

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



MARIE C. LADERTA
DIRECTOR

CINDY S. INOUE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
235 S. BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

April 1, 2008

**TESTIMONY TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND
JUDICIARY AND LABOR**

For Hearing on Thursday, April 3, 2008
2:45 P.M., Conference Room 225

BY

MARIE C. LADERTA, DIRECTOR

**Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 102 and Senate Resolution No. 57
Requesting the Departments of Public Safety and
Human Resources Development
to Increase the Salaries and Improve the Benefits
That are Provided to Deputy Sheriffs**

TO CHAIRPERSONS WILL ESPERO AND BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND MEMBERS OF
THE COMMITTEES:

S.C.R. No. 102 and S.R. No. 57 request that the Departments of Public Safety and Human Resources Development negotiate increased salaries and benefits for Deputy Sheriffs.

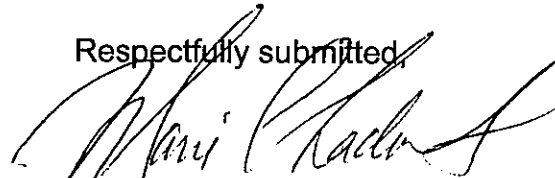
The Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) **opposes** the resolutions since it is more appropriate to rely on the collective bargaining process, rather than through legislation, to ensure that salaries and benefits are fair to the employees and the public employers.

The Deputy Sheriffs' salaries and benefits through June 30, 2009 are set forth in the current Bargaining Unit (BU) 03 collective bargaining agreement that the State, other jurisdictions, and the Hawaii Government Employees Association negotiated in 2007 for all BU 03 employees. These important contract terms are normally and historically bargained for during mutually-scheduled contract negotiations, whereby salaries and benefits for the whole bargaining unit are set for the entire contract period.

The parties will be exchanging our respective proposals for the next BU 03 agreement no later than June 16, 2008, to take effect on July 1, 2009. Nevertheless, HGEA requested discussions specific to the Deputy Sheriffs' salaries and benefits and we have held meetings with the HGEA on this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these important measures.

Respectfully submitted,



MARIE C. LADERTA



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME LOCAL 152, AFL-CIO

888 MILILANI STREET, SUITE 601 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2991



Randy Perreira *Executive Director*
Tel: 808 543-0011 Fax: 808 528-0922

Nora A. Nomura *Deputy Executive Director*
Tel: 808 543-0003 Fax: 808 528-0922

Derek M. Mizuno *Deputy Executive Director*
Tel: 808 543-0055 Fax: 808 523-6879

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Committee on Public Safety

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
April 3, 2008

**S.C.R. 102/S.R. 57 – REQUESTING
THE DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC
SAFETY AND HUMAN RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT TO INCREASE THE
SALARIES AND IMPROVE THE
BENEFITS THAT ARE PROVIDED TO
DEPUTY SHERIFFS**

The Hawaii Government Employees Association strongly supports the purpose and intent of S.C.R. 102/S.R. 57. Deputy Sheriffs are a vital part of the state's law enforcement community. They are first responders who are responsible for law enforcement and protection of all persons, employees and the public, within state buildings and premises. Deputy Sheriffs are responsible for arrest and legal processing of all violators of state law. Their jurisdiction includes Judiciary and Executive Branches of government as well as harbors and airports. They are responsible for cooperating and coordinating with all other local, state and federal agencies responsible for law enforcement services in matters of mutual concern or whenever assistance or augmentation of law enforcement services are needed.

Despite their first responder status, Deputy Sheriff pay and benefits are no longer competitive in comparison with the four county police officers locally, or Deputy Sheriffs on the west coast. Law enforcement agencies from the Mainland have actively recruited well-trained Hawaii Deputy Sheriffs with more attractive compensation and benefit packages. It makes no sense to invest valuable resources training these employees only to have them leave for higher pay and better benefits elsewhere.

The recent arbitration award received by county police officers resulted in an even greater disparity in pay and benefits with state Deputy Sheriffs. For example, at the recruit level, police officers will earn about 30% more, effective July 1, 2008, and almost 25% more at the independent worker level. The pay differences will exceed 35% at the sergeant and lieutenant levels.


The Twenty-Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Committee on Public Safety

Re: S.C.R. 102/S.R. 57
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Other forms of compensation such as standard of conduct pay, uniform allowance, longevity pay, and educational pay are also lagging in comparison to west coast jurisdictions. Therefore, it is imperative that the Departments of Public Safety and Human Resources Development negotiate higher salaries and increased benefits with the Hawaii Government Employees Association that are competitive with the four county police officers and west coast Deputy Sheriffs.

We ask your assistance in passing this measure to urge the departments of Public Safety and Human Resources Development to address this very pressing problem of inequity. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.C.R. 102/S.R. 57.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora A. Nomura". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 102

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 3, 2008; 2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

Senator Espero, Taniguchi and Members of the Joint Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to request for your strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 102, which is requesting the Departments of Public Safety and Human Resources Development to increase the salaries and improve the benefits that are provided to Deputy Sheriffs.

The pay and benefits for Deputy Sheriffs are currently not competitive in comparison to county police officers or law enforcement officers on the west coast of the mainland. As first responder personnel in Hawaii have had a significant increase in compensation through recent years, the Deputy Sheriffs have not. The reason for this oversight may have been due to the fact the Deputy Sheriffs are included in Unit 3 and 4 of the HGEA. This fact would have made it difficult to separate benefit increases for first responder classes from the general unit membership that is largely comprised of clerical classes.

Without increasing the pay and benefits, we will continue to have difficulties recruiting, as well as, retaining trained and experienced Deputy Sheriffs as they leave for other county police departments or mainland police departments which provide better pay and benefits.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Lieutenant Robin Nagamine
Department of Public Safety, Sheriff Division

**COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY
&
COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY AND LABOR**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF:
SCR 102 AND SR57**

Aloha, Chair Espero, Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Hee, and members of the committees.

I am Lieutenant Michael Oakland of the State Sheriff's Division and I would like to submit testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Concurrent Resolution 102 and Senate Resolution 57.

As you are aware based on the language in these resolutions the Sheriff Division has been loosing deputies at an unprecedented rate. This loss can be compared to the same situation that the Honolulu Police Department was in before their new contract.

The Sheriff Division has lost (most recently) a significant number of deputies to the Renton Police Department in Washington State. This loss follows several visits by this particular law enforcement agency to recruit Deputy Sheriffs'. The Honolulu Police Department has been visited many times in the past, but they are not being as actively recruited because of their recent contract that brings them more on par with other law enforcement agencies across the country. I would like to also add that at the end of their current contract a Police Recruit (still in training) would be starting at \$45,000.00 dollars per year while a Deputy Sheriff Recruit will be starting at \$33,720.00. This by the way is more than I get paid as a Lieutenant. The gap grows when a Police Officer and a Deputy Sheriff gets on line and passes all probationary requirements from a Police Officer's pay at, \$53,268.00 and a Deputy Sheriff's pay at, \$36,504.00, and as time and rank go up so does the gap.

Some of the reasons that the Renton Police Department, King County Sheriff's Department, Arizona Highway Patrol, United States Customs and Boarder Protection/ICE, Seattle Police Department and several other departments have been and continue to "Poach" from us is that they can offer pay and benefits packages on a lateral transfer. The other agencies gain by saving a large amount of training funds because they are getting pre-trained Deputy Sheriffs', not to mention that the Sheriff Division has lost

several federally certified S.W.A.T. Team members from our Rapid Reaction Force and is the only Homeland Security Certified team in the State of Hawaii.

They gain while the Sheriff Division and the State of Hawaii loses because we have to try and recruit people from our state which has been and will continue to be difficult with a greater than 60% disparity in salary alone.

Although, the county police departments are the main First Responders for their islands, we are the state's First Responders. We do the same jobs as the police with some specific responsibilities as well as being able to enforce all laws and county ordinances on all islands with our statewide jurisdiction.

The Sheriff Division makes criminal cases, including investigations, issuance of traffic citations on all roadways within our state, respond to calls for service, hunt for wanted fugitives, provide narcotics and explosive canine (K-9) services, protect the Governor, the Lt. Governor and their families, visiting foreign and domestic dignitaries, the Legislature, The Judiciary and we also participate in several task forces to include the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Drug Enforcement Administration, United States Marshall Service, High Intensity Drug Traffic Area (HIDTA) as well as working with the county police departments in some joint operations.

I would also like to point out that after 911 the Sheriff Division was heavily relied upon with our very limited personnel and resources to step up to the point that most deputies were working their normal eight (8) hour shift then would go to the airport and work another twelve (12) hours and this occurred for quite a while. The Sheriff Division rose to the occasion and performed very well and more than most other agencies aside from the Hawaii National Guard. The Sheriff's Deputies as the states first responders is the only first responders to be forgotten in the pay and benefit packages that have been given to all others and to include the fact that we are the only first responders who have to work for thirty (30) years before we can retire.

As has been mentioned in the media we are very aware that the Council on Revenues show a "**SLOWING**" Hawaiian economy, but they also said that the economy is still growing but just at a slower rate. The economy hasn't stopped growing, nor has the economy recessed.

I would like to conclude by thanking all of you for hearing these measures and I will remain in the room to answer any questions you may have.