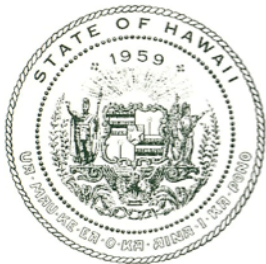


HAWAII
STATE
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF
WOMEN



Chair
LESLIE WILKINS

COMMISSIONERS:

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February 1, 2017

To: Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental
and Military Affairs

From: Cathy Betts, Executive Director
Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support, SB 517, Relating to Domestic Violence

The Commission supports SB 517, which would require any state or county agency that employs personnel whose job duties require or may require intervention in a domestic abuse situation to have a minimum of 15 hours of training regarding domestic abuse intervention.

Comprehensive, ongoing, culturally competent and trauma informed training regarding domestic violence is crucial for anyone working with victims, survivors, or family members involved in domestic violence. When adequate training is not received, systemic and institutionalized ramifications are felt—including victims being forced to file for a restraining order in order to retain custody of children (identified as not a best practice, but still occurring), limited english proficiency (LEP) victims not being offered interpreter services because a responding officer doesn't identify the person as LEP, or children being removed from a protective parent because a first responder identifies the victim as the abuser. These are all egregious results that stem from a lack of training about the complexities and nuances of domestic violence. While agencies may feel that this request is cumbersome and unnecessary, all anecdotal and statistical evidence reflects the high need for specialized training for any first responder. When a helpful and unbiased first responder interacts with a victim of domestic violence, the first responder has an immediate impact—one that can mean the difference between life and death.

In recent years, the Honolulu Police Department has increased their training regarding domestic violence. The Commission strongly believes that other state and county agencies would benefit from this increased training. Training staff for 15 hours is a small amount of time to commit in order to ensure all victims are treated with dignity and respect. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Justin F. Kollar
Prosecuting Attorney

Jennifer S. Winn
First Deputy



Rebecca Vogt Like
Second Deputy

Diana Gausepohl-White
Victim/Witness Program Director

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 517

A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 2, 2017, 1:15 P.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Honorable Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Kaua'i submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 517.

This measure requires any state or county agency to provide domestic abuse intervention training to their personnel whose job duties require or may require intervention in a domestic abuse situation.

Over the years, many first responders have indicated that one of the most important needs they have is the ability to have proper training when it comes to working with victims of domestic violence.

During the 2015-2016 Fiscal year, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Kaua'i processed 354 domestic violence cases. Having proper training will enable, equip and enhance Hawaii's first responders with the necessary tools and skills crucial to effectively deal with complex situations of domestic violence. Proper training would assist first responders in providing that crucial first step in the families of domestic violence to breaking the cycle of abuse.

The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Kaua'i supports the passage of Senate Bill No. 517. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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**THE HONORABLE CLARENCE NISHIHARA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2017
State of Hawai`i**

February 2, 2017

RE: S.B. 517; RELATING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu submits the following testimony in opposition to S.B. 517.

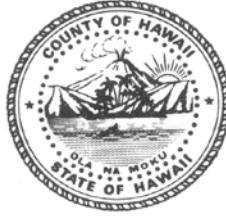
The purpose of S.B. 517 is to ensure that first responders are able to recognize the various signs associated with domestic violence, and are properly equipped with the right tools to handle the myriad of domestic violence situations that will likely encounter in the course of their duties. Our Department agrees that domestic violence is an epidemic that does not discriminate between age, economic status, gender or race and our goals and objectives are in line with the intent of S.B. 517. However, this bill would mandate a minimum of fifteen (15) hours of training regarding domestic abuse intervention without the proper allocation of funds to facilitate such training, thereby making it nearly impossible to implement.

Although S.B. 517 has good intentions, requiring mandatory training creates a financial burden for large agencies to comply, without proper funding. In addition, the lack of specificity regarding when a job duty "requires or may require" intervention may lead to a wide range of interpretations by various agencies, which could lead to unintended non-compliance.

For all of the reasons stated above, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu opposes S.B. 517. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 517

A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 2, 2017, 1:15 P.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Honorable Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 517.

This measure requires any state or county agency to provide domestic abuse intervention training to their personnel whose job duties require or may require intervention in a domestic abuse situation.

During the 2016 Family Violence Summit in Hilo, Hawai'i, first responders stated that one of the most important needs they have is the ability to have proper training when it comes to working with victims of domestic violence.

During the 2015-2016 Fiscal year, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i serviced 1,452 victims of domestic violence. Having proper training will enable, equip and enhance Hawaii's first responders with the necessary tools and skills crucial to effectively deal with complex situations of domestic violence. Proper training would assist first responders in providing that crucial first step in the families of domestic violence to breaking the cycle of abuse.

The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i supports the passage of Senate Bill No. 517. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



February 1, 2017

To: Hawaii State Senate Committee on Public Safety,
Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs, the Senate Committee on
Judiciary and Labor, and the Senate Committee on Ways and
Means
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 2, 2017 (1:15 p.m.)
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 229
Re: Testimony of American Association of University Women –
Hawaii in **support of S.B. 517**, relating to domestic violence

Dear Senator Clarence K. Nishihara (Chair), Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran (Chair),
Senator Jill N. Tokuda (Chair), Senator Glen Wakai (Vice-Chair), Senator Karl Rhoads
(Vice Chair), Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz (Vice Chair), and Members of the
Committees,

I am grateful for this opportunity to testify in **strong support of S.B. 517**,
requiring a minimum of fifteen hours of domestic violence education for first responders,
and judges.

My testimony is on behalf of the approximately 400 members of the American
Association of University Women (AAUW) in Hawaii, who list gender-based violence as
an important current concern. My testimony is informed by many years of work in the
field of domestic violence, research conducted with survivors of intimate partner
violence, and experience on a Judicial Committee in New Zealand. In addition, when I
lived in New Zealand, I managed a 24-hour, 7-days/week domestic violence hotline, and
I also trained hotline Advocates to respond skillfully and empathetically to survivors of
violence. I provided extensive education to Advocates for Women, and also worked with
police, courts, and other service agencies on behalf of survivors.

Based on these experiences, I argue that passage of S.B. 517 is vitally important,
with great potential to improve assistance offered to survivors of violence in Hawaii. It is
essential to mandate education for “personnel,” which “includes but is not limited to law
enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel” (S.B. 517,
lines 19-20). I have taught at the University of Hawaii – Manoa for seven years, and have
heard many horror stories from students about misunderstanding and lack of assistance
from law enforcement. This is inexcusable, and this situation will only change with
education combined with police instruction from higher levels to deal appropriately with
survivors of domestic violence.

In conclusion, passage of S.B. 517 is an important step in improving service
provision from state and county employees for survivors of domestic violence.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely

Susan J. Wurtzburg, Ph.D.
Policy Chair



TO: Chair Nishihara
Vice Chair Wakai
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FR: Nanci Kreidman, M.A.

RE: SB 517 Support

Aloha! Thank you for hearing this Measure today. There have been many discussions and a great deal of attention focused on our community's response to domestic violence. As a participant on a variety of workgroups, ad hoc bodies, governor and attorney general appointed committees, the discussion inevitably focuses on training.

Effective and appropriate intervention in domestic violence is necessary to create safety, secure accountability, and pave the way for obtaining support. In order for this to be achieved it is essential that a sufficient understanding of the complexity of domestic violence and suitable responses are standard practice by intervenors, system wide. Currently, the various public agencies provide different kinds of training and make different investments in the time devoted to training. It is safe to say, that the complexity of this issue cannot be well understood in just a few hours. We must collectively commit to solid training. This will save lives, and bring immeasurable support to the families suffering the harm of abuse.

We are in absolute support of this Bill to require a mandatory minimum amount of training. At the Domestic Violence Action Center, all new staff participates in 4 days of training, and annually we expect staff to attend no fewer than 4 trainings. Just as it is crucial for our staff, who is community leaders in serving families, it is crucial for our system allies to make a similar commitment.

Thank you for allowing us to share our perspective. We shall look forward to favorable action on SB 517.





Hawaii Women's Coalition

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: Thursday, February 2, 2017
TIME: 1:15 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 229

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB517 relating to domestic violence training

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai and members,

The Coalition is in strong support of this bill, which would require any state, or county agency that employs personnel whose job duties require or may require intervention in a domestic abuse situation to have a minimum of 15 hours of training regarding domestic abuse intervention.

In recent years we have been regaled with too many stories from victims of domestic violence of neglect and further abuse from public officials whose job it is to protect them. These stories have come directly from victims, but have also been reported in the press.

In legislative hearings it was disclosed that, in HPD in particular, training in how to handle cases of domestic violence was minimal and inadequate. Although the Department has taken steps to get more training, we feel that given the severity and prevalence of this blight upon our State, 15 hours for those state and county officials who may be in a position to help, is a small ask. This is the ounce of prevention that will go a long way in stopping the cycle of domestic violence, saving lives and taxpayer dollars in the process.

Please pass this important bill out of committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Ann S. Freed Co-Chair, Hawai'i Women's Coalition
Contact: annsreed@gmail.com Phone: 808-623-5676

1/31/17

To: Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair, Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair, and members of the House Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
From: Nicole Trost

Re: Testimony in support of SB 517, Relating to Domestic Violence: Thursday, February 2, 2017, 1:15pm, Conference Room 229

Thank you for hearing SB 517, which authorizes the intervention and training for providers to advocate and protect victims of domestic violence. I strongly support this measure because it will help bring awareness, educate, and immediate intervention for those who may work or witness domestic violence. This act is to increase the safety, awareness, and tools to advocate for those who are victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence does not only impact an individual but those vulnerable such as children. As a social worker who conducts training for foster families protecting and caring for our keiki receiving future training would be able to support, advocate in order provide a much more safe environment of empathy, understanding, and support for our children to heal.

The language in this measure will provide the necessary safeguards to ensure that those in the profession would be trained and equipped to identify, support, and advocate for a domestic violence victim.

Passing SB 517 will give provide insight, skills, and tools for those who have been victims of domestic violence. Please help us improve individuals, family, children, and our community in Hawaii by passing SB 517.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony