

Hawaii Association for Infant Mental Health

FIRST RELATIONSHIPS

February 3, 2016

Representative Scott Nishimoto, Chair, House Legislative Management Committee
John Mizuno, Vice-Chair, House Legislative Management Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

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Related to: **H.B. NO. 1787, Task Force on Sexual Abuse Education**

Dear Representatives Morikawa, Kobayashi and Members of the Committee:

As President of the Hawaii Association for Infant Mental Health, I am testifying in strong support of HB 1782.

In 2015, Child Welfare Services has received 15,165 calls regarding Child Abuse and Neglect on Oahu only. Statewide they received in total 22,074 mandated reporting calls. National statistics say that 11% of children are sexually assaulted every year. HAIMH knows from working in the sex abuse treatment field since 1986 that this number is still **underreported**.

Within my work with children and families I have long witnessed the intergenerational effect of children who are not identified and who are not treated for sexual abuse. I know through working with these individuals, they have a higher risk of suicide, poor coping skills, difficulty developing prosocial behaviors, problems with establishing healthy supportive relationships, have difficulty academically, have difficulty finding and maintaining employment, have higher risk of substance abuse, have difficulty regulating emotions, develop eating disorders and often become depressed, anxious, and feel hopeless.

Research is clear that the sooner sexual abuse is identified, the quicker the child can begin to feel safer, the abuse can stop, and the healing process can begin. Too often shame, stigma and misbelief become obstacles in moving forward with reporting requirements. HAIMH's stance is that exposing sexual abuse should not be avoided, silenced or disregarded, and that the community needs to stand together on this issue. Erin's Law can help strengthen this process that we have been striving to achieve.

This legislation would establish a task force to guide establishment of effective sexual abuse curriculum for our schools. It will be important to establish the best possible curriculum and teaching plan in regard to educating children about sexual abuse. Teachers often have the most readily available and influential access to a child, and training in sex abuse prevention can create a greater impact on the future of a child victim. Early education targeting safe touch, unsafe touch, safe secrets, and unsafe secrets can change the dynamic of sexual abuse. Preventative means help take the power away from the abuser, and give the victim a stronger voice. The initial confusion, disbelief, and terror may be weakened as children will learn that it is not okay for someone to hurt, touch, or violate them. Early identification and intervention will also prevent ongoing traumatization, and prolonged exposure to the abuse/abuser.

HAIMH strongly supports this bill, so that children can live in a society in which violence is not tolerated. By passing this bill we hope that child victims will become more empowered to tell someone when they are being hurt and that sexual abuse will no longer be underreported.

Our children in our communities are our future and it is time to further nurture their healthy development and protect them from pending harm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joey Keahiolalo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joey" and last name "Keahiolalo" clearly distinguishable.

Joey Keahiolalo, President

LMGtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 13, 2016 4:03 AM
To: LMGtestimony
Cc: NuWayveUnl@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1787 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM*

HB1787

Submitted on: 2/13/2016

Testimony for LMG on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Terrell Trice	NuWayve Unlimited	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Katherine Bennett, JD, MSW
E-Mail: kgwb@hawaii.edu
Phone: (808) 956-6123

February 16, 2016

Representative Scott Nishimoto, Chair
Representative John Mizuno, Vice-Chair
House Legislative Management Committee

RE: H.B. 1787 HD 1, Task Force on Sexual Abuse Education

Hearing Date: Wednesday February 17, 2016 at 2pm
Hearing Place: House Conference Room 423

Dear Representatives Nishimoto, Mizuno, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in strong support of HB 1787.

In 2015, our Department of Human Services Child Welfare Services Division received 15,165 calls regarding Child Abuse and Neglect, on Oahu only. Statewide they received in total 22,074 mandated reporting calls. National statistics show that 11% of children in the child welfare system were sexually assaulted. As a social worker, lawyer, and educator working in the field of child welfare and sex abuse treatment for over ten (10) years, I feel confident that this number is **underreported**.

Working with children and families I have witnessed the intergenerational effects of children who are not identified and who are not treated for sexual abuse. I know through working with these individuals, they have a higher risk of suicide, poor coping skills, difficulty developing prosocial behaviors, problems with establishing healthy supportive relationships, have difficulty academically, have difficulty finding and maintaining employment, have higher risk of substance abuse, have difficulty regulating emotions, develop eating disorders and often become depressed, anxious, and feel hopeless.

Research is clear that the sooner sexual abuse is identified, the quicker the child can begin to feel safer, the abuse can stop, and the healing process can begin. Too often shame, stigma, and disbelief become obstacles in moving forward with reporting requirements. Exposing the realities of child sexual abuse should not be avoided, silenced, or disregarded. Our community needs to stand together on this issue. Erin's Law is a substantial step to strengthening this process.

This legislation would establish a task force to guide establishment of effective sexual abuse curriculum for our schools. It will be important to establish the best possible curriculum and teaching plan in regard to educating children about sexual abuse. Teachers often have the most readily available and influential access to a child, and training in sex abuse prevention can create a greater impact on the future of a child victim. Early education targeting safe touch, unsafe touch, safe secrets, and unsafe

secrets can change the dynamic of sexual abuse. Prevention through education means we can take the power away from the abuser and give the victim a stronger voice. The initial confusion, disbelief, and terror may be weakened as children learn that it is not okay for someone to hurt, touch, or violate them. Early identification and intervention will also prevent ongoing traumatization and prolonged exposure to abuse.

I have three young children in my home and I believe wholeheartedly in giving them the developmentally appropriate tools and language to recognize and protect themselves from potential sexual assault.

I strongly support this bill. Children deserve to live in a society where violence of any nature is not tolerated. By passing this bill, I believe we will empower child victims to tell someone when they are being hurt so that sexual abuse will no longer be underreported and they don't have to grow into adulthood living in secrecy and shame.

If we can prevent even a single child from experiencing sexual abuse, it would be well worth it. I thank you for your time and the opportunity to support HB 1787.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Bennett, JD, MSW
kgwb@hawaii.edu
(808) 956-6123

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/17/2016

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 423

Committee: House Legislative Management

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1787, HD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Creates and appropriates funds for Erin's Law Task Force to review policies, programs, and curricula for educating public school students about sexual abuse prevention, and report recommendations for the establishment of a program to educate public school children on sexual abuse prevention through age-appropriate curricula. (HB1787 HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB 1787 HD1 which establishes and appropriates funds for an Erin's Law task force to be convened by the legislature.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

LMGtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 3:06 PM
To: LMGtestimony
Cc: laurie.field@ppvnh.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1787 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM*

HB1787

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for LMG on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Field	Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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TO: Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Mizuno, and Members of the House Committee on Legislative Management

FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

DATE/LOCATION: February 17, 2016; 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 423

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1787, HD1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

We support the intent of HB 1787, HD1 – Relating to Education. Sadly, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be the victim of child sexual abuse by their 18th birthday. There are more than 42 million survivors of child sexual abuse in the United States. This is a matter that is often kept silent and as a result is left unaddressed (most people do not even realize this is a significant issue or that they are a victim). In almost every case, the only witnesses to this crime are the perpetrator and the victim. Perpetrators often tell the child this is a secret and no one will believe them. Children rarely report abuse and are meant to feel that the abuse was their fault. Most victims never tell anyone until several years after the abuse, if they ever tell at all.

However, we feel that implementing child sexual abuse training immediately is the appropriate course of action versus creating a task force. Task forces have been formed in other states related to Erin's Law and it has delayed the process of ensuring that children are safe from harm. Each second we delay, a child is forever hurt and traumatized. We cannot do this to our keiki. We understand that we want to "get it right" and make sure we set this up properly. If that is the intent so be it, however, the longer we delay, the more likely children will be at risk without needed supports. If we do not take strong measures to address these matters that impact child sexual abuse, this issue will continue to impact our community and will only negatively impact Hawai'i's future, people, keiki, communities, culture, economy, reputation, commerce, and industries. Let's put the emphasis on those who take advantage of the most vulnerable, as they are the culprits and drivers of this criminal enterprise. This is cutting into the fabric of the Aloha State and is not acceptable here in Hawai'i.

The children who endure this traumatic sexual abuse have a long list of adverse issues. These issues include:

- Poor academic performance
- Dropping out of high school
- Self mutilation
- Persistent post traumatic stress disorder
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Increased risk for abuse in subsequent relationships
- Difficulty in forming meaningful and trusting relationships
- Cognitive deficits
- Depression
- Dissociative symptoms
- Suicide

It is critical to identify these child victims early so that support can be put in place to significantly reduce the likelihood of the long-term adverse issues and costs of the above listed items.

We support Erin's Law because it recommends:

- Child sexual abuse prevention education should be taught in grades as early as pre-Kindergarten through high school.
- Giving children the tools to speak up and seek help.
- Providing intentional and age-appropriate programming in schools regarding child sexual abuse.
- Training school staff and faculty regarding child sexual abuse prevention and the handling of sexual abuse disclosures.

Erin's Law leverages the relationship between schools and the child. Schools are primary connections to our communities that also share strong relationships with our parents and keiki. It would only be natural that we take advantage of those trusting relationships to provide the services they need and further benefit from. The teachers who spend time with the students on a daily basis should be able to recognize signs of unhealthy influence and link resources to their families. School personnel should no longer wonder out of suspicion or feel hopeless in attempts to help students in need. We strongly believe our time should be invested in direct action in order to provide students with the services they need, before they are further affected by the negative impacts of sexual abuse. We support the intent of this bill but would like to see Erin's Law implemented immediately.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 16 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB 1787, HD1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

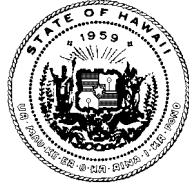
FOR: HB 1787 HD1 Relating to Education
DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 2016
TIME: 2:00 PM
COMMITTEE(S): House Committee on Legislative Management
ROOM: Conference Room 423
FROM: Tom Hutton, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Testimony in support of the intent of HB 1789 HD1

Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Mizuno, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission supports the intent of House Bill 1787 HD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for an Erin’s Law task force to be convened by the Legislature. We appreciate the amendment made to this bill to include representation from the charter school sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 12, 2016

TO: The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair
House Committee on Legislative Management

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: HB 1787 HD1 - Relating to Education

Hearing: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 423, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and provides comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to create and appropriate funds for the Erin's Law task force to guide the establishment of a program to educate public school students on sexual abuse prevention through use of age appropriate curricula; provide relevant training to school teachers and staff; and inform parents about important child sexual abuse topics.

The DHS sees the tragic effects of sexual abuse on Hawaii's children and their families. In SFY 2015, fifty-one children (ranging from age 3 through age 17) were in foster care due to confirmed sexual abuse by a family member.

The DHS works collaboratively with the Department of Education (DOE) to prevent child sex abuse, and serves as a resource to the DOE.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
1390 Miller Street, Room 303
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 16, 2016

TO: Scott Nishimoto, Chair
House Committee on Legislative Management

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director

SUBJECT: HB 1787, HD 1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2016

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 423

Purpose of Bill: Creates and appropriates funds for Erin's Law Task Force to review policies, programs and curricula for educating public school students about sexual abuse prevention, and report recommendations for the establishment of a program to educate public school children on sexual abuse prevention through age appropriate curricula. (HB 1787 HD 1)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) supports the intent of this bill and its commitment to addressing the safety and well-being of students (pre-kindergarten to grade twelve) in the prevention of sexual abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



A Program of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children

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Gidget Ruscetta

Joshua A. Wisch

DATE: February 17, 2016

TO: The Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Chair
The Honorable John Mizuno, Vice Chair
House Committee on Legislative Management

FROM: The Sex Abuse Treatment Center
A Program of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children

RE: Testimony in Strong Support of H.B. 1787 H.D. 1
Relating to Education

Good afternoon Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Mizuno, and members of the House Committee on Legislative Management.

The Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) strongly supports H.B. 1787 H.D. 1, which creates and appropriates funds for an Erin's Law task force to guide the establishment of a program to educate public school students on sexual abuse prevention through the use of age appropriate curricula; provide relevant training to school teachers and staff; and inform parents about important child sexual abuse topics.

Sexual abuse remains a serious and ongoing threat to the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people in the State of Hawaii. Nationally, 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men have been the victim of sexual assault in their lifetimes. Of these, 44% were under the age of 18 at the time of the assault. This is consistent with SATC's experience on Oahu – in 2014, of the 637 victims who sought care for the first time at SATC, 51% were children. It is important to note that these numbers do not reflect the total number of victims on Oahu or in our state, but only those who were able to seek help from our center.

Given the high incidence of sexual abuse perpetrated against minors, it is important that children and young people be taught the knowledge and skills necessary to protect themselves against sexual violence and obtain help to end abuse as quickly as possible. Moreover, it is critical that those who interact the most with children and young people, including parents, other guardians, educators and school staff, receive sufficient training to understand issues of sexual violence and respond appropriately.

Through a contract with the State Department of Health (DOH), SATC currently delivers training to teachers, counselors and school administrators on a series of age-appropriate, evidence-based curricula for sexual abuse prevention education. Each of the four curricula, designed for students in kindergarten through 2nd grade, 3rd grade through 5th grade, middle school, and high school, were developed locally in close

partnership with the State Department of Education (DOE), teachers from both public and private schools, and the University of Hawaii's Teacher Institute of Education, and they all are DOE-approved to fulfill existing health education requirements.

Despite these combined efforts, it is our understanding that implementation of sexual abuse prevention education curricula is not consistent system wide, and resources for the provision of training and education are limited. Consequently, students in Hawaii may not receive regular, consistent child abuse prevention education, nor are parents informed about child sexual abuse topics. In addition, many school teachers and staff do not receive sufficient training on talking to students about child sexual abuse prevention, the effects of sexual abuse on children, handling sexual abuse disclosures, and mandated reporting.

Laws requiring that public school systems implement a program of regular, consistent sexual abuse prevention education for students, teacher and staff training, and parental involvement, have passed in 26 states and the Territory of Guam, and have been introduced in the legislatures of 17 others. These laws and the programs they would create represent a national trend in safety, health and wellbeing education and are collectively referred to as "Erin's Law" after an Illinois survivor of child sexual abuse, Erin Merryn, who has led the national movement for required programs for child sexual abuse prevention education.

H.B. 1787 H.D. 1 is necessary to provide the State of Hawaii the means to design and plan a strong, sustainable program to consistently make sexual abuse prevention education available to all public school students.

In order to do so, this measure would follow the model of several other states that have successfully adopted Erin's Law, by bringing together stakeholders from the legislature, relevant state agencies and the community in order to collaboratively review existing policies, programs and curricula; assess service gaps and needs; and make well-informed recommendations through a transparent, report-driven process.

Therefore, we respectfully urge you to support H.B. 1787 H.D. 1.

LATE



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

**TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 1787, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO
EDUCATION**

House Committee on Legislative Management

Hon. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair

Hon. John M. Mizuno, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 423

Honorable Chair Nishimoto and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of HB 1787, HD1, relating to education.

IMUAlliance is one of Hawai'i's leading providers of anti-exploitation education, teaching over 10,000 students each year about the perils of sex trafficking victims and commercial sexual exploitation. Victims typically induced into exploitation between the ages of 12-14, years of heightened developmental vulnerability, and are often predisposed to exploitation by a complex and overlapping traumatic history that may include child abuse or neglect, assault, sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, and bullying.

We believe that education ends exploitation. When students are empowered with knowledge about risk factors of sex trafficking and sexual abuse, they are able to spot the signs of abuse and take action to protect themselves, their peers, and their communities. Moreover, education guards against the psychological impact of abuse, which can include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociative disorder, explosive outbursts, self-injurious and suicidal behavior, and hyper-sexualization. That said, **we ask that this bill be amended to include a public school teacher as part of the task force**, since teachers facilitate educational programming and curricula, while managing student response and intervention frameworks.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance