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TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 130,
SENATE DRAFT 1
URGING THE STATE SHERIFF TO CREATE A WORKING
GROUP TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR COMBATING
THE ILLICIT DRUG ABUSE EPIDEMIC IN THE STATE

by
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Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Gilbert S.C Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 4, 2017; 1:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Chairs Keith-Agaran and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, and Member of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **appreciates the intent** of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 130, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which urges the State Sheriff to create and convene a working group to: 1) develop a course of action and possible operations that could be established and deployed to combat the drug epidemic in the state, including but not limited to expanding the special operations canine unit; 2) discuss cross jurisdiction issues, if any, among federal, state, and county law enforcement agencies; and 3) submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2018 that includes data and statistics on narcotics and money trafficking through the State's five major

airports, how the drug epidemic is impacting the State's communities, and a plan of action to combat the illicit drug abuse epidemic in the State. PSD, however, offers the following comments.

First, PSD notes that the Director of the Department of Transportation, who maintains jurisdictional authority over all Hawaii airports, may be more properly designated as the convening authority of this working group. The Sheriff Division is the law enforcement agency at Oahu airports only based upon a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Transportation. The Sheriff Division is not assigned to any of the neighbor island airports.

Second, PSD further notes that the suggested recommendation that data and statistics on "how the drug epidemic is impacting the State's communities" be deleted or clarified as such a report is subjective and may be wide-reaching to include areas such as social services and education, beyond just law enforcement services provided by the State sheriffs and other county and federal law enforcement agencies.

Third, if SB 658, which proposes a new Hawaii Airport Corporation, is passed and established by this Legislature, then PSD suggests that this resolution be deferred and delayed to include the oversight of that proposed overall statewide authority. The department notes that the state Sheriff Division has law enforcement duties and responsibilities limited to Oahu only based on a Memorandum of Agreement with the state Department of Transportation.

Fourth, PSD notes that SCR 130, on page 1, lines 23 – 31, states that the Sheriff Division special operations canine unit deploys teams to detect bombs, narcotics, and currency. This special operations canine unit currently has five teams. All teams, however, are not specifically tasked to the Honolulu International Airport, other than one narcotics canine and handler team that assists at the airport and one currency canine and handler team that assists with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Finally, SCR 130, SD 1 shifts the focus from a plan of action and proposal for a phased-in implementation of a statewide canine special operations program to the development of a course of action to combat the illicit drug epidemic in the State. Page 2, lines 6 – 10 of SCR 130, SD 1 specifically states that this development of a plan of action and possible operations includes, but is not limited to, expanding the use of the canine unit for drug detection.

PSD notes, as we did in our prior testimony on a proposed bill which sought to establish the special operations canine unit and special fund with fifty (50) permanent full time deputy sheriff canine handler positions and canines across the State, the cost of implementing such a program is significant. Just as an example, for two deputy sheriff positions to work a regular 8 hours a day, five days a week schedule, PSD's normal operational plan is to estimate for three (3) deputy sheriffs to assure that both positions are covered in the event of leave by either of the deputies prompted by sick, vacation, comp time, training, Family Leave, and other issues. Three deputy sheriffs for the full fiscal year would cost \$224,135. This cost estimate includes initial equipment issuance, but does not include differentials afforded by the collective bargaining agreement for canine handlers, explosive canines, and canine decoys conducting bite training, nor does it include the costs of additional training to become canine handlers.

Each canine must be purchased at an estimated cost of \$15,000. Also, each canine team must be equipped with a vehicle for transportation and care, and a sports utility vehicle is estimated at \$45,000 each. Secure kennels and training areas would need to be secured for each island, not to mention dog food, supplies, and veterinary costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.