

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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KE KIA'ĀINA



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
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Tuesday, April 7, 2026
10:15 AM
State Capitol, 016

**HB1692, HD2, SD1
RELATING TO TRAFFIC SAFETY**

Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports HB1692, HD2, SD1.

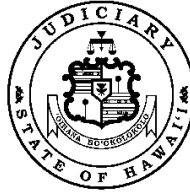
This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes § 291C-27 to require drivers approaching stationary vehicles stopped on the shoulder or roadside due to traffic collisions or mechanical problems to slow down and, where possible, change lanes to provide a safe buffer. The bill also prohibits passengers from riding in the beds of pickup trucks on high-speed roadways and raises the minimum age for riding in a truck bed to 18 years of age. The bill is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 3000.

The DOT supports this measure as it directly advances the safety of motorists, first responders, roadside assistance workers, and all individuals who may find themselves in vulnerable positions along Hawaii's roadways. Stationary vehicles on the shoulder or roadside present significant hazards, and drivers who fail to slow down or move over contribute to a disproportionate number of serious and fatal crashes. Expanding the existing move-over law to encompass all stationary vehicles displaying safety signals — not solely emergency and law enforcement vehicles — closes a critical gap in current statute and aligns Hawaii with best practices adopted by numerous other states across the nation.

The prohibition on passengers riding in pickup truck beds on high-speed roads, combined with raising the minimum age for truck bed occupancy to 18, further strengthens public safety protections. Riding in an open truck bed exposes occupants to severe injury or death in the event of sudden stops, turns, or collisions. These provisions reflect a sound, evidence-based approach to reducing preventable roadway fatalities and injuries, consistent with the DOT's ongoing commitment to the goals of the Safe System Approach and Vision Zero initiatives.

The DOT is committed to supporting legislative efforts that protect the lives of all road users in Hawaii, and we believe HB1692, HD2, SD1 is an important step toward safer roads for residents and visitors alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i
Ka ‘Oihana Ho‘okolokolo, Moku‘āina ‘o Hawai‘i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:15 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

By

Dyan M. Medeiros
Senior Judge, Deputy Chief Judge
Luna Kānāwai ‘Ohana Nui
Family Court of the First Circuit
‘Aha Ho‘okolokolo ‘Ohana o ke Ka‘apuni ‘Ekahi

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, Relating to Family

Purpose: Establishes an exemption from mediation in parentage proceedings where there are allegations of domestic abuse. Clarifies the exemption from mediation in divorce proceedings as it relates to domestic abuse. (SD1)

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports House Bill No. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1. The family courts of Hawai‘i have championed mediation in many of the case types under its jurisdiction, including divorce and parentage cases. We have decades of experience that support our continued policy to order mediation as an alternative to continued litigation. We have witnessed countless cases where parties, including parties who have alleged domestic abuse, have reached positive results through mediation and managed to avoid or minimize the harmful effects of conflict and litigation on children and families.

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



April 7, 2026

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Re: H.B. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, Relating to Family

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:15 AM, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Women Lawyers is a lawyer's trade organization that aims to improve the lives and careers of women in all aspects of the legal profession, influence the future of the legal profession, and enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunities for all.

Hawaii Women Lawyers submits testimony in support of H.B. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, which advances vital protections for survivors of domestic abuse involved in family court proceedings. This measure ensures that mediation is never imposed on a party who alleges domestic abuse without their consent and safeguards that, when mediation does occur, it is conducted by trained professionals in a trauma-informed, survivor-centered manner.

Mandatory mediation in family court cases can re-traumatize survivors and perpetuate coercive dynamics when abuse has occurred. H.B. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1 recognizes this risk and codifies clear, safety-focused procedures: survivors must affirmatively authorize mediation, mediators must be trained to recognize abuse, and an attorney or support person may accompany the survivor. These provisions help ensure that survivors are not forced into potentially harmful processes and that they retain control over how to participate in legal proceedings affecting their families.

Women experience domestic abuse at disproportionately high rates and often face systemic barriers to safety and justice. This bill affirms their right to be heard in court without being compelled into unsafe or inappropriate mediation. It reflects a careful balance: protecting vulnerable individuals while preserving mediation as a valuable tool when appropriate.

For the above reasons, we support H.B. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1 and respectfully request that the Committee pass this measure.

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



April 7, 2026

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Mike Gabbard
Rep. Stanley Chang
Rep. Joy A. San Buenaventura
Rep. Brenton Awa

Re: HB1962 HD2 SD1 Relating to Family

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

The Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) mission is to unite Hawai'i to end all forms of domestic violence. We are a statewide partnership of domestic violence programs and shelters.

On behalf of HSCADV and our 20 member programs, I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of HB1962 HD2 SD1. We're grateful to the Legislature for taking important steps to protect survivors of domestic violence from being compelled into mediation in family court proceedings.

This bill appropriately recognizes the risks mediation can pose when domestic abuse is present by:

- ensuring survivors consent to engaging in mediation;
- mediators who work with survivors have been trained in the dynamics of domestic abuse; and
- reiterates that, under HRS §658H-10, a person may bring a lawyer or someone else they choose to mediation, and that person may participate in the mediation. Additionally, a waiver of participation, made before the mediation, may be rescinded.

These changes reflect the [Revised Hawai'i Guidelines for Mediators](#), endorsed by the Hawaii Supreme Court on May 6, 2025, which emphasize participant self-determination, mediators' competence, and mediation safety.

HB1962 HD2 SD1 also addresses concerns raised during the 2025 legislative session that inconsistent statutory language might lead to the inequitable application of HRS §658H-10. This measure references HRS §658H-10 and includes aligning its language with the statute to promote clarity, consistency, and fairness in how courts apply these protections.

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

Sincerely,
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director



Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Re: **HB1962 HD2 SD1 – Relating to Family**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
April 7, 2026, 10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB1962 HD2 SD1**. This bill establishes an exemption from mediation in parentage proceedings where there are allegations of domestic abuse and clarifies the exemption from mediation in divorce proceedings as it relates to domestic abuse.

This bill reflects best practices encouraged by advocates and professionals working with survivors of domestic violence, who emphasize that legal processes must adapt to the realities of lived experience. It affirms that domestic violence survivors should not be compelled to engage in a process that could retraumatize them or compromise their and their children's safety.

Mandatory mediation can place a survivor in close contact with their alleged abuser, which can hinder fair outcomes regarding custody, parenting time, or child support. Allowing survivors to opt out of mediation protects them from potentially dangerous face-to-face encounters with their abuser and prioritizes the physical and emotional well-being of children who may also be at risk.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this bill.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

Hawaii Women's Coalition

April 6, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB1962 HD2 SD1**, Relating to Family

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Llasmin Chaine, Co-Chair, Hawaii Women's Coalition

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1962 HD2 SD1, Relating to Family

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:15 a.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

On behalf of the Hawaii Women's Coalition, a catalyst coalition for progressive, social, economic, and political change regarding critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls, I would like to thank the Committee for hearing this important bill and express our **strong support of HB1962 HD2 SD1**. The Coalition thanks the Legislature for taking these important steps to protect survivors of domestic violence from being compelled into mediation in family court proceedings.

This bill appropriately recognizes the risks mediation can pose when domestic abuse is present by:

- Ensuring survivors consent to engaging in mediation;
- Ensuring mediators who work with survivors have been trained in the dynamics of domestic abuse; and
- Provisioning consistent statutory language, in alignment with HRS §658H-10, that a person may bring a lawyer or someone else they choose to mediation, and that person may participate in the mediation. Additionally, a waiver of participation, made before the mediation, may be rescinded.

These changes reflect the [Revised Hawaii Guidelines for Mediators](#), endorsed by the Hawaii Supreme Court on May 6, 2025, which emphasize participant self-determination, mediators' competence, and mediation safety.

HB1962 HD2 SD1 also addresses concerns raised during the 2025 legislative session, references HRS §658H-10 and includes matching language from the statute to promote clarity, consistency, and fairness in how courts apply these protections.

The Coalition appreciates the Legislature's commitment to trauma-informed practices and survivor protections and urges the Committee to **pass HB1962 HD2 SD1**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



April 6, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB1962 HD2 SD1**, Relating to Family

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB1962 HD2 SD1**, Relating to Family

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:15 a.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to advancing the rights, safety, and well-being of women and girls in Hawaii. Thank you for hearing this important bill. We stand in **support of HB1962 HD2 SD1**, as it aligns with our [mission](#) and establishes clear exemptions from mandatory mediation, ensures survivors consent, and recognizes the need for mediators to be trained in the dynamics of domestic abuse.

Mandatory mediation, while often a valuable tool for resolving family disputes, can be inappropriate and even harmful in cases involving domestic violence. Power imbalances and the potential for coercion can undermine the safety and autonomy of survivors, making voluntary and equitable agreement difficult to achieve. HB1962 HD2 SD1 prioritizes the **safety and autonomy of survivors, aligning with established best practices** in trauma-informed and survivor-centered legal processes.

We respectfully recommend that the Legislature ensure robust implementation of these exemptions, including clear procedures for identifying qualifying cases and providing appropriate support services for survivors. HB1962 HD2 SD1 represents **an important step toward a safer, healthier, and more just and equitable legal system for all families in Hawaii.**

We respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HB1962 HD2 SD1**, protecting survivors of domestic abuse from processes that may retraumatize or endanger them.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

LATE



April 6, 2026

RE: HB1962 HD2 SD1

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, April 7, 2026
TIME: 10:15 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

POSITION: SUPPORT

The League of Women Voters of Hawai'i County is in full SUPPORT of House Bill 1962 HD2 SD1.

The LWVHC has been an advocate for women's rights and freedoms for over a century. As a member of the Hawai'i Women's Coalition, we align in support of HB1962, which protects the rights of domestic violence victims in divorce proceedings here in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The League of Women Voters of Hawai'i County

League of Women Voters of Hawai'i County, P.O. Box 665, Hilo, HI 96721.

LATE

Dennis Dunn

Kailua, HI 96734

TO: **Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair**

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: **H.B. 1962, H.D. 2., S.D. 1, Relating to Family**

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 2026, 10:15 a.m.

Room 016

Good morning, Chair Rhoads Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Dennis Dunn, and I am testifying **in strong support of H.B. 1962, H.D. 1, Relating to Family**. This Bill exempts victims of domestic abuse from mandatory mediation in parentage proceedings. This exemption is not only a matter of compassion but a crucial step toward ensuring true justice and the safety of survivors. Allow me to outline the reasons why this exemption is necessary:

- **Safety Concerns:** Mandating mediation requires victims to interact, directly or indirectly, with their abusers, exposing them to risks of further harm, intimidation, or coercion. Granting an exemption is essential to protect their physical and emotional well-being.
- **Power Imbalances:** Domestic violence creates profound power differentials between parties. Mediation depends on equal footing and open negotiation—circumstances that do not exist when one party has exerted control of another through threats or violence. This bill recognizes and addresses these fundamental imbalances.
- **Risk of Re-traumatization:** The process of mediation can force survivors to revisit traumatic events or face their abusers, leading to emotional and psychological distress. Exempting victims from mediation spares them unnecessary trauma and promotes their recovery.
- **Lack of Voluntary Participation:** Effective mediation requires both parties to participate freely and in good faith. Victims may feel compelled to agree out of fear rather than genuine consent, undermining the integrity and fairness of any outcomes reached.

- **Legal Protections and Precedent:** Many jurisdictions already recognize the unique challenges faced by survivors and provide exemptions to prioritize their safety. This bill aligns with best practices and established legal protections.
- **Promoting Justice:** Most importantly, this exemption ensures that our legal process does not compromise justice by subjecting survivors to a process ill-suited to address abuse or protect their interests.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **support H.B. 1962, H.D. 2, S.D. 1** and stand with survivors in their pursuit of safety, dignity, and justice. Thank you for your time and consideration.