizing the MMIP crisis as a matter of justice, public health, and equity. Including Hawai‘i in the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Regional Outreach Program will help address the needs of affected Native Hawaiian families, mitigate the long-term health impacts of this issue, and provide critical resources for healing and justice.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this important resolution.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Burdick Chair, Health Committee

Melodie Aduja Vice Chair, Health Committee

HR-8

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 1:39:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Llasmin Chaine	Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of these resolutions (HCR8/HR8). The state would benefit from dedicated federal resources to address local missing or murdered indigenous persons.

HR-8

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 2:02:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hope you support this resolution

HR-8

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 2:47:09 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Makana Paris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HR8/HCR8

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of the resolution requesting the United States Department of Justice to include Hawaii in the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Regional Outreach program. Hawaii has the eighth highest rate of missing persons per capita in the nation, with a disproportionate number of these individuals being indigenous, especially our Native Hawaiian 'ohana.

The federal government has recognized the need to address this crisis, and the establishment of the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Regional Outreach program is a crucial step towards providing support and resources to states. However, Hawaii's exclusion from this program is a glaring omission.

I urge you to support this resolution and advocate for Hawaii's inclusion in the program. This would help move our state closer to securing the necessary resources to prevent, solve, and prosecute missing or murdered indigenous person cases, and promote a more just and equitable society for all.

Mahalo.

Me ke aloha,

Anthony Makana Paris

Kapolei, Hawaii

HR-8

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 2:02:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nate Bizzack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

the military needs to take accountability for polluting these waters ! i support this bill!