



March 15, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT of HB2289 HD1**, Relating to the Expenditure Ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund

To: Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

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

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2289 HD1, Relating to the Expenditure Ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund

Hearing: Monday, March 16, 2026, 3:02 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The State Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to advancing the rights, safety, and well-being of women and girls across Hawaii. Access to timely and accurate information for crime victims is essential to ensuring their safety and empowerment, particularly for survivors of gender-based violence. The Commission **supports HB2289 HD1** because it **directly affects the ability of victims to receive critical notifications about changes in the status of offenders, which is a vital component of victim-centered justice.**

Removing the expenditure ceiling on the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) System Special Fund will allow the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to adequately respond to increasing program costs and the growing demand for victim services. As the needs of victims evolve and the volume of cases rises, **maintaining an arbitrary cap will impede the system's ability to provide consistent, reliable notifications.** This is especially important for women and girls who may be at heightened risk and rely on such notifications for their personal safety and peace of mind.

Best practices in victim services emphasize the importance of accessible, up-to-date information as a means of supporting survivors' autonomy and recovery. **By repealing the expenditure ceiling, the bill aligns with these practices and demonstrates a commitment to prioritizing the needs of victims, including those who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, and other gender-based crimes.**

The Commission respectfully encourages this Committee to **pass HB2289 HD1**, ensuring that the SAVIN System can be fully resourced to meet the needs of Hawaii's most vulnerable. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2289, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE EXPENDITURE CEILING ON THE AUTOMATED VICTIM
INFORMATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SPECIAL FUND.

by
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Monday, March 16, 2026, 3:02 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Via Video Conference

Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **strongly supports** House Bill (HB) 2289, House Draft (HD) 1, which seeks to remove the \$600,000 annual expenditure ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund to address rising program costs and growing victim service demands. This change is necessary to ensure uninterrupted notifications and continued operational flexibility.

DCR is statutorily obligated to establish and operate the Statewide Automated Victim Information Notification (SAVIN) system which is administered by DCR's Victim Notification Services Office (VNSO). Under HRS §353-136(d), the SAVIN Special Fund must be used exclusively for the development and operating expenses of the system, including salaries and fringe benefits of positions as authorized by the legislature. Victims frequently contact SAVIN (24/7, 365 days per year) and DCR's VNSO not only for more than just notifications but also to seek information and connections to support services. Essential functions such as statewide SAVIN system monitoring, rapid issue resolution, and follow-up on victim inquiries may be compromised, potentially causing additional harm should there be even a minor delay or interruption of these services.

HB 2289, HD 1 Relating to the Expenditure Ceiling on the Automated
Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund.

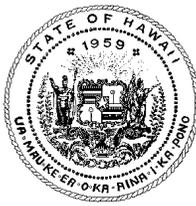
March 16, 2026

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Steady collective bargaining unit increases, rising costs of the SAVIN system contract, rent and lease expenses, including telephone and internet service charges, continue to reduce available operating funds, limiting the program's ability to advance. Under the current annual expenditure cap, we are unable to meet rising costs, maintain staffing levels, and preserve critical infrastructure, including system maintenance and office space. Eliminating the cap would allow VNSO to responsibly use available special funds as it was intended, to meet DCR's statutory mandate to efficiently operate the statewide SAVIN system.

Increasing victim registrations and escalating operational expenses, without the flexibility to address them expeditiously, directly threaten service reliability and victims' trust. HB 2289, HD 1, is a necessary adjustment and provides a practical, fiscally responsible solution to ensure DCR can continue its vital mission of protecting victims and strengthening public safety. We respectfully urge you to pass this measure and provide DCR's VNSO with the flexibility it needs to serve Hawai'i's communities effectively.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of HB 2289, HD 1.



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII – KA MOKU`ĀINA `O HAWAII`I
**CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION
COMMISSION**

Ke Komikina Uku Luaahi Kalaima

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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2289, HD1
RELATING TO THE EXPENDITURE CEILING ON THE AUTOMATED VICTIM INFORMATION AND
NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SPECIAL FUND

by

Pamela Ferguson-Brey, Executive Director
Crime Victim Compensation Commission

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Monday, March 16, 2026; 3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Good afternoon Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs. Thank you for providing the Crime Victim Compensation Commission (“Commission”) with the opportunity to testify before you today in strong support of House Bill 2289, HD1. HB 2289, HD1, removes the \$600,000 annual expenditure ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) system special fund to address rising program costs and growing victim service demands. Without this increase, the SAVIN program will not be able to serve the rising demand of victims and agencies that rely on timely notifications.

The Commission provides compensation for victims of violent crime to pay un-reimbursed expenses for crime-related losses due to physical or mental injury or death. In addition, the Commission serves on and formerly chaired the SAVIN Governance Committee, which guides the SAVIN program in Hawai`i. The Governance Committee is comprised of county victim service providers and advocates, crime victims, technology experts, and members of the criminal justice community.

The SAVIN program has provided tens of thousands of notifications to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, victim service providers, law enforcement agencies, and concerned members of the public with timely information about changes in an offender’s custody status. The ability for crime victims to have input in decision making about an offender’s release,

the impact of the offender's release on the victim's safety, as well as on the safety of the public, is dependent on timely notification which the SAVIN program provides.

In order to meet rising demand and support victims and survivors during the post-conviction process, it is necessary to remove the current expenditure ceiling. Since FY 2023, registrations in the SAVIN system have increased by 38.9% with 16,424 new registrations in 2 years. The rising cost of the SAVIN system and escalating operational expenses driven in part by collective bargaining increases, will continue to undermine the SAVIN program's funding base unless the ceiling is removed.

Thank you for providing the Commission with the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2289, HD1.

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2289 HD1

A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE EXPENDITURE CEILING ON THE AUTOMATED VICTIM INFORMATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SPECIAL FUND

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair

Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Monday, March 16, 2026 at 3:02 p.m.

Via Videoconference

State Capitol Conference Room 016

415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Fukunaga, Vice-Chair Lee and Members of the Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs, The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony **in strong support** of House Bill 2289, House Draft 1.

H.B. 2289 HD1 was drafted with the intent to remove the \$600,000 annual expenditure ceiling on Hawai'i's Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification System ("SAVIN") Special Fund to address rising program costs and growing victim service demands.

SAVIN offers victims, law enforcement, and all concerned citizens free, anonymous, and confidential access to timely information and notification on the custody and parole status of offenders under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Registered users receive notifications via email, text, phone call, and/or in-app. Live operator assistance is always available to field any questions the users may have. Registration information is not shared with offenders.

It often times seems as though our criminal justice system places greater emphasis and focus on offenders. We need more legislation and programs like SAVIN that support victims, their healing, crime prevention awareness, and promote public safety.

H.B. 2289 HD1 supports the funding necessary to continue to improve Hawai'i's victim notification and services, all the while contributing to a safer and healthier Hawai'i. For the foregoing reasons, the County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney **strongly supports** the passage of House Bill 2289, House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



LATE

March 16, 2026

Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs:

Chair Carol Fukanaga
Vice Chair Chris Lee
Rep. Troy N. Hashimoto
Rep. Lorraine R. Inouye
Rep. Samantha DeCorte

Re: SB2289 HD1 Relating to the Expenditure Ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund

Dear Chair Fukanaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs:

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. This bill is intended to lift the current expenditure ceiling on the SAVIN Special Fund. The SAVIN Special Fund is a critical funding source for SAVIN, the State's Automated Victim Notification System.

The SAVIN system ensures that critical information about victim safety is available to victims quickly, helping them make informed decisions and take prompt actions to protect themselves from offenders being released. Thousands of crime victims rely daily on SAVIN notifications to prepare for safety measures when an offender is released from custody. Victim advocates also depend on this system to alert them that victims will need immediate safety planning, crisis counseling, and emotional support.

When SAVIN was first initiated in 2012, it may have made sense to set an annual expenditure cap of \$600,000. However, current inflation rates and expanded staffing and equipment needs have left the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation struggling unnecessarily to meet funding needs for a growing, changing SAVIN program. This change is needed to sustain program development and improvement. The elimination of this arbitrary and outdated funding cap is essential for the efficient and effective operation of the SAVIN program.

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

Sincerely,
Angelina Mercado, Executive Director

HB-2289-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 5:27:38 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/16/2026 3:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2289 HB RELATING TO THE EXPENDITURE CEILING ON THE AUTOMATED VICTIM INFORMATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SPECIAL FUND.

HB-2289-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 1:09:07 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/16/2026 3:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carolyn Eaton. I am a resident of Honolulu and I strongly support lifting the current expenditure ceiling on the automatic victim information and notification system special fund. Rising costs and growing demand are important concerns and must be figured in to provide the special fund ample resources.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of keeping victims aware of any change in status of defendant(s), and generally maintaining the smooth running of our institutions providing justice to victims.



Dennis M. Dunn

Kailua, HI 96734

dennismdunn47@gmail.com

TO: **Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair**

Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

RE: **HB 2289, H.D. 1, RELATING TO THE EXPENDITURE CEILING ON THE
AUTOMATED VICTIM INFORMATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SPECIAL FUND**

HEARING: **Monday, March 16, 2026, 3:02 p.m.**

Conference Room 016

Good afternoon, Chair Fukunaga and Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs. I am providing testimony in **Strong Support of H.B. 2289, H.D. 1**. This Bill is intended to lift the current expenditure ceiling on the SAVIN Special Fund. The comments made in my testimony are drawn from my nearly 50 years of experience as an advocate for crime victims, forty-four of which were as an employee of the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney's Office, serving as Director of the Victim Witness Kokua Services from 1985 to 2022.

The SAVIN Special Fund is a critical funding source for SAVIN, the State's Automated Victim Notification System. I am proud to say that I was involved in the establishment of SAVIN, which was enacted by the Legislature in 2012. The initiation of SAVIN was a monumental accomplishment for crime victims in Hawaii as it ensured consistent and sustainable automated notifications about the custody status of individuals in the custody of the Department of Public Safety on a 24/7 basis. The SAVIN system ensures that critical information relating to victim safety is available to victims on a timely basis, allowing them to make important decisions and take timely actions to protect themselves from offenders who are being released

Thousands of crime victims depend daily on SAVIN notifications to prepare themselves to seek safety options when an offender is released from custody. Victim advocates also depend on this system to alert them that victims will need immediate safety planning assistance, crisis counseling, and emotional support. When SAVIN was first initiated in 2012 it may have made sense to have a \$600,000 annual expenditure cap., However, current rates of inflation and expanded needs for staff and equipment have left Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation struggling unnecessarily to meet the

funding needs for a growing and changing SAVIN program, This change is needed to sustain program development and improvement. The elimination of this arbitrary and outdated funding cap is essential for the efficient and effective operation of the SAVIN program. Please **support H.B. 2289, H.D. 1** as an effective means to accomplish this badly needed amendment to the SAVIN Special Fund.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.