



HAWAII STATE COMMISSION

ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

February 4, 2025

Testimony in Support of SB1660, Relating to Employment

To: Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology

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

Re: Testimony in Support of SB1660, Relating to Employment

Hearing: Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 3:10 p.m.
Conference Room 224, 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 bill. I would like to express my support of SB1660, which would require employers in the hospitality industry to implement anti-harassment measures, provide training, and equip certain workers with panic buttons, and I appreciate the opportunity to offer comments.

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: What Are the Numbers?

Workplace sexual harassment and assault is widespread in the United States.



38% of women have experienced sexual harassment at the workplace.¹

Workplace sexual harassment and assault have detrimental effects on the well-being of employees.

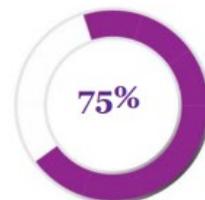
The most common diagnoses for victims of workplace sexual harassment are depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.⁴

Women who have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace are **6.5 times more likely** to leave their jobs than those who have not,⁵ often taking new work at a lower wage.⁶



Only **1 in 10** people who experience sexual harassment or assault in the workplace ever report.²

Workplace sexual harassment and assault not only harms survivors, it inflicts high costs on employers. Sexual harassment and assault cases are extremely costly for companies. In 2017, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) obtained \$46.3 million in monetary benefits from companies on behalf of survivors of sexual harassment.⁷



75% of employees who speak out about harassment or assault face retaliation from their employers.

Given the isolated working conditions of hospitality employees, they are at an increased risk of experiencing sexual harassment, exposure, unwanted touching and/or sexual assault. Providing annual training and a means to immediately summon security to the location of these vulnerable employees will increase hospitality workers' safety and improve their wellbeing.

I offer the following amendments to this bill for your consideration.:

- Proposed bill amendment to employer responsibilities to provide mandatory training on page 3, lines 10-15:

(2) Provide mandatory annual training for all hospitality workers, including managers and supervisors, on:

(A) Recognizing, preventing, and addressing harassment in the workplace; ~~[and]~~

(B) Sexual assault victim rights, local sexual violence survivor services, statewide providers and their corresponding 24/7 sex assault hotline phone numbers; and

~~(B)~~ **(C) The proper use and limitations of the panic button provided under paragraph (3);**

- Proposed bill amendment to employer responsibilities to provide hospitality workers with resources on page 4, lines 6-11:

(4) Provide hospitality workers with a list of resources **in English, Ilocano, Tagalog, Japanese, and any language that is the first language spoken by at least five percent of the employer's workforce**, including contact information for:

(A) The department of labor and industrial relations;

(B) The equal employment opportunity commission; and

(C) Local advocacy groups specializing in harassment prevention, **statewide sexual assault survivor service providers and their corresponding 24/7 sex assault hotline phone numbers**, and victim support; and

- Proposed bill amendment to employer responsibilities to display a notice of rights and protections on page 4, lines 12-15:

(5) Display, in a conspicuous and accessible location, a notice summarizing the rights and protections provided under this chapter and providing information about how to report a violation **and sexual assault in English, Ilocano, Tagalog, Japanese, and any language that is the first language spoken by at least five percent of the employer's workforce.**

I respectfully urge this Committee to pass SB1660 and thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Llasmin Chaine, LSW

Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

¹ Gonzales Fitzpatrick, Maya. (2020) Panic Buttons: Tackling Sexual Harassment & Assault in California's Hospitality Industry. Brown University – Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs. <https://watson.brown.edu/public-policy/files/pp/imce/events/2020/GonzalesFitzpatrick%2C%20Capstone.pdf>