

**VIA EMAIL: [hthtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:hthtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)**

Committee: Committee on Health  
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 3:00 p.m.  
Place: State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
Re: *Testimony of Kit Grant in Support of S.B. 604; Relating to Emergency Contraceptives for Sexual Assault Survivors*

Dear Chair Ige and Members of the Committee on Health:

I write in support of S.B. 604, which seeks to require hospitals to provide information about emergency contraception to women who are sexually assaulted and to provide emergency contraception when requested.

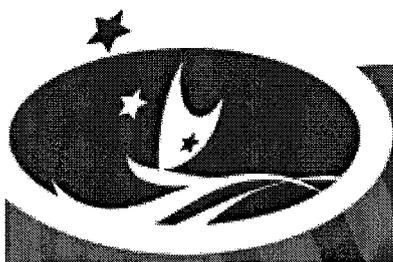
Hawaii should not turn its back on sexual assault survivors and force them to face the added burden of possibly becoming pregnant as a result of rape. The denial of access to contraceptive services for sexual assault survivors has severe repercussions for a woman's right to live her life and her ability to participate equally in society. Simply put, reproductive health care is essential to a woman's opportunity – the opportunity to obtain a good education, to improve her economic circumstances, to participate in public life, to define her family, to decide what makes a meaningful life, and to live that life. Hawaii should not turn its back on sexual assault survivors.

- This bill is critically important for sexual assault victims on the neighbor islands
- Emergency Contraception is only effective if taken within a few hours of a sexual assault
- Major medical groups recommend that EC be offered to women to prevent pregnancy after a sexual assault.
- The list of states mandating that EC be available in the Emergency Room is growing
- Emergency care facilities should offer EC to a woman during her initial exam following a sexual assault.
- An institution's religious objections to EC must not imperil a woman's access to timely and comprehensive treatment.
- EC prevents pregnancy. It does not induce an abortion.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your attention to this matter. We hope that you will do your utmost to improve the quality of care for survivors of sexual assault in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Kit Grant  
1111 Wilder Ave. #14b  
Honolulu, HI 96822



WOMEN'S CAUCUS

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus 1050 Ala Moana Blvd #D-26, Honolulu, HI 96814 Email: [hidemocraticwomenscaucus@yahoo.com](mailto:hidemocraticwomenscaucus@yahoo.com)

February 11, 2009

To: Senator David Ige, Chair  
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair and  
Members of the Committee on Health

From: Jeanne Ohta, Chair of Legislative Committee, Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus

Re: SB 604 RELATING TO EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVES FOR SEX ASSAULT SURVIVORS  
(February 11, 2009, 3:00 p.m., Room 016)

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Thank you for hearing this bill and for allowing me to present testimony today, in support of SB 424 which requires hospitals to provide information about emergency contraception (EC) to women who are sexually assaulted and to provide EC when requested.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawai'i's women and girls. It is because of this mission, the Women's Caucus strongly supports this measure which provides for an accepted standard of medical care for victims of sexual assault.

We call your attention to the American Medical Association's Guidelines for treating sexual assault victims which states that victims should be informed about and provided EC.<sup>1</sup> The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology also supports this standard of care.<sup>2</sup> We simply cannot allow care that does not meet established standards. In the aftermath of rape, victims find themselves dealing with a host of reproductive and sexual health issues, including pregnancy. Providing information about EC and administering EC within the recommended 72 hours can prevent pregnancy. Women who have been raped have a particularly compelling need for quick and easy access to EC.

We ask this committee to ensure that sex assault victims are provided with this standard of care no matter where treatment is sought; and that hospitals are not excused from their duty to provide these accepted standards of care. All hospitals should provide emergency care to sexual assault survivors with written and oral information about EC that is medically and factually accurate. In addition, all sexual assault survivors should be provided an option to receive emergency contraception at the hospital.

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<sup>1</sup> American Medical Association, Strategies for the Treatment and Prevention of Sexual Assault (1995).

<sup>2</sup> American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Violence Against Women: Acute Care of Sexual Assault Victims (2004), at [http://www.acog.org/departments/dept\\_notice.cfm?recno=17&bulletin=1625](http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_notice.cfm?recno=17&bulletin=1625)

There is overwhelming support for offering EC to women following a sexual assault. One survey found that 78 percent of women feel their hospital should provide EC for anyone who has been raped (Catholics for Free Choice, 2000). A survey of registered voters conducted for Planned Parenthood Action Fund in June 2001 confirmed these findings: three of four voters favored requiring all hospitals to make EC available to women who have been raped.

Providing EC to survivors of sexual assault is good medical practice, regardless of a hospital's religious affiliation. The women of Hawaii deserve a standard of medical care that is NOT dictated by religious beliefs. Please do not allow religious interference in the medical care of sexual assault survivors.

We strongly urge this committee to pass SB 604 and show that this legislature understands and supports the needs of sexual assault victims. Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony in support of this measure.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Senator David Ige, Chair  
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair

Senate Bill 604

Friday, February 13, 2009, 2:40 p.m.  
Conference Room 16, State Capitol

My name is Dana Abdinoor, I am a Graduate Student at the University of Hawai'i Myron B. Thomson School of Social work. I am providing written testimony on the measure Relating to Emergency Contraceptives for Sexual Assault Survivors (SB 604). I strongly SUPPORT this bill in the effort to provide information pertaining to emergency contraception for victims of sexual assault and to provide emergency contraception when requested

Hospitals that refuse to provide emergency contraception abandon women in their greatest time of need. Failure to provide both medical and emotional support can have dire consequences. Opposition to this bill is founded on the mischaracterization of emergency contraception as a form of abortion. As a medically accepted and supported form of birth control, emergency contraception *prevents* pregnancy and has the potential to diminish the number of abortions performed each year to terminate pregnancies resulting from sexual assault.

Please support Senate Bill 604. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Dana Abdinoor