



LATE TESTIMONY

WOMEN'S CAUCUS

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

April 20, 2015

TO: Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FROM: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: HCR 45 REQUESTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO ESTABLISH
AND FUND A VETERAN WOMEN SERVICES COORDINATOR POSITION
WITHIN THE OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES
Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2015, 2:00 p.m., Room 325

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support of HCR 45 which requests that the State Department of Defense establish and fund a Women's Veterans Coordinator position in the Office of Veteran Services (OVS).

In 2013 the Hawai'i Military Women's Taskforce submitted a report to the legislature recommending that a Women's Veteran's Coordinator position be established in order to help address the unique needs of women in active duty and of women veterans, needs that are often different from those of their male counterparts. The coordinator will fill a gap in care and will aid with the process of helping the approximately 12,000 women veterans in Hawai'i to move forward in their lives. The coordinator would help the OVS to collect data, integrate services and move forward on the Task Force's recommendations.

As with other organizations where women are a distinct minority; programs and services were originally established and created for male populations. Those benefits and services have been designed to address the needs of men rather than women. Women need gender appropriate programs, benefits, and services; nowhere is this more evident than for healthcare services and for military sexual trauma, a result of sexual assault while in the military.

It is important to recognize the specific and distinctive needs of women in their effort to re-enter civilian lives, retrain for new careers, establish homes for themselves and their families, and to care for their families. Establishing a Coordinator position will help focus the OVS on gender appropriate, effective care for women

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, the Women's Caucus supports this important measure.

We thank the committee for this opportunity to submit our testimony.

LATE TESTIMONY

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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS

April 15, 2015

Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Rep. Will Espero, Chair
Rep. Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Yoonjung Cha, MSW
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Testimony in support, HCR45.

Hello Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker, and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify HCR45, which request the assist, support, and develop comprehensive program and services for female veterans who served on activate duty military members for the full period they were activated within the Office of Veterans' Services.

I am Yoonjung Cha, a graduate student in Social Welfare program at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, University of Hawaii at Manoa. I support the HCR45. This would be a greet opportunity to collect current data and access to real issues and problems among the female veterans in the State of Hawaii, such as what female veterans' primary concerned and needs, then can provide specific needs and programs/services for the group.

In Hawaii, female veterans are approximately 11,495 and rising rapidly. Many of them have had experiences being homeless. The Office of Veterans' Services needs to develop programs and services; educations about what programs and services are available for them, what benefit out there, and counsels for post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) for them.

Same as other veterans, many female veterans come toward to the State of Hawaii and serve for this nation/their country instead of their own life. It is important that we respect their sacrifice by addressing their needs and look after their life as they do to their country, we have a duty to keep their human dignity and support them to survive their life. I appreciate you for the opportunity to testify.