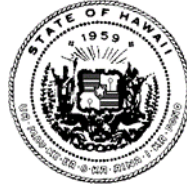


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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELawe KANAKA
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March 23, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR 226/ SR 164 - URGING THE UNITED STATES INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND TO MORE PROACTIVELY COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN HAWAI'I BY MAKING A ZERO-TOLERANCE COMMITMENT, SHARING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVALENCE DATA WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENT, AND LAUNCHING AN ANTI-COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION PROGRAM ACROSS ALL HAWAI'I MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.**

Hearing: March 24, 2023, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of these resolutions and offers comments.

PURPOSE: These resolutions request that the United States Indo-Pacific Command:

1. Issue a public statement committing to zero tolerance for sex buying, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse material consumption, and child sexual exploitation by United States Indo-Pacific Command personnel;
2. Share gender—based violence prevalence data with the Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls Taskforce (MMNHWGT); and
3. Implement an anti-commercial sexual exploitation program aimed at informing military personnel, including through the placement of posters and signage in visible

areas, at all Hawai'i military installations of the consequences for sex buying and holding sex buyers accountable.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's commitment to zero tolerance for sex buying, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse material consumption, and child sexual exploitations in the state and this effort to engage the United States Indo—Pacific Command to take steps to address these issues with its personnel.

DHS appreciates its partnership with various governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Programs. DHS agrees that members of governmental and non-governmental organizations could provide valuable contributions to identifying issues relating to the sexual exploitation of minors through a commitment to preventing and addressing sex buying, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse material consumption, and child sexual exploitation, data and information sharing, and collaboration on shared efforts. The United States Indo-Pacific Command should be considered an additional and necessary participant in these discussions and task forces.

DHS is a member of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Steering Committee on Oahu. This Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Steering Committee is led by the Judiciary and meets monthly. The steering committee comprises members from various State and Federal agencies and aims to provide a coordinated system response to identify and respond to child victims of sex trafficking.

DHS is also a member of the Honolulu County Human Trafficking Task Force (HCHTTF). The task force aims to implement victim-centered and coordinated approaches to identifying victims of sex and labor trafficking, addressing the individualized needs of victims through services, and investigating and prosecuting sex and labor trafficking cases (as well as the purchasers of commercial sex) at the local, state, tribal, and federal levels. The HCHTTF membership has included representatives from the military, which is helpful to the collaborative work of the task force.

DHS also participates in the Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls (MMNHWG) Task Force. According to the MMNHWG Task Force Report, "Representatives from critical entities are uninvolved in responding to the MMNHWG crisis. Namely, representatives from the United States military and the tourism sector are absent from this

process and are not encouraged by the legislature to participate in this report. Lack of representation on the MMNHWG Task Force is problematic given that the military and tourism are two of the biggest industries in Hawai'i and are also the most extractive in terms of natural resources and land holdings." Encouraging military participation in combating this issue is vital.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this resolution.