



## HAWAI'I FRIENDS OF CIVIL RIGHTS

April 11, 2022

**TO:** **Committee on Health, Human Services & Homelessness**  
Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Amy Agbayani, Co-Chair & Pat McManaman, Co-Chair

**SUBJECT:** **SCR 133, SD1**

**HEARING:** April 14, 2022 at 9:00 AM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

The Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights stands in **Strong Support of SCR 133, SD1** which proposes to provide outreach and information to abused immigrant women through a collaboration between the State Commission on the Status of Women, the Domestic Violence Action Center, and the Filipino Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i.

Immigrant women often feel trapped in abusive relationships because of immigration laws, language barriers, social isolation, and lack of financial resources. Abusers often use their partners' immigration status as a tool of control. In such situations, it is common for a batterer to exert control over his partner's immigration status to force her to remain in the relationship. Additionally, many immigrant victims may believe that the protections of the U.S. legal system do not apply to them and that domestic violence services are not available to them.

Engaging battered immigrant women in their communities and their languages is a critical first step in ending immigrant domestic violence. In addition to multilingual posters and signage, the collaborative organizations may wish to provide multilingual digital access to information and resources on their websites. Often, a cell phone is the sole link a battered

woman may have to seek information, help, and assistance. Confronting English-only information may dissuade her from making further contact.

Finally, there is a critical need to restore state-wide training for community health care providers, community-based organizations, state and local government workers, and others on the unique barriers that confront abused immigrant women and available immigration legal remedies.

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

**SCR-133-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/12/2022 10:06:17 AM

Testimony for HHH on 4/14/2022 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
nanci kreidman	domestic violence action center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Broad outreach in the community is an important way of educating survivors, families, co-workers, business leaders and allies that domestic violence is a problem impacting all communities. Working in collaboration with others makes an enormous difference in reaching diverse communities.

DVAC is happy to participate.

thank you for favorable action on this Measure.



[www.hicir.org](http://www.hicir.org) | Instagram @hicir  
[hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com](mailto:hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com)

**Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness**  
Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair  
Representative Adrian Tam, Vice-Chair

**SUPPORT for SCR133 SD1**

April 14, 2022 at 9am

The Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) stands in **Strong Support of SCR133 SD1**, which proposes to provide outreach and information to immigrant women who have been abused through a collaboration between the State Commission on the Status of Women, the Domestic Violence Action Center, and the Filipino Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i.

Foreign-born individuals who identify as female are disproportionately impacted by intimate partner violence, especially if they are undocumented or have a complicated legal status. It is not uncommon for an intimate partner to use the threat of deportation and/or separation from their children to maintain control over a victim. In the state of Hawai'i, approximately half of our foreign-born population is of Filipino background, in addition to the many second generation Filipino/as, nearly 342,000 individuals in total. It is critical that this population receive the thought, resources, and individualized care that it deserves.

In concert with our partners, we recommend the Resolutions be amended to create a Task Force to include the Domestic Violence Action Center, Consulate General of the Philippines, Hawai'i Department of Health, Hawai'i Immigrant Justice Center, The Legal Clinic, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i, and other chambers of commerce in Hawaii, as appropriate, to evaluate previous strategic plans from a culturally competent and gender-responsive lens and develop and implement an outreach



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[hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com](mailto:hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com)

program aimed at informing domestic violence victims of various sources of assistance, including placement of posters and signage in various languages in discrete areas.

In engaging immigrant survivors of intimate partner abuse, we also recommend that the Task Force be encouraged to develop a plan for language equity. Engaging immigrant survivor women in their communities and their languages is a critical first step in ending immigrant domestic violence. In addition to multilingual posters and signage, the collaborative organizations may wish to provide multilingual digital access to information and resources on their websites. Often, a cell phone is the sole link a victim may have to seek information, help, and assistance. Confronting English-only information may dissuade her from making further contact.

Finally, there is a critical need to restore state-wide training for community health care providers, community-based organizations, state and local government workers, and others on the unique barriers confronting abused immigrant women and available immigration legal remedies.

Ē mālama pono,

Liza Ryan Gill, Co-chair HI Coalition for Immigrant Rights

Catherine Chen, Co-chair HI Coalition for Immigrant Rights

**SCR-133-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/13/2022 8:56:52 AM

Testimony for HHH on 4/14/2022 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Angelina Mercado	Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) advances the safety and healing of victims, survivors, and their families. We are the collective voice of a diverse network of organizations and individuals, working to eliminate all forms of domestic violence in Hawai'i by fostering partnership, increasing awareness of domestic violence, developing the capacity of our member programs and community partners to address the needs of survivors and their families, and advocating for social justice and change.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 26 member programs statewide, we support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,  
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director



**‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke  
Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine**

**Testimony on behalf of the  
Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women**

**Support for SCR133/SR177 SD1**

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women **supports SCR 133/SR177 SD1.**

The Commission takes the position that this project is urgently needed and that a formal taskforce should be created. The Commission supports the creation of a *Task Force to End the Invisibility and Abuse of Filipino Women*.

It has been long known that Filipino women represent nearly one-third (28.9%) of all domestic violence victims in Hawai‘i. Filipino women are also much more likely to be fatal victims of domestic violence compared to Native Hawaiian and Japanese women relative to their proportions in the population.<sup>1</sup> More still, almost 10% of domestic violence victims speak Filipino as their first language.

Results from *Hawaii domestic violence fatality review 2000-2009* found that, “It is possible that tolerance for domestic violence is influenced by socio-cultural factors and length of immigration and acculturation,” but cited an outsider of our Filipino culture (David Joel Steinberg) who was only able to provide a superficial, gender-blind analysis: “Personalism, smooth interpersonal relationships, and hierarchical structures are safety lids for the Philippine society. Filipinos are both friendly and tolerant, but the society also tolerates moments of violence. To run amok is an understandable behavior if an individual has been wronged or provoked sufficiently. Crimes of passion abound and revenge is, in Philippine terms, often an acceptable explanation of criminal behavior. Temporary, explosive anger at a personal affront is a way Filipinos expresses existential rage. Political violence, especially just prior to elections, is widely accepted and usually unpunished.”

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<sup>1</sup> Pobutsky, Ann et al. “Results from the Hawaii domestic violence fatality review, 2000-2009.” *Journal of injury & violence research* vol. 6,2 (2014): 79-90. doi:10.5249/jivr.v6i2.473

We need a special taskforce led for and by Filipino women to address this deadly tragedy afflicting our community.

Please pass SCR133 SD1.

Mahalo,  
Khara Jabola-Carolus, Executive Director



**SCR-133-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/13/2022 1:34:21 PM

Testimony for HHH on 4/14/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Galacgac	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Growing up in Hawai‘i as a daughter of Filipino (im)migrants, I know many who have either experienced or witnessed violence against women at home. Filipino women represent nearly one-third (28.9%) of all domestic violence victims in Hawai‘i. Filipino women are also much more likely to be fatal victims of domestic violence compared to Native Hawaiian and Japanese women, relative to their proportions in the population.

Unfortunately, the data does not surprise me, however, we need action to address this insidious problem that impacts everyone. This violence did not always exist in our community and culture. Stressors of migration and ongoing economic hardship in Hawai‘i are factors in creating the extremely difficult conditions in which violence manifests. When abusers inflict violence against women, the culture of silence has protected abusers and allowed for this unacceptable treatment of women to continue. Survivors are not to be blamed for doing what they need to do to survive and endure and yet, the onus remains on all of us to take deliberate, principled, and collective action. It will take each of us to break this generational cycle, begin to heal those harmed, and ensure future generations will no longer normalize domestic violence.

This project is urgently needed and warrants a formal taskforce: the *Task Force to End the Invisibility and Abuse of Filipino Women*. Lived experiences can inform solutions to address this issue within the Filipino community. We need a special taskforce led for and by Filipino women. It’s notable that 10% of domestic violence victims speak Filipino as their first language, so navigating systems as an English language learner often contributes to the difficulties to accessing services.

I ask that the Committee pass SCR133 the **requested amendments**:

1. Create a formal Taskforce to End the Invisibility and Abuse of Filipino Women.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022, the House of Representatives concurring, that the State Commission on the Status of Women is to **work create the Task Force to End the Invisibility and Abuse of Filipino Women**

2. Extend the report deadline to 2024 to allow for sufficient time to investigate the issue and develop a plan to combat domestic violence in the Filipino community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Commission on the Status of Women is requested to submit a report of its progress in the development and implementation of the outreach program, findings and recommendations, and proposed legislation if any, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of **2023 2024**

Thank the opportunity to express my strong support for this measure. **Please pass SCR 133.**

**SCR-133-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/13/2022 6:31:33 PM

Testimony for HHH on 4/14/2022 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alani Bagcal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha e Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,**

**My name is Alani Bagcal and I am a first generation Filipina strongly in support of SCR 133. We need a special taskforce led for and by Filipino women to address domestic violence in our community and how we can support and protect survivors and prevent men and other perpetrators from doing it in the first place.**

**Centering Filipinos is so necessary, Filipino women are much more likely to be fatal victims of domestic violence compared to Native Hawaiian and Japanese women relative to their proportions in the population. Filipinas are nearly one-third (28.9%) of all fatal domestic violence victims in Hawai'i. More still, nearly 10% of domestic violence victims speak Filipino as their first language. Sufficient funding is needed to implement an organized and effective outreach program to ensure information is translated in Filipino dialects.**

**Please pass SCR 133. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.**

**Alani Bagcal**

**96815**