



**Testimony of
Thomas Smyth, Board Member**

LATE TESTIMONY

**Before the
House Committee on Public Safety
Thursday, April 2, 2009
9:30 am Room 309**

**On
HCR 295/HR 267**

**Requesting the Department of Public Safety To Identify A Plan To Collect
Unadjudicated Fines And To Consolidate Its Backlog of Warrants**

Chair Hanohano, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee:

The Downtown Neighborhood Board supports HCR 295 and HR 267 that asks the Department of Public Safety to develop a plan to collect past fines and reduce the warrant backlog.

The Downtown and Chinatown areas have a major public safety issue with street crime. The unusually aggressive shooting of a man right outside of our Neighborhood Board meeting place on Pauahi St. by River Street last Saturday is just the most recent example of the drug-related criminal activity growing in our neighborhood. We appreciate the excellent work by HPD, in cooperation with federal authorities, who arrested two of the three individuals who apparently committed this tragic street killing. We are relieved that no one else was injured. But it could happen again at any time and our neighbors might be in the line of fire.

Our concern with this crime and the purpose of these resolutions are that so many times those who are later arrested for committing street crime in our neighborhood have outstanding warrants that have yet to be served. We feel that if warrants were processed and served in a timelier and responsible fashion, some of these criminals, many with a long list of previous offenses, would be taken off the streets. We understand that there are many obstacles to improving the administration of warrants, ranging from computer processing to the personnel shortages that prevent more aggressive service of warrants.

We also support the concept of allowing our counties, whose personnel collect unadjudicated fines, to retain those fines to help pay the growing cost of local public safety. It is a matter of fiscal fairness.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

