



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 448, H.D. 1
RELATING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

REPRESENTATIVE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Hearing Date: February 24, 2015

Room Number: 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the intent of H.B. 448, H.D. 1,
3 which adds near-deaths and suicides to the types of multidisciplinary reviews conducted through
4 the Domestic Violence Fatality Review (DVFR) process. H.B. 448, H.D. 1 also mandates the
5 Department to conduct DVFRs by deleting “may” conduct to “shall” conduct these reviews. The
6 purpose of the DVFR is to prevent the incidence of domestic violence fatalities in Hawaii.

7 Adding near-deaths and suicides will give the Department a larger number of domestic violence
8 incidences to review, increasing the ability to learn more about events leading up to a domestic
9 violence fatality and thereby providing additional supports and recommendations for systems
10 change and improvements

11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

12

13

HAWAII
STATE
COMMISSION
ON THE
STATUS
OF
WOMEN



Chair
LESLIE WILKINS

COMMISSIONERS:

ELENA CABATU
CARMILLE LIM
AMY MONK
LISA ELLEN SMITH
MARILYN LEE
JUDY KERN

Executive Director
Cathy Betts, JD

Email:
Catherine.a.betts@hawaii.gov
Visit us at:
humanservices.hawaii.gov
/hscsw/

235 S. Beretania #407
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: 808-586-5758
FAX: 808-586-5756

February 23, 2015

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

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

Re: Testimony in Support, HB 448, HD1, Relating to Domestic Violence

On behalf of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to express my support for HB 448, HD1, which would amend our domestic violence fatality review panel statute to include suicides and near deaths. This information, if captured, would help create a clearer picture of how extensive domestic violence related near deaths and suicides are in our state.

This bill would additionally strengthen our existing statute and would provide more accountability by adding a reporting component. Finally, HB 448, HD1, would allow for more streamlined information gathering by allowing for cross-agency collaboration with domestic violence service providers, and relevant state and county agencies. It is clear that this dialogue is necessary—in the last week, one domestic violence related death has occurred, and one domestic violence related near suicide has occurred. These incidents can be prevented, but our community direly needs data collection and information as a starting point.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

Board of Directors

*Howard Garval, Chair
Joanne Lundstrom, Vice Chair
Jerry Rauckhorst, Treasurer
Liz Chun, Secretary
Susan Chandler
Victor Geminiani
Marya Grambs
Katherine Keir
Jeeyun Lee
John McComas
Carol Morimoto
Robert Naniole
Darcie Scharfenstein
Alan Shinn*

TO: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Members, House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW
Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: **Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in Conf. Rm. 329**

Testimony in Support for [HB448 HD1, Relating to Domestic Violence.](#)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** for HB448 HD1, which requires the Department of Health to conduct reviews of domestic violence fatalities, near-deaths and suicides, and requires reviews to commence within one year. PHOCUSED is a nonprofit membership and advocacy organization that works together with community stakeholders to impact program and policy change for the most vulnerable in our community, including survivors of domestic violence.

In Hawaii, it is estimated that about 132,000 adults (15%) experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. However, only a few of those adults reported such experience to authorities, and even fewer resulted in fatalities. The fatality review process has helped our community to better understand the circumstances regarding domestic violence. By expanding fatality reviews to include near-deaths, as well as suicides, this bill will further increase our understanding of domestic violence, and will provide more robust feedback to impact both system and institutional changes.

Once again, PHOCUSED strongly supports HB448, and urges you to pass this bill out of committee. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact PHOCUSED at 521-7462 or by e-mail at admin@phocused-hawaii.org.



TO: Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Joy San Buenaventura
Members of the Committee
FR: Nanci Kreidman, M.A

RE: HB 448 HD1 Support

Aloha. And thank you for your consideration of this testimony. It is our responsibility to urge you to examine the community needs related to addressing domestic violence, one of our complex and costly community problems with broad impact.

As a member of the Fatality Review team since its inception and great interest in efforts underway across the country, we are anxious that Hawaii's work reviewing weaknesses and challenges in our system that end in death or other serious injury be improved. The Fatality Review Team has not had the leadership it needed nor the investment necessary to bring the work to a meaningful place. Thus, an amendment to the statute to motivate timely reviews is a welcome initiative.

Further, the work that has been undertaken and completed thus far has not been circulated for system wide consideration or change to system practice. The section in this Bill which refers directly to compilation and use of information collected appears necessary.

Thank you for including the language below that encourages the development of procedures for reviewing near deaths, as this is new work for the existing team. Further, the practice for obtaining information about these kinds of assaults is important to the work and necessitates the participation and involvement by state and county agencies and branches of government.

(b)Members of the fatality review team, shall work to develop procedures related to near deaths- resulting from intimate partner assaults and the department shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the relevant state agencies and branches of government and county agencies to obtain the information relating to near-deaths resulting from intimate partner violence.

This legislation is another attempt to strengthen the work, and yield outcomes that can be beneficial to the community, the system and to practitioners as they reflect on the best ways to approach their work. Thank you for favorable action on this Bill.



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Protecting the lives of women and children is extremely important. I urge you to support this important legislation

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Betty Sestak	AAUW Windward	Support	No

Comments:

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Hawaii Women's Coalition	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha Chair Rhoads and committee members, The Hawaii Women's Coalition is in STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 448 Domestic Violence Fatality Review. It is a sad fact that Domestic Violence (DV) is still affecting far too many women and girls, yet it is difficult to get good data on the scope and nature of the problem since DV near deaths and suicides are not reviewed or reported to the DOH fatality review panel. This was revealed at the September 2014 hearing on Domestic Violence. This information, if captured, would create a clearer picture of the prevalence of DV fatalities in our state, as attempted double murder/suicides happen frequently in these cases. This bill would add teeth to the already existing DV fatality review statute. Our current statistics on DV are woefully inadequate. Please pass this bill that would help DV agencies and organizations formulate policy by providing a better picture of the problem in our state. Informed policy would help them to develop and provide targeted, best practice services. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, Ann S. Freed Co-Chair, Hawai'i Women's Coalition



February 24, 2015

To: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Judiciary

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: HB 448 HD1 Relating to Domestic Violence
Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2015, 2:00 p.m., Room 325

Position: SUPPORT

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support on HB 448 HD1 Relating to Domestic Violence which requires the Department of Health to conduct reviews of domestic violence fatalities, near-deaths, and suicides.

Domestic violence is a serious concern in our community. Its results may be catastrophic for victims, survivors, and their families. By adding near-deaths, and suicides to the information gathered; we will have a better understanding of the real consequences of violence in our families. The information will help our community improve systems, policies, and procedures, which will then prevent domestic violence.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls. It is because of this mission that we respectfully request that the committee pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.