



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2025 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 10:01 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

by
Dyan M. Medeiros
Senior Judge, Family Court of the First Circuit

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Resolution No.: House Concurrent Resolution No. 55, H.D. 1.

Purpose: Requesting the Judiciary to Convene a Working Group to Study How Effective Existing Laws on Domestic Violence Temporary Restraining Orders, Protective Orders, and Harassment by Stalking Are In Preventing Continued Abuse and Harassment.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary appreciates the amendments made to House Concurrent Resolution No. 55, H.D. 1. Moving forward, the Judiciary respectfully requests the authority to invite other individuals or entities not listed in HCR55, HD1 with relevant knowledge or experience to be members of the working group.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this resolution.

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**Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawaii to the Senate Committee on Judiciary**

April 15, 2025

HCR 55, HD1 (HSCR 1849):

REQUESTING THE JUDICIARY TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY HOW EFFECTIVE EXISTING LAWS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDERS, PROTECTIVE ORDERS, AND HARASSMENT BY STALKING ARE IN PREVENTING CONTINUED ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender **submits comments on HCR 55, HD1:**

The Office of the Public represents defendant charged in criminal courts with offenses relating to domestic violence, including violations of temporary restraining orders, orders for protection, abuse, harassment and harassment by stalking. We represent the majority of defendants appearing in criminal court for these offenses.

We respectfully request that the working group include the following additional members or their designees:

1. The Office of the Public Defender
2. The Hawaii Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (HACDL)

We submit that it is essential for any working group studying domestic violence and the efficacy of existing laws in preventing continued abuse and harassment to include the Office of the Public Defender and a member of HACDL. We ask for inclusion on behalf of our Office and on behalf of the private defense bar. This will provide a more balanced discussion and valuable input on how defendants are processed through the criminal courts, what is working, and what is not working to help prevent continued abuse and harassment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



HAWAII STATE COMMISSION

ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

April 11, 2025

Position: Support of HCR 55 HD1

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

From: Llasmin Chaîne, LSW, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support of HCR 55 HD1, Requesting the Judiciary to convene a Working Group to Study the effectiveness of Existing Laws on Domestic Violence Temporary Restraining Orders, Protective Orders, and Harassment by Stalking are in Preventing Continued Abuse and Harassment

Hearing: Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 10:01 a.m.
Conference Room 225, State Capitol

On behalf of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to thank the Committee for hearing this important resolution. I would like to express my strong support of HCR 55 HD1, with comments, as the bulk of domestic violence and stalking survivors are female, and the state would benefit from an analysis as to the efficacy of our current protections and recommendations for improvements to the law to dissuade continued abuse and harassment. I defer to the Judiciary and the Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence as to the implementation recommendations and specifics of this resolution.

Creating protective environments is one of CDC's recommended strategies for the disruption and prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV). Such approaches address community-level risk factors by changing, enacting, or enforcing laws, regulations or social incentives (or consequences) for behavior, which have the potential for population-level impact on IPV outcomes, often at low cost for implementation. "These community-level approaches may encourage higher rates of disclosure of IPV, increase resources and support leveraged on behalf of IPV survivors, and promote social norms that are intolerant of IPV within the community, potentially increasing the likelihood that community members will intervene when they witness IPV."¹

I respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HCR 55 HD1** and **offer a non-substantive amendment suggestion to delete repetitive text within the resolution on page 3 lines 28-32**, as the same language is already present on page 3 lines 19-23. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

¹ Intimate Partner Violence Prevention: Resource for Action: A Compilation of the Best Available Evidence. CDC. <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/158966>

HCR-55-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 12:33:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/15/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melody Rolnick	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Please refer to my zoom testimony in support of this bill.

Thank you very kindly,

Melody Rolnick

HCR-55-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 3:29:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/15/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalae Correa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HCR55 HD1, which calls for a Judiciary-led working group to study the effectiveness of current laws on domestic violence restraining orders and harassment by stalking.

While TROs and protective orders are essential tools for victim safety, concerns remain about enforcement and their ability to prevent ongoing abuse. This resolution rightly brings together law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and survivors to examine these issues closely and recommend improvements.

A comprehensive review can lead to stronger protections, better enforcement, and safer outcomes for victims across the state.

Mahalo for considering this important measure.

HCR-55-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 5:43:41 PM

Testimony for JDC on 4/15/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

LATE

HCR-55-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 8:53:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 4/15/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allen Cardines, Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Support of HCR55 HD1

Domestic violence and stalking are serious issues that affect many individuals, families, and communities across our island home.

I believe the results from such a study could assist all stakeholders in crafting better, more effective responses to domestic violence and stalking cases.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.