



Patsy T. Mink PAC

Raising money to elect Progressive Pro-Choice Democratic Women

P.O. Box 25002 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

www.patsytminkpac.org

March 29, 2011

Rep. Gil S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii

Re: Testimony in Support of House Resolution 9
March 31, 2011, 2 p.m.

Dear Representatives Keith-Agaran and Rhoads,

The Patsy T. Mink Political Action Committee (PTMPAC) appreciates your consideration of House Resolution 9—"Recognizing the need to reach out to Hawaii women and engage them in the political process." We are very pleased to submit the attached testimony in strong support of it.

Amy Monk, PTMPAC's Treasurer, will be attending the hearing and will be prepared to present our testimony.

Aloha,



Jantine Nielsen
Chair

Attachment

Hawaii campaign spending laws limit your donations to \$1000.00 per election (i.e. \$1000 primary, \$1000 general) and a total of \$2000 per election cycle. All cumulative donations of more than \$100.00 must and will be reported to the Campaign Spending Commission. Contributions are not deductible as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes. The Patsy T. Mink Political Action Committee is a non-candidate committee established under Hawaii laws governing political activities of organizations and regulated by the State Campaign Spending Commission; it is not affiliated with the Patsy Takemoto Mink Foundation or the Mink Family.



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March 29, 2011

To: Rep. Gil S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Amy Monk, Treasurer
Patsy T. Mink Political Action Committee

Re: HR 9 Relating to Survey of Women's Political Opinions
Hearing: Thursday, March 31, 2011, 2:00 pm
Conference Room 325

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Good afternoon. My name is Amy Monk and I thank you for hearing this bill and for allowing me to present testimony today, in strong support of HR 9—
“Recognizing the need to reach out to Hawaii women and engage them in the political process.”

First of all, I want to thank Reps. Linda Ichiyama and Marilyn Lee, members of the Women's Legislative Caucus and all of you who have co-sponsored and support this resolution.

As many of you know, the Patsy T. Mink PAC was founded in 2003 by former Lt. Governor and now Congresswoman Mazie Hirono. Our mission is to improve the lives of Hawaii's women and their families by supporting and electing pro-choice Democratic women with demonstrated commitment to the values of Patsy T. Mink. We are patterned after Emily's List, who helped Congresswoman Mink who, incidentally, was the first woman of color and first Asian Pacific American woman elected to Congress.

In the four election cycles since we were founded, we are pleased to report that we have helped elect and re-elect 13 women to the State Legislature, including Colleen Hanabusa who was elected to Congress, Maile Shimabukuro who's been appointed to the Senate from the House, and Hermina Morita, the new chair of the Public Utilities Commission.

Last year the Patsy T. Mink PAC sought to do more to address the needs and concerns of Hawaii's women. Being in the political arena, we are aware that political polls are more often than not focused on the older women and the women who are registered to vote.

We wanted to hear and address concerns from all women, including younger women and those who are not registered to vote.

It is our belief that the younger women are, and are raising, our future leaders.

But, we had no data or facts to back up our beliefs regarding Hawaii's younger women. What are their issues? Their concerns? Are they engaged in the political process? Why and why not? We decided to put our money where our mouth is.

The Patsy T. Mink PAC contracted QMark Research to conduct a quantitative study of women ages 18-44. A total of 249 telephone interviews and 422 internet surveys were completed from mid-July to mid-August of 2010.

We learned that a significant number – 77 percent – said they are pro-choice and consider choice an important issue. Yet, over half of them said they could support a candidate that did not agree with their position if they were comfortable with the candidate's position on other important issues.

The most important issue that women want their legislators to work on is the high cost of living, followed by higher quality of education for their children. Nearly half of the respondents said conditions in Hawaii – and the nation – need an overhaul.

A quarter of the women surveyed had reached out and contacted a local politician, but out of those who sought help, a quarter of them never received a response.

The other three quarters of the women who had never contacted a local elected official said they believed their concerns might not be taken seriously.

Clearly, this is sobering news. Our survey indicates that young women feel disenfranchised and believe their voices are not heard.

At our focus groups and through our survey, we learned that young women would like to become involved in public policy but need assistance and education as to how to start.

Because the Patsy T. Mink PAC believes women are an important and significant force in Hawaii, and we want our political leaders to be aware of and address their concerns, we would like to respectfully suggest a first step to respond to them.

Actually, this suggestion comes directly from the young women in our focus groups. Because they fear that they won't be taken seriously by their political leaders, they asked if our political leaders could hold an organizational meeting just for them to talk to each other about what concerns them – and for our political leaders to just listen to them. The Patsy T. Mink PAC believes such a meeting would be a most valuable first step toward encouraging Hawaii's young women to get involved in the public policy arena. Moreover, we would be pleased to assist you in any appropriate way in this endeavor.

In closing, again, I wish to say mahalo to all of you for your interest in Hawaii's women – and for your continued leadership in helping them and their families.

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Testimony for HR9 on 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2011 11:10 AM

To: JUDtestimony

Cc: olindaaiwohi@yahoo.com

Testimony for JUD 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM HR9

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Olinda Aiwohi

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: olindaaiwohi@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 3/24/2011

Comments:

I am full agreement with this resolution to encourage greater involvement of women of Hawaii in the legislative process and government process due to the lack of interest by women of Hawaii. I am very encouraged by this bill. Please support it.
Thank you

Testimony for HR9 on 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 9:54 PM

To: JUDtestimony

Cc: merway@hawaii.rr.com

Testimony for JUD 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM HR9

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Marjorie Erway

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: merway@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 3/29/2011

Comments:

I thank Rep. Ichiyama, and the 11 other Representatives, who have signed and brought this resolution to you. I ask that you fully support it. It's time to reach out to Hawaii women and get them involved in the political process.

Mahalo for your consideration.



1350 S. King Street • Suite 309 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814 • www.pphi.org • Phone: 808-589-1156 • Fax: 808-589-1404

March 30, 2011

To: Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
From: Katie Reardon, Director of Government Relations & Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood of Hawaii
Re: **Testimony in Support of HR 9, Engaging Women in the Political Process**

Planned Parenthood of Hawaii (PPHI) strongly supports HR 9, which encourages women to become more civically engaged and asks the Legislature to be more inclusive of women in leadership roles. Because female voices are necessary for balanced decision making, PPHI supports this resolution.

In 2010 the Patsy T. Mink Political Action Committee released study results that indicated the overwhelming majority, nearly 72%, of young women in Hawaii feel estranged from the political process. What is more concerning is that only 4% of the women surveyed felt that their participation in the political process would produce any meaningful result.

We see a lack of female leadership within the State Legislature. Only two members of the 10 person House leadership team are women, compared with the Senate's nine member leadership team, four of whom are women. Out of 20 standing committees, the House has just five female Committee Chairs. The Hawaii Senate has designated 14 standing committees, five of which are chaired by women.

Yet, the State Legislature hears numerous issues every session that directly impact women's lives. This session, bills were introduced that extended protections to victims of sexual and domestic violence, improved health care for sexual assault victims, created greater access to justice for victims of child sexual abuse and sexual assault, improved the treatment of incarcerated women, funded perinatal care for women with substance abuse issues, continued funding for cancer screenings for women over the age of 45, and sought to do something about Hawaii's high teen pregnancy rate. Many of these important bills have failed to progress through the legislative process. Finally, the state's budget crisis has had a serious impact on women as many of the social services that provide Hawaii's women and children with basic health, safety and welfare received dramatic cuts.

At PPHI, we have set of twelve core beliefs that help inform our mission and our every day work. Among these strongly held beliefs is that women deserve an equal place at life's table and should be respected as moral decision makers. Therefore, we respectfully ask this committee to pass HR 9. Thank you.

Honolulu Health Center
1350 S. King Street, Suite 310
Honolulu, HI 96814
808-589-1149

Kailua Kona Health Center
75-184 Hualalai Road, Suite 205
Kailua Kona, HI 96740
808-329-8211

Kahului (Maui) Health Center
140 Ho'ohana Street, Suite 303
Kahului, HI 96732
808-871-1176
(A Maui United Way Agency)



Committee: Committee on Judiciary
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, March 31, 2011, 2:00 p.m.
Place: Room 325
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of H.R. 9

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii ("ACLU of Hawaii") writes in support of H.R. 9, which seeks to recognize the need to reach out to Hawaii women and engage them in the political process.

Women have made great strides in the fight for equality, but gender bias continues to create huge barriers for many, especially poor women, women of color and immigrant women. Ongoing struggles include insuring equal economic and educational opportunities, ending gender-based violence and addressing the harms to women and girls in the criminal justice system. Engaging women in the political process is an important tool towards rectifying these inequalities, as it will bring these issues and women's perspectives to the table. As Justice Ginsberg has stated, "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."¹

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 40 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laurie A. Temple
Staff Attorney
ACLU of Hawaii

¹ Joan Biskupic, *Ginsburg: Court Needs Another Woman*, USA Today (Oct. 5, 2009). Available at http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/judicial/2009-05-05-ruthginsburg_N.htm.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
P.O. Box 3410
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96801
T: 808.522-5900
F: 808.522-5909
E: office@acluhawaii.org
www.acluhawaii.org



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

March 31, 2011

To: Representative Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Chair
Representative Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Judiciary

From: Jeanne Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: HR 9 Recognizing the Need to Reach out to Hawai'i Women
Hearing: Thursday, March 31, 2011, 2:00 p.m., Room 325

Position: Strong Support

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support of HR 9 which encourages women to become more civically engaged and asks the Legislature to be more inclusive of women in leadership roles.

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.

In 2010 the Patsy T. Mink Political Action Committee released study results that indicated the overwhelming majority, nearly 72%, of young women in Hawai'i feel estranged from the political process; even more concerning, only 4% of the women surveyed felt that their participation in the political process would produce any meaningful result.

In order to reverse these perceptions, more women must be in visible leadership positions within the State Legislature. Only two members of the 10 person House leadership team are women, compared with the Senate's nine member leadership team, four of whom are women. Out of 20 standing committees, the House has just five female Committee Chairs. The Hawai'i Senate has designated 14 standing committees, five of which are chaired by women.

Yet, the State Legislature hears numerous issues every session that directly impact women's lives. This session, bills were introduced that:

- extended protections to victims of sexual and domestic violence,
- improved health care for sexual assault victims,
- created greater access to justice for victims of child sexual abuse and sexual assault, improved the treatment of incarcerated women,

- funded perinatal care for women with substance abuse issues,
- continued funding for cancer screenings for women over the age of 45, and
- sought action to address Hawai`i's high teen pregnancy rate.

Sadly, many of these important bills have failed to progress through the legislative process.

Finally, the state's budget crisis has had a serious impact on women as many of the social services that provide Hawai`i's women and children with basic health, safety and welfare receive dramatic cuts.

We feel strongly that that more effort should be made to engage women in a process that affects them so profoundly. We encourage leaders in the legislature to examine ways in which they could encourage that engagement and to start by including more women in leadership roles.

We ask that you pass HR 9. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Rep. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair

Rep. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Hearing on HR9 - RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO REACH OUT TO HAWAII WOMEN AND ENGAGE THEM IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS..

Thursday, March 31, 2011, 2:00 PM, Room 325

Aloha Chair Keith-Agaran and Vice-Chair Rhoads,

The Hawai'i Women's Coalition is in strong support of HR9.

This year the Pasty Mink PAC undertook a ground-breaking survey of the women of Hawai'i. They wanted to find out why Hawai'i had one of the lowest rates of women registered to vote and why so few were engaged in the political process. The results were stunning and unexpected.

The women were articulate about not seeing their government as addressing issues that mattered to them and not seeing themselves as having any power to change that.

This resolution acknowledges that they DO have a voice and that the Legislature is beginning to listen.

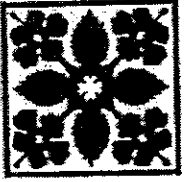
We strongly support this resolution and mahalo to those who introduced it.

Ann S. Freed

Hawai'i Women's Coalition

Mililani, Hawai'i

808-623-5676



**Hawai'i
Women's
Political
Caucus**

P.O. Box 11946
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96828
(808) 732-4987

Faye Kennedy
President

Allicyn Hikida Tasaka
Vice President

Nanci Kreidman
Vice President

Carolyn Wilcox
Treasurer

Pua Auyong White
Secretary

Amy Agbayani
Director

Diane Chang
Director

Gladys Gerlich-Hayes
Director

Joy Kobashigawa-Lewis
Director

Alice Tucker
Director

A State Chapter of the
National Women's
Political Caucus

March 31, 2011

To: Rep. Gil C. Keith-Agaran, Chair

Rep. Karl Rhodes, Vice Chair

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Amy Agbayani, Member

Subject: Testimony in Support of HR 9: Recognizing the Need to Reach Out to Hawai'i Women and Engage them in the Political Process.

I am speaking on behalf of the Hawaii Women's Political Caucus (HWPC), a chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus. Our organization seeks to increase the number of qualified elected and appointed women public officials. We also support efforts to increase the participation of women in politics and policies that improve the status of women and girls in our community.

HWPC is very pleased to support HR 9 and thank the Patsy T. Mink PAC for using their funds to conduct this important survey. The results are sobering and should become a call for action to all of us who believe in democracy and inclusion. I had the opportunity to listen to one of the focus groups and was struck by the plight of these young women. They spoke about their feelings of alienation, their grinding and low paying work and major and oftentimes solo family responsibilities. These women are pro-choice, they want policy makers to help them with cost of living issues and good education for their children. Each of us can do more to support women to advocate for themselves and their families.

I respectfully ask you to pass HR 9.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 6:36 AM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: gfilaban@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for HR9 on 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 3/31/2011 2:00:00 PM HR9

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Gwen Ilaban
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: gfilaban@aol.com
Submitted on: 3/31/2011

Comments:

Women are an important and significant force in Hawaii and it is in the best interest of the State to empower and actively engage them in the political process.

HR 9 will encourage women to take active roles in public life, including business and government, and to provide the support for women to fully participate by recognizing the need for educational opportunities and family care.

Please give your support to HR 9.

Mahalo!
Gwen Ilaban