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April 16, 2008

TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEES ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND
PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

For Hearing on Thursday, April 17, 2008
11:30 A.M., Conference Room 312

BY

MARIE C. LADERTA, DIRECTOR

**Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 102, SD 1,
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 ALEX SONSON AND CINDY EVANS AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEES:

S.C.R. No. 102, SD 1, requests 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 resolution 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,


for MARIE C. LADERTA

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 102,SD1

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

Representative Alex Sonson, Chair
Representative Bob Nakasone, Vice Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Representative Cindy Evans, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 17, 2008; 11:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

Representative Sonson, Evans and Members of the Joint Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to request for your strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 102, SD1 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



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
April 17, 2008

**S.C.R. 102, S.D. 1 – 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.D. 1. The deputy sheriffs are a vital part of the state's law enforcement community. They are first responders who conduct criminal and civil investigations on cases within their jurisdiction, which includes persons and properties in the Judiciary and Executive Branches of government and Honolulu International Airport. Deputy sheriffs also transport inmates for court appearances.

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 deputy sheriffs 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, county 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.

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

Re: S.C.R. 102, S.D. 1 – Requesting the Departments of Public Safety and Human Resources Development to Increase the Salaries and Improve the Benefits that are Provided to Deputy Sheriffs

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the Hawaii Government Employees Association that are competitive with the four county police officers and west coast deputy sheriffs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.C.R. 102, S.D. 1

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora A. Nomura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nora" being the most prominent.

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director