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**THE HONORABLE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii**

February 25, 2015

RE: H.B. 1198; RELATING TO APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE HONOLULU FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER.

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto and members of the House Committee on Finance, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in strong support of House Bill 1198, with amendments.

The Honolulu Family Justice Center (HFJC) is a public safety initiative developed by the Department that will provide comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence, sex assault and human trafficking as well as long-term transitional housing. The HFJC will provide victims with a safe environment during some of their most vulnerable stages of separation from their abusers and encourage increased trust and understanding between victims and police and prosecutors, to better facilitate and follow-through on prosecution of these offenses. This, in turn, will help to hold more offenders accountable for their actions, and ultimately decrease incidents of recidivism.

As part of its legislative package, the Department submitted House Bill 211, which requests \$350,000 as a grant-in-aid for the Honolulu Family Justice Center (HFJC). House Bill 211 is substantially similar to House Bill 1198. Both bills would provide grant funding for the HFJC.

House Bill 1198 differs from House Bill 211 as follows:

1. House Bill 1198 would appropriate monies for the HFJC “as a grant pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes”
2. House Bill 1198 adds language that, in addition to the hiring of necessary staff, the funds would be used for “[r]isk-assessment training regarding domestic violence and sexual abuse and trauma; and . . . [e]valuation services for victims . . .”; and
3. House Bill 1198 adds a requirement of matching funds for the HFJC on a one-to-one basis from the City and County of Honolulu.

The Department requests the following amendments to House Bill 1198:

- A. The reference to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, should be deleted as that chapter authorizes grant funding to individuals, private organizations and non-profit organizations but does not authorize funding for government agencies; and
- B. The HFJC will be providing training to HFJC staff including, but not limited to, risk assessment training regarding domestic violence and sexual abuse and trauma as well as evaluation services for the HFJC staff. The Department would prefer flexibility in the types of training that are provided to the HFJC staff and accordingly, respectfully requests that the enumeration of specific types of training be deleted from House Bill 1198.

The Department has no objection to the matching fund requirement in House Bill 1198. The Department has requested the amount of \$350,000 for the HFJC in its FY16 operating budget request to the Honolulu City Council. In addition, the Honolulu City Council has already appropriated \$6,220,000 in the FY15 Executive Capital Budget which has enabled the City to purchase a 24-unit, 1-bedroom apartment building in Makiki to house the HFJC. The City fully supports the HFJC and has already made a substantial investment in the HFJC. It is anticipated that the City will continue its support of the HFJC with continued appropriations to fund the operations of the HFJC. Accordingly, the Department has no objection to the matching fund requirement in House Bill 1198.

For the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu strongly supports the passage of House Bill 1198, with the amendments as noted above. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this matter.



February 26, 2015

Good afternoon Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, members of the Finance Committee, I am Edwin Flores, the Executive Director for the Hawaii Family Law Clinic also known as Ala Kuola. We strongly support HB 1198.

We have supported prior efforts to pass similar legislation for the Honolulu Family Justice Center. We reiterate our strong support for the underlying intent and purpose of this Bill.

There clearly is a need for a “one stop shop” to address ongoing situations of domestic violence, sexual abuse and related trauma that currently does not exist. Ala Kuola has already committed to the completion and filing of Family Court TROs for the Honolulu Family Justice Center. The Honolulu Family Justice Center is intended to provide a facility that provides comprehensive services to address all aspects of domestic violence at a single location, which has been lacking up to this point in time.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to present our position on HB 1198 and am ready to address any questions that the Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee members may have.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2015 6:09 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: breaking-the-silence@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1198 on Feb 27, 2015 13:30PM



HB1198

Submitted on: 2/26/2015

Testimony for FIN on Feb 27, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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