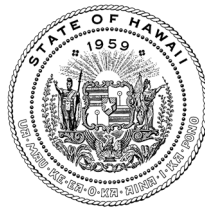


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
AND REHABILITATION**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima  
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**TOMMY JOHNSON**  
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Deputy Director  
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**Sanna Muñoz**  
Deputy Director  
Rehabilitation Services  
and  
Programs

No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2289, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE 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 Finance  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:31 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Via Video Conference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) **strongly supports** House Bill (HB) 2289, House Draft (HD) 1, Senate Draft (SD) 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 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 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.

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 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, SD 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 communities effectively.

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

**KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN**  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

**SHANNON M. KAGAWA**  
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## OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2289, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1

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

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 10:31 a.m.  
Via Videoconference  
State Capitol Conference Room 211  
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means, The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony **in strong support** of House Bill 2289, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1.

H.B. 2289, HD 1, SD 1 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, SD1 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, Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



April 7, 2026

Members of the Senate Committee on Ways & Means:

Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki  
Rep. Lynn DeCoite  
Rep. Brandon J.C. Elefante  
Rep. Troy N. Hashimoto  
Rep. Lorraine R. Inouye  
Rep. Dru Mamo Kanuha  
Rep. Michelle N. Kidani  
Rep. Donna Mercado Kim  
Rep. Chris Lee  
Rep. Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III  
Rep. Glenn Wakai  
Rep. Kurt Fevella

Re: HB2289 HD1 SD1 Relating to the Expenditure Ceiling on the Automated Victim Information and Notification System Special Fund

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways & Means:

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 support of HB2289 HD1 SD1. 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-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:27:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Llasmin Chaine	Testifying for Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

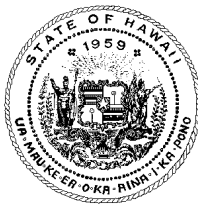
The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to advancing the rights, safety, and well-being of women and girls across Hawaii. The Commission **supports HB2289 HD1 SD1** because it **directly affects the resources available to support victims**, many of whom are women impacted by crime and gender-based violence, and it **addresses the capacity of the Automated Victim Information and Notification System (AVIN) to meet increasing demands for victim services**. Ensuring timely, reliable information and notification is essential for empowering survivors, enabling their successful safety planning, upholding their rights to information, and assisting in their recovery.

Removing the annual expenditure ceiling on the AVIN System Special Fund will allow the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to more effectively address increasing program costs and the expanding needs of victims. As the demand for victim services grows, maintaining an arbitrary funding cap hinders the system’s ability to provide consistent and comprehensive support. **National best practices emphasize the importance of robust victim notification systems as a critical component of trauma-informed care and public safety**. This is especially relevant for women, who are disproportionately affected by certain types of crime and who rely on timely notifications for their safety and peace of mind.

The Commission recognizes that expanding funding flexibility can help ensure that the AVIN System remains responsive to evolving technology, security requirements, and the diverse needs of victims. This aligns with **our commitment to advocating for policies that prioritize victim safety, health, and access to information**.

The Commission appreciates the Legislature’s attention to the needs of survivors and supports efforts to strengthen the state’s victim notification infrastructure. We respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HB2289 HD1 SD1**, repealing the expenditure ceiling on the AVIN System Special Fund. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



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

**Ke Komikina Uku Luaahi Kalaima**

1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1530  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
Telephone: 808 587-1143  
Fax: 808 587-1146

**MARI McCAIG BELLINGER**  
Chair

**CLIFTON Y.S. CHOY**  
Commissioner

**JO KAMAE BYRNE**  
Commissioner

**PAMELA FERGUSON-BREY**  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2289, HD1, SD1  
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 Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 7, 2026; 10:31 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Good morning Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. 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, SD1. HB 2289, HD1, SD1, 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, SD1.

Dennis M. Dunn  
Kailua, HI 96734

TO: **Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair**

**Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

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

HEARING: **Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:31 a.m.**

**Conference Room 211**

Good morning, Chair Dela Cruz, and Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. I am providing testimony in **Strong Support of H.B. 2289, H.D. 1, S.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, S.D. 1** as an effective means to accomplish this badly needed amendment to the SAVIN Special Fund.

Mahalo for your time and consideration