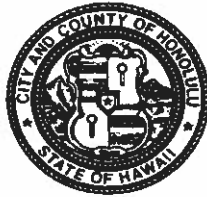


## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

## CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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February 9, 2012

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Human Services  
The Honorable Will Espero, Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Public Safety,  
Government Operations, and Military Affairs  
The Senate  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Chun Oakland and Espero and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 2071  
Relating to Criminal History Record Checks for County Employees

The Department of Human Resources **strongly supports** Senate Bill 2071. The purpose of this bill is to provide county agencies the ability to access national criminal history record information in addition to state conviction information for the purpose of determining employment suitability. Specifically, this bill will enable us to obtain criminal history record information for current and prospective employees involved in liquor control investigations, and prospective employees for firefighting, emergency medical services, emergency management, and for community based personnel who work with vulnerable adults.

The Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu, and our Civil Service Rules require that our system of personnel administration be based on merit principles. State law defines the merit principle as it pertains to employment and selection, as "the selection of persons based on their fitness and ability for public employment and the retention of employees based on their demonstrated appropriate conduct and productive performance." Part of the City's process in determining the "fitness" of prospective employees is reviewing whether or not they have a criminal history record, and if they do, determining the relevancy and impact that the conviction(s) would have on their fitness (i.e., suitability) for the job for which they are being considered.

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
and Members of the Committee on Human Services  
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and Members of the Committee on Public Safety,  
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It is our duty to make prudent hiring decisions regarding the suitability of the individuals who are hired for the kinds of jobs that this bill addresses. Applicants are NOT automatically disqualified for having an arrest or court record. Rather, a careful study is done which includes an opportunity for the prospective candidate to provide relevant information or input on the findings.

Since technological advances have made it possible for individuals outside of the State of Hawaii to view and apply for jobs in Hawaii, we have seen an increase in the number of out-of-state and recently relocated candidates who apply for civil service jobs in our jurisdiction. Without the proposed changes, we will not have an effective means of reviewing prospective employees' convictions that occurred out-of-state. The proposed legislation will give us the ability to efficiently obtain national criminal history record information not just for our prospective employees in recreational or child care programs who work in close proximity to children, but also for the other specified categories of employees/prospective employees who we believe work with similarly vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Yours truly,



Noel T. Ono  
Director