



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE, 2018**

LATE

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 2852, RELATING TO THE WEED AND SEED STRATEGY.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS

DATE: Thursday, February 1, 2018 **TIME:** 1:35 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

TESTIFIER(S): Russell A. Suzuki, First Deputy Attorney General, or
Julie Ebato, Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division
Administrator

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Executive Budget.

In the last grant-in-aid, the Weed and Seed Project provided community policing strategies; prevention, intervention and treatment activities; and neighborhood restoration. The Weed and Seed Project included and benefited youth, seniors, and neighborhoods in the Weed and Seed sites: Kalihi-Palama-Chinatown, Ewa-Ewa Beach, and Waipahu. This includes but is not limited to: 22 community clean up or graffiti paint outs, 12 community traffic awareness campaigns, 36 citizen patrol and neighborhood security watch groups or training, 146 youths receiving back to school supplies, 18 senior safety presentations (for 488 seniors), 23 Na Alakai Youth Leadership activities (for 445 youth), 2 Town Hall meetings on underage drinking and drug use (150 attendees), monthly steering committee meetings focused on capacity building and monitoring ongoing projects, and participation in the Celebrate Safe Communities event at the Leeward Community College.

We respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill.

LATE

January 31, 2018

The Honorable Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair
The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
& Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military
Affairs
State Capitol Room 229
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

RE: SB2852 http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2016/CommReports/HB1580_HSCR152-16_.pdf –
RELATING TO THE WEED AND SEED STRATEGY

My name is Deanna Espinas, Board President of the Friends of Waipahu Cultural Garden Park.

I am appealing for your support of SB2852 to sustain the Weed and Seed program in Kalihi-Palama-Chinatown-Ala Moana-Sheridan, Waipahu, and Ewa-Ewa Beach.

Weed and Seed is a collaborative effort involving law enforcement, residents, non-profit organizations, community groups and private businesses that have helped to reduce violent and drug-related crimes in my community.

- I am an avid supporter of Weed and Seed, because I have seen the improvement in my community through decreased crime and increased community awareness of illegal activities. They have realized that crime prevention must start at a younger age and they work with elementary, intermediate and high school students to combat and prevent substance abuse, truancy and gang involvement. They've organized graffiti paint outs and participated in beautification projects. They've assisted in creating neighborhood security watches in the most at-risk neighborhoods and have empowered the residents to report illegal activities promptly.
- They work with the 6th graders at Waipahu and Honowai Elementary for their "Real and Powerful Sessions" educating the students about juvenile laws, substance abuse and illicit activity and help to empower the students to make safer choices as they age.
- They were instrumental in hosting the first meeting in Waipahu to discuss how the community can support the state and federal government concerning prison re-entry into the community.
- They were instrumental in hosting the first discussions regarding the over representation of Polynesian youth in the Juvenile Justice System. This led to the creation of the Civil Citation program which was implemented in Kalihi to divert first time offenders into a culturally based program instead of into the Juvenile Justice System.
- They are an integral part of the Waipahu Community Coalition and help to provide safe, healthy, drug-free activities for the residents of Waipahu. It is a pleasure working with such dedicated professionals to improve Waipahu and I look forward to working with them in future projects.

Weed and Seed is an important community resource which needs to be continued. Your continued support of this important initiative will ensure that community leaders and partners continue to build a strong network of committed citizens that will work toward preventing crime and growing strong, healthy communities.

I urge you to support Weed and Seed by supporting SB2852 so that we can continue to ensure for the safety of all stakeholders in these communities.

Sincerely,

Deanna Espinas
Board President, Friends of Waipahu Cultural Garden Park
2103 Palolo Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816

Cell: 228-6345
espihawaii@juno.com

LATE

SB-2852

Submitted on: 2/1/2018 3:21:13 PM

Testimony for PSM on 2/1/2018 1:35:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tricia Dang		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support the continuation of the weed and seed program through the appropriation of funds to support (1) Law enforcement ; (2) Community policing; (3) Prevention, intervention, and treatment programs; and (4) Neighborhood restoration.

The numbers and facts show for itself. The program matters, it reduces crime, it improves neighborhoods, and it reduces the potential for criminal experiences that negatively impact the lives / pathways of the many youth & at-risk youth that live in these lower-income neighborhoods.

There are so many challenging factors affecting families today. The weed and seed program is a positive solution to reduce and eliminate a many of these hurdles that can often plague the daily lives of people in our community.

Thank you,
Tricia Dang

Born, raised, educated, and working on Oahu.