



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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February 3, 2011

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

House Bill 1614 - Relating to a Silver Alert for Missing Senior Citizens

The Disability and Communication Access Board supports the intent of House Bill 1614 to establish a Silver Alert program that targets seniors who have a diminished mental capacity. This is particularly important for those elderly whose disability impairs their ability to understand their surroundings and can easily be unable to find their way home, making them increasingly vulnerable to harm.

This bill asks for a program to be established in conjunction with the Maile Amber Alert program, although there is no appropriation. We do not know of if there is a cost involved and defer to the implementing agencies on the fiscal impact.

We urge your favorable consideration of this bill because it assist will families to locate missing seniors.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Fischlowitz-Leong

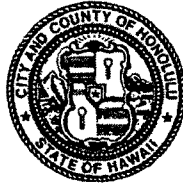
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Chairperson
Legislative Committee

Francine Wai

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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OUR REFERENCE **BN-NTK**

February 3, 2011

The Honorable Henry J. C. Aquino, Chair
and Members
Committee on Public Safety
and Military Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino and Members:

Subject: House Bill No. 1614, Relating to a Silver Alert for Missing Senior Citizens

I am Britt Nishijo, Captain of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Honolulu Police Department, City and County of Honolulu.

The Honolulu Police Department opposes House Bill No. 1614, Relating to a Silver Alert for Missing Senior Citizens. Unlike the Maile Amber Alert Program that is used for criminal abductions of children in life-threatening situations, missing person cases are not criminal in nature. The Honolulu Police Department actively investigates cases when a senior citizen is reported missing who has Alzheimer's, dementia, or an impaired mental condition that poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the senior citizen. Because the jurisdiction of the Honolulu Police Department encompasses the entire island of Oahu, there are no jurisdictional communication problems that have prompted similar legislation on the mainland.

Upon receiving the report, an All Points Bulletin is broadcast island-wide for the missing person. Investigators make contact with the family to obtain more detailed information and a photograph of the missing person. A flyer is created and distributed to The Bus, shopping centers, hotel security, sheriffs at the airport, and all patrol districts. Investigators may utilize the police helicopter, tracking dogs, or trained search and rescue personnel to assist in the search if deemed necessary. Areas where the missing person is known to have lived or frequented in the past are also checked.

Serving and Protecting With Aloha

The Honorable Henry J. C. Aquino, Chair
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Investigators work with the media to request the public's assistance to help locate these missing senior citizens. These measures have been very successful. In 2009, there were 87 reported Alzheimer's or dementia-related missing persons cases. Of those, 87 were found within twenty-four hours. In 2010, there were 54 reported and of that number, all were found within twenty-four hours.

Passage of the Silver Alert for Missing Senior Citizens may confuse the public and may be detrimental to the existing Maile Amber Alert Program that is used in only the most severe criminal cases where children are kidnapped and are in immediate danger of death.


The Honolulu Police Department urges you to oppose House Bill No. 1614, Relating to a Silver Alert for Missing Senior Citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


BRITT NISHIJO, Captain
Criminal Investigation Division

APPROVED:



LOUIS M. KEALOHA
Chief of Police