

House Committee on Human Services
Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
Representative Tom Brower, Vice Chair
HB 873 Relating to Domestic Violence
Hearing date: February 5, 2009

Aloha,

My name is Ed K. Flores. I am the Director of the Hawaii Family Law Clinic dba ALA KUOLA, a non-profit organization that assists victims of domestic abuse to obtain temporary restraining orders in the Family Court. We have been in existence since 2007.

I strongly support passage of H.B. No. 873 that would require law enforcement officers to report to the Department of Human Services (DHS) when a child witnesses an incident of domestic abuse. I further support the requirement that DHS collaborate with other agencies and organizations to establish procedures and protocols. It is well documented that a child witnessing abuse may have detrimental effects, both psychological and developmental.

In assisting several hundred individuals and families with obtaining restraining orders against their abusers, we have found that many of those who file petitions for a TRO indicate that a child or children in the household either witnessed the abuse, heard the abuse occurring, or are present when the abuse occurs. Persons who seek the services of Ala Kuola complete a questionnaire and have indicated that children have witnessed past abusive behavior.

The passage of this bill is another step to ensure the safety of our keiki.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully submitted

Ed K. Flores

I, Matthew Simmons UH School of Social Work, support H. B. 873.

Committee on Human Services

Thursday February 5, 2009 @ 8:15 am

It is my belief that hb873 has the propensity to help build a more comprehensive solution to the domestic violence situation that currently plagues our state. Children, while sometimes the quiet victims, can be valuable assets in the fight to abolish domestic violence, by empowering them to voice their experiences to proper authorities, and by further follow through investigation on behalf of the Department of Human Services. It is my hope that this is a continuation of comprehensive legislation that will address the issue of domestic violence in our state contained by the semblance of collaboration with local, state, private, and federal authorities.

brower2-Jenna

From: [REDACTED]@googlemail.com on behalf of Emily C. Smith [REDACTED]@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2009 10:14 PM
To: HUS testimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 873

Categories: Red Category

Emily Smith

Graduate Student

University of Hawaii at Manoa, School of Social Work

Testimony for:

House of Representatives Committee on Human Services

Thursday, February 05, 2009 at 8:15 a.m.

HB 873

9 committee members

Testimony:

I am testifying in favor of House Bill 873.

My testimony is based around the following concepts:

1. We as adults must protect the children of our community from exposure to violence.
2. Children can use all the help they can get to stop the cycle of violence that begins during their most formative years.
3. Government agencies can benefit from additional information when making tough decisions. In this case DHS workers can benefit from additional information regarding previous domestic incidents when working with children in possibly violent homes.
4. Finding funding and manpower to handle additional mandates is always an issue, but that should not keep us from doing what is necessary and right in protecting our keiki.