



February 9, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **HB2448**, Relating to Female Genital Mutilation

To: Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

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

Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HB2448**, Relating to Female Genital Mutilation

Hearing: Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women is dedicated to advancing the rights, safety, and well-being of women and girls in Hawaii. HB2448 is of critical importance to our mission, as it **addresses the serious and harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), which constitutes a violation of human rights**. By establishing both criminal penalties and civil remedies for victims, this bill represents a significant step toward protecting minors from gender-based violence and supporting survivors, thus the Commission's **support of HB2448**.

FGM is internationally recognized as a harmful practice with lifelong physical and psychological consequences. Its prohibition **aligns Hawaii with global standards and best practices** in safeguarding girls from gender-based violence, and prevents Hawaii from becoming a destination for "vacation cutting", in which girls from states where FGM is illegal are sent to Hawaii to undergo this harmful practice. The dual approach of HB2448, criminalizing the act and providing civil remedies, ensures that **perpetrators are held accountable while also empowering survivors** to seek justice and redress. This comprehensive framework reflects a victim-centered approach, which is essential for effective prevention, intervention, and support.

By clearly defining prohibited acts and establishing legal consequences, **HB2448 sends a strong message that FGM will not be allowed in Hawaii**. Such legislative action is consistent with the Commission's goal of advancing gender equality and protecting girls and women from harm.

The Commission appreciates the Legislature's commitment to the safety, health, and wellbeing of our community, and urges this Committee to **pass HB2448**. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2448

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 5:00:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Smart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE HB2448. If ths body considers it important to prohibit "female genital mutilation" then there is no reason to exclude so-called "gender affirming care". You can't have it both ways.

HB-2448

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 7:12:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I cannot support this bill enough. The fact that female genital mutilation was not explicitly illegal in this state is a failure on all of us. There is NO REASON to oppose this bill. **I STRONGLY URGE THIS COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT HB2448!**

HB-2448

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:41:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Smart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB2448 must pass with one absolutely essential amendment.

I support making it a criminal offense to perform genital mutilation on minors, men or women.

Delete the waiver mentioned in paragraph section (3) (c) that states:

“(c) Part of a gender affirming care requested by the person to whom the care is being provided.”

This deletion is necessary. Individuals (about 28 right now) who have been maimed as a result of “gender affirming care” (which is a misnomer since it those procedures deny the God-given gender of the individual) are suing the medical professionals and facilities (psychologist, plastic surgeon, and their employers).

Recently, a victim of this horrific procedure successfully sued the doctors for malpractice for 2 million dollars for performing a double mastectomy on her when she was 16 years old. The case was heard in the very liberal state of New York. This is just the beginning of the malpractice suits that are pending.

This issue was decided based on the doctor's failures to do an individualized assessment of her case and lack of communication with the rest of her "team", however, as patients learn that they can never actually transition to a different sex, there will be more lawsuits.

Everyone with minimal intelligence knows a man can never become a woman and a woman can never become a man. To "affirm" such a thing is a lie... and those who lie to minors will one day be held accountable for that lie, including legislators. It is another lie to say gender is "assigned at birth". We all know that gender is determined on day 1, when the male sperm enters the female egg. These days, the gender is announced well before birth because it is based on biological fact – not "feelings".

If the waiver is not removed, Hawaii will be complicit in medical malpractice surgeries (mutilations) on minors. Legislators must not put our state and its taxpayers in this type of child abuse, moral degeneracy, and financial jeopardy.

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If the waiver is not removed, Hawaii will be complicit in medical malpractice surgeries (mutilations) on minors. Legislators must not put our state and its taxpayers in this type of child abuse, moral degeneracy, and financial jeopardy.

Pass HB2448 with the requested amendment.

HB-2448

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 6:36:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O PIHA this bill, protect all girls from this practice!

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i

HB-2448

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 9:40:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Duffy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill for its strong and necessary protections against female genital mutilation of minors, recognizing it as a grave human rights violation and a form of child abuse that causes irreversible physical and psychological harm. However, I respectfully urge the Legislature to remove subsection (3)(c), which exempts procedures characterized as “gender affirming care.” This carve-out is unnecessary and risks creating legal and ethical contradictions within a statute intended to protect children from non-therapeutic, irreversible genital harm. An increasing number of young adults—now numbering in the dozens—who underwent invasive medical interventions as minors are bringing malpractice claims against medical professionals and institutions, asserting failures of individualized assessment, informed consent, and long-term risk disclosure. Notably, a recent malpractice verdict in New York awarded substantial damages (\$2 million dollars) for irreversible surgery performed on a minor, signaling that courts are beginning to scrutinize these practices more closely. As awareness grows that biological sex cannot be changed, additional litigation is likely. Hawai‘i should not codify exemptions that may later expose providers, institutions, and the State itself to legal risk, or that undermine the bill’s core purpose: protecting minors from irreversible procedures lacking clear, long-term medical necessity. Removing this exemption would strengthen the bill’s consistency, child-protective intent, and legal durability while ensuring that genuine, narrowly defined medical emergencies remain appropriately addressed.