HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENCE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE PERPETRATED BY WOMEN AGAINST MEN IN HAWAI'I.

WHEREAS, abuse is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another and battering is a behavior that physically harms, arouses fear, prevents a household member from doing what that person wishes or forces that person to behave in unwanted ways; and

WHEREAS, battering includes the use of physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation, emotional abuse, and economic deprivation; and

WHEREAS, domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender; can happen to couples who are married, living together, or who are dating; and affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels; and

WHEREAS, the most commonly recognized facts about domestic abuse focus on the plight of women being abused by men; and

WHEREAS, for example, about one out of every four women in the country will be physically assaulted or raped by an intimate partner at some point in their lives and are more likely to be assaulted, injured, raped, or killed by a male partner than by any other type of assailant. Estimates of assaults on women by partners range from approximately two to four million annually in the United States. The majority of women killed at work are murdered by a current or former intimate partner; and

WHEREAS, domestic abuse can also be perpetrated by women against their male partners, which is a situation that largely goes unnoticed or ignored; and

WHEREAS, according to various websites devoted to exploring domestic abuse perpetrated by women against men, up to 835,000
men are battered each year, reflecting the hidden side of
domestic abuse; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2003 article in the Florida State University Law Review by Dr. Jill Kelly (vol. 30, pp. 792-793):
"The 1977 assertion that 'the phenomenon of husband battering' is as prevalent as wife abuse is confirmed by nationally representative studies, such as the Family Violence Surveys, as well as by numerous other sources. However, despite the wealth and diversity of the sociological research and the consistency of the findings, female violence is not recognized within the extensive legal literature on domestic violence. Instead, the literature consistently suggests that only men commit domestic violence. Either explicitly, or more often implicitly, through the failure to address the subject in any objective manner, female violence is denied, defended and minimized"; and

WHEREAS, this view of domestic abuse has skewed arrest and prosecution philosophies and shaped how rehabilitative programs are geared toward producing only programs that address male violence; and

WHEREAS, this is reason to believe that this situation also exists in the State but the problem is largely unacknowledged; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the Department of Human Services is urged to investigate the incidence of domestic abuse perpetrated by women against men in Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human Services is further urged to reshape its programs that relate to education, prevention, protection, treatment, or rehabilitation of persons in an abusive relationship to account for men being abused by their women partners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human Services is requested to report findings and recommendations to the Legislature, including any necessary proposed legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2011; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services.

OFFERED BY: [Signatures]

JAN 26 2010