

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO HO'OPI'I
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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**THE HONORABLE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawai'i**

January 30, 2025

RE: S.B. 287; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu (“Department”) submits the following testimony in **strong support** of S.B. 287. This bill is part of the Department's 2025 legislative package, and we thank you for hearing it.

The purpose of S.B. 287 is to provide additional funding in the amount of **\$736,785**, for fiscal year 2025-2026, to maintain the current level of service for the Department’s Victim Witness Kokua Services (“VWKS”) Unit. This is the remaining balance between actual costs, and costs covered by federal funds, funding from the Department of the Attorney General, and the funding from the City and County of Honolulu. VWKS advocates assist in guiding victims, witnesses and/or surviving family members through the criminal justice system—before, during, & after criminal prosecution of a case—and are specifically trained & qualified to do so.

Historically, the Legislature has supported the Victim Witness Assistance Program since 1983. In 1986, the Legislature enacted HRS §28-111, “whose purpose shall be to provide information, assistance, and support services to the victims of and witnesses to crimes committed in the State.”. While the statute established this program to be administrated by the Department of the Attorney General, direct services are provided by the office/department of the prosecuting attorney in each county. The counties continuously provide the most up-to-date information, assistance, funding, and support services to the crime victims and witnesses in their respective counties. Adequate funding is necessary for our Department and the neighbor island counties to be able to continue these vital services.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu **strongly supports** the passage of S.B. 287. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

COUNTY COUNCIL

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KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
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January 27, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
SB 286, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR CAREER CRIMINAL
PROSECUTION,
SB 287, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE VICTIM WITNESS
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,
AND
SB 289, RELATING TO ETHICS ADMINISTRATIVE FINES
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Thursday, January 30, 2025
9:15 a.m.
Conference Room 016
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 286, Making an Appropriation for Career Criminal Prosecution, SB 287, Making an Appropriation for the Victim Witness Assistance Program, and SB 289, Relating to Ethics Administrative Fines. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of SB 286, SB 287, and SB 289, which would greatly affect the Kaua'i community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 286, SB 287, and SB 289. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

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LATE

SB-287

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:05:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 1/30/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stand in SUPPORT