

‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke  
**Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine**

Testimony on behalf of the  
**Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women**  
Khara Jabola-Carolus, Executive Director

In support of SCR8/SR7  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Dear Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women supports SCR8 and SR7, which requests the Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women convene a task force to conduct a study on missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls and to submit a report on the study to the Legislature.

This legislation seeks to address the absence of information and coordinated response around the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) in Hawai‘i. SCR8 was inspired by First Nations organizing in Canada and across Indian country in United States. The Commission is concerned about the high rate of sexual violence against Native Hawaiian women and believes a similar, invisible may exist across Hawai‘i.

Women’s advocacy in Hawai‘i has not adequately addressed the unique experiences of Native Hawaiian women. MMIWG is a conversation about sexual violence and colonization. There is a nexus between MMIWG and sex trafficking— a crime which has an intense impact on individual and community well-being. Sexual trafficking and rape are an assault on human dignity.<sup>1</sup> Yet until 2019, there was no comprehensive data on the prevalence of sex trafficking victimization among Native Hawaiians or even on the sex market in Hawai‘i.

The Commission functions as the state’s information center on women and girls. In 2018, the agency in partnership with Arizona State University’s Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention and Research embarked to produce the first comprehensive research on sex trafficking in the state’s 61-year history. The pre-inquiry process of interviews with social service providers and criminal justice personnel indicated that Native Hawaiian women and girls are being sex trafficked in Hawai‘i, over state lines and even across international borders.

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<sup>1</sup> See Christine Boyle, *What Makes “Model” Sexual Offenses? A Canadian Perspective*, 4 BUFF. CRIM.L. REV. 487, 492 (2000).

In 2019, the Commission published peer-reviewed, empirical data that found:

- 77% of 22 sex trafficking victims were Native Hawaiian, and 100% identified as women<sup>2</sup>
- 64% of 97 sex trafficking victims, and 75% identified as women<sup>3</sup>
- Current overrepresentation of Native Hawaiian women and girls in sex trafficking at present may be directly linked vulnerabilities that trace to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i—that is, land dispossession, exposure to sexual violence, hypersexualization, incarceration, cultural dislocation, intergenerational trauma, mental and emotional distress, racism, poverty, and ongoing inequities<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, the Commission supports this legislation as an important step to radically improve the safety of Native Hawaiian women in Hawai‘i.

Sincerely,  
Khara Jabola-Carolus

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<sup>2</sup> Jabola-Carolus, K. & Roe-Sepowitz, D., *Sex Trafficking in Hawai‘i Part II: The Stories of Survivor*, Arizona State University, Jan. 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Jabola-Carolus, K. & Roe-Sepowitz, D., *Sex Trafficking in Hawai‘i Part III: Sex Trafficking Across Hawai‘i*, Arizona State University, Feb. 2020.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 1.



### SCR8/SR7

## REQUESTING THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kuleana Hawai‘i

Pepeluali 9, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Hālāwai Keleka‘a‘ike

The Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** SCR8/SR7. Particularly given recent indications that Native Hawaiians may be disproportionately represented among sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, and sex abuse victims – who in turn may be at a heightened risk of being murdered or going missing – **OHA supports the improved data collection, reporting, and analysis envisioned in this measure, as a critical first step to identifying and preventing what may be a serious problem affecting the Native Hawaiian community.**

Recent data indicate that Native Hawaiian women and girls may be disproportionately represented among victims of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation.<sup>1</sup> Most recently, the Hawai‘i Commission on the Status of Women, in partnership with Arizona State University and Child and Family Services, published the third part of a multi-part report examining sex trafficking in Hawai‘i. Although the survey underlying this most recent publication could rely on only a limited sample of 363 willing participants, nearly 27% of participants surveyed were identified as having been sexually trafficked, with 64% of these trafficking victims identifying as Native Hawaiian.<sup>2</sup> Alarming, 23% of the trafficking victims were first trafficked before the age of 18.<sup>3</sup>

This recent report supplements data that further demonstrate the high risk for sexual victimization within the Native Hawaiian community. For example, the Sex Abuse Treatment Center has indicated that, between 2001 and 2010, Native Hawaiians represented the largest ethnic group among their intake of sex abuse victims.<sup>4</sup> Further, a more recent OHA study also revealed that Native Hawaiian girls are vastly

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<sup>1</sup> ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION & THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, SEX TRAFFICKING IN HAWAI‘I PART III: SEX TRAFFICKING EXPERIENCES ACROSS HAWAI‘I 5 (2020).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> DAWNA NELSON, EVELYN YANAGIDA & CAROL PLUMMER SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS IN HONOLULU: A 2001-2010 STATISTICAL PROFILE 24 (2012).

overrepresented among juvenile runaways,<sup>5</sup> and data show that one third of runaway youth will be approached for sexual services within 48 hours of being on the street.<sup>6</sup> In addition to—and perhaps partially due to—“land dispossession, exposure to sexual violence, hypersexualization, incarceration, cultural dislocation, intergenerational trauma, mental and emotional distress, racism, poverty, and going inequities”<sup>7</sup>—Native Hawaiian youth may, therefore, be particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse.

**The potential prevalence of sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, and sexual abuse of Native Hawaiians heightens concerns that Native Hawaiians, and particularly Native Hawaiian women and girls, may be at a higher risk of being murdered or going missing.** However, as described in OHA’s report *Haumea: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Women and Empowering Wāhine Well-Being*, there is a need for much better data collection generally on violence perpetrated against Native Hawaiian women, especially young women and girls, including through data disaggregated by age, race, and gender. Such data may be critical to better understanding and addressing the social and systemic contexts of violence against Native Hawaiian women and girls, including their murder or disappearance.<sup>8</sup>

**OHA accordingly appreciates and supports the improved data collection, reporting, and analysis envisioned by this measure, which constitute critical first steps to understanding and addressing the potentially heightened risk of Native Hawaiian women and girls going missing, being murdered, or being otherwise subjected to violence or abuse.**

OHA fully supports this effort and looks forward to participating in this Task Force to better protect and uplift the most vulnerable of Native Hawaiian women and girls.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** SCR8/SR7. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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<sup>5</sup> OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, HAUMEA: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING 74 (2018).

<sup>6</sup> Ho’ōla Nā Pua, Re/imagine: A Capital Campaign to Rebuild Pearl Haven, <https://hoolanapua.org/re-imagine/> (last accessed Feb. 3, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION & THE HAWAI’I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, SEX TRAFFICKING IN HAWAI’I PART II THE STORIES OF SURVIVORS 9 (2019).

<sup>8</sup> THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS HAUMEA: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND EMPOWERING WĀHINE WELL-BEING 7, 84 (2018).



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

**Testimony to the Thirty-First State Legislature, 2021 Regular Session**

**Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs**

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keahokalole, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 1:00 pm  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

by

Rodney A. Maile

Administrative Director of the Courts

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

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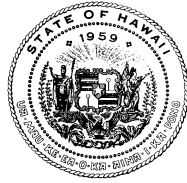
**Measure No. and Title:** Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8 / Senate Resolution No. 7,  
REQUESTING THE HAWAI‘I STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO  
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE  
HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

**Judiciary's Position:**

The Judiciary respectfully supports the intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8, which requests that the Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women convene a task force to conduct a study regarding missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls.

The Judiciary is committed to participating in the newly-created task force to effectuate its purpose as stated in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.C.R. 8**

**REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE  
HAWAIIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS.**

SENATOR MAILE S.L. SHIMABUKURO, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Hearing Date: 2/9/2021

Room Number: Via Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports S.C.R. 8 requesting the  
3 Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW) to convene a task force to improve  
4 the health of Native Hawaiian women and girls at-risk for all forms of violence including  
5 domestic violence and involvement in sex trafficking and the sex industry. The DOH agrees for  
6 the director or designee to serve on the task force.

7 This resolution seeks to address the lack of awareness, data, and information surrounding the  
8 issue of missing and murdered women and girls of Hawaii's indigenous people. The Hawaii  
9 Crime Prevention and Justice's Missing Children's database reports 11 female and 6 male Native  
10 Hawaiian children are among the currently 57 missing and endangered children, some for more  
11 than 20 years.

12 The task force objectives support the DOH with information and data that will assist in  
13 developing and distributing information to prevent violence, sexual trafficking, and the  
14 promotion of healthy outcomes for Native Hawaiian females. The DOH currently provides  
15 trainings and resources to domestic violence partners on teen dating, developing respectful  
16 healthy relationships, and a sexual violence prevention train-the-trainer curriculum for educators  
17 of middle and high school students. Additionally, the DOH-supported statewide network of

- 1 family planning providers conduct annual trainings on identifying and screening for domestic
- 2 violence and abuse of adolescents and women of reproductive age.
- 3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 3:31:33 PM

Testimony for HWN on 2/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Field	Testifying for Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports SCR 8/ SR 7.





**Papa Ola Lokahi**  
Nana I Ka Pono Na Ma

**Papa Ola Lokahi**

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808.597.6550 ~ Facsimile: 808.597.6551

**Papa Ola Lokahi**

is a non-profit Native Hawaiian organization founded in 1988 for the purpose of improving the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians and other native peoples of the Pacific and continental United States.

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**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice-Chair

**IN SUPPORT**

**SCR 8 - REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY MISSING & MURDERED NATIVE HAWAIIAN GIRLS**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 1:00 PM, Videoconference**

February 9, 2021

Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board established in 1988 through the federal Native Hawaiian Health Care Act (Title 42 USC 122), **SUPPORTS** SCR 8 that convenes a task force to further explore the plight of missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls.

Recent reports from the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women (2020) and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (2018) indicate a serious dearth of information in this area of health to understand the depth and breadth of the risks and harms posed to Hawaiian women and girls. The findings from these reports indicate that the need for such a study is critical, particularly considering the current climate of economic and social uncertainty, increased domestic violence and emotional instability, caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

As you are aware, Papa Ola Lōkahi is concerned with the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians and their families. Thus, we are committed to serve on the Task Force as proposed in this measure, participating in the actions outlined in the resolution. Furthermore, we appreciate the diversity represented in a Task Force made up of subject matter experts, community representatives and State agency officials.

Papa Ola Lōkahi urges the legislature to support this effort to protect Hawai'i's women and girls, recognizing that this group may also extend to individuals who do not necessarily identify as women or girls, such as mähū, non-gender conforming, queer, and other identities who also face these injustices.

In addition, we call to attention the need to identify the perpetrators of violence and harm against Hawaiian women and girls whenever possible to seek healing for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR8 (and HCR11).

**LATE**

**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:30:37 PM

Testimony for HWN on 2/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Munoz	Testifying for Ho'ola Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Honorable Members,

Ho'Ā• la NÄ• Pua is in support of the convening of a task force within the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women that will study and report on missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls.

We know firsthand that good data is imperative to better understanding of a problem. There is a movement to better track the number of missing and murdered indigenous women globally. Native Hawaiians are currently not counted. As evidenced by the statistics provided in this resolution, Hawaii follows the trend of native trauma we see in other states reporting high numbers of murdered and missing indigenous women and children.

There is a lack of comprehensive state and federal data on missing and murdered indigenous people. Often, these crimes are linked to incidents of sexual violence and human trafficking. Rural areas are harder hit due to unique challenges and complexities of limited resources, and there is a strong sense that in native communities there is an underreporting of cases. Though several state and federal task forces have sprouted nationally dedicated to Native Americans and Alaskan Natives, there has yet to be a focus on Native Hawaiians.

By working together on this task force, the entities involved have the opportunity to identify, understand, and tackle the systemic racial and economic disparities that foster cycles of violence, poverty, and crime so that in addition to reviewing past cases, we can stop future ones from occurring.

We are willing and eager to participate on the task force described in the resolution. We urge the committee to support SR 7 and SCR 8 to prioritize our most vulnerable and exploited populations.

Respectfully,

Ho'Ā• la NÄ• Pua



**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:52:55 AM

Testimony for HWN on 2/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tea™sha Kahumoku-Derricotte	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support said task force to be commissioned to study missing and murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls.

**LATE**

**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:33:14 PM  
Testimony for HWN on 2/9/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Fern Anuenue Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for supporting this bill senators!