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**THE HONORABLE COLLEEN HANABUSA, CHAIR**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
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State of Hawai'i

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**RE: S.B. 2433 - MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CAREER CRIMINAL PROSECUTION UNITS AND VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

Chairs Ige and Hanabusa and members of the Senate Committees on Intergovernmental Affairs and Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs, the County of Kauai Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony in support of Senate Bill 2433.

The purpose of this bill is to appropriate grants-in-aid to the counties for career criminal prosecution units and victim witness assistance programs. These programs are integral parts to the prosecution of crimes on Kauai.

Currently, the County of Kauai Office of the Prosecuting Attorney receives \$168,027 for its Career Criminal Prosecution unit, and the Kauai Victim Witness Assistance Program receives \$54,741. These are down from a total state grants (Attorney General appropriation and legislative grant-in-aids) of \$311,980 and \$96,548, respectively, from Fiscal Year 93-94.

More specifically, the Career Criminal Prosecution unit includes 1.4 attorneys at annual salaries of \$45,000 and

\$19,200, respectively. These amounts are extremely low, given that the Kauai County Council recently mandated that the range of pay for deputy prosecutors to be from \$60,000 to \$66,000 annually. This means that there is less money to pay a career criminal prosecutor, someone who should have a lot of experience, than a new district court deputy prosecutor. Coming up with funds to make up the pay difference if this appropriation is not approved would mean termination of clerical positions in our office. This would be detrimental to the career criminal prosecution program, especially because career criminal cases are increasing in number.

Regarding the Victim Witness Assistance Program, this program is much used, especially by women, children and grieving families. The advocates and staff are specifically trained to work with crime victims and witnesses, including those with special needs. Deputy prosecutors ask these individuals for, among other things, help with preparing victims and witnesses to testify in court, for helping to arrange for transportation to court for victims and witnesses, and for providing emotional support for victims and witnesses at the courthouse. The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney's efforts to prosecute crime would be severely diminished without the services of the Kauai Victim Witness Assistance Program.

For these reasons we support the passage of Senate Bill 2433, and thank you for this opportunity to testify.