

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

NOLAN P. ESPINDA
DIRECTOR

Cathy Ross
Deputy Director
Administration

Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata
Deputy Director
Corrections

Renee R. Sonobe Hong
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 3079
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

by

Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

LATE

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 28, 2018; 10:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **strongly supports** Senate Bill 3079, which would establish one full-time equivalent lieutenant position in the Sheriff Division, Kona unit and appropriate funds for the initial six-month period and for the one-time costs for the purchase of uniforms and equipment.

The Sheriff Division, Hawaii Section is responsible for all courthouses in Hilo, Waimea, and Kona, including the physically separated drug and family courts. One lieutenant, whose office is currently in Hilo, supervises this vast geographical area of control. A second lieutenant for the Kona unit will allow for more effective and efficient supervision of the line deputies and enhance the capacity of the Sheriff Division to provide the necessary services to the Judiciary and the Hawaii Island community

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

LATE

SB-3079

Submitted on: 2/27/2018 10:32:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patrick K. Kawai	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY ON SB 3079 RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

By

Patrick K. Kawai

Private Citizen

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran

Day, Date, Time

State Capitol, Conference Room #

Chair Dela Cruz; Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

My name is Patrick K. Kawai and I'm submitting written testimony as a private citizen opposing Senate Bill (SB) 3079. I am employed by the Department of Public Safety Sheriff Division as the current Lieutenant on Hawaii Island. I have been the Lieutenant here on Hawaii Island since June 2009. The purpose of SB 3079 is to establish one full-time equivalent permanent Lieutenant position in the Kona unit of the sheriff division within the department of public safety and the appropriate funds to support the position. While I appreciate the legislatures support for additional positions, the establishment of

a Sergeant's position for the Kona unit will be more effective, efficient, and appropriate. SB 3079 identifies that:

the current level of staffing in the sheriff division on the island of Hawaii, particularly in the Kona unit, is inadequate for the sheriff division to properly perform its duties. Further, the legislature finds that the sheriff division Kona unit would be more effective and efficient with proper staffing

The inadequacy of the Sheriff division on the island of Hawaii, Kona unit in the past had to do with inadequate amount of positions, sluggish recruitment, attrition, collective bargaining rights to vacation and sick leave, and the geographic separation of the Kona Judiciary facilities. Since my arrival, my Kona positions grew from 10 positions to 17 positions, all of which are currently filled. Currently, the daily major challenges to provide adequate staffing are court ordered transports (off-island and on-island), execution of court orders, and the geographic separation of the judicial facilities. The completion of the new Kona Courthouse shall minimize the challenges for court ordered transports because the new facility is geographically closer to the Kona airport. In addition, the consolidation of the Kona Judicial facilities into one location shall make the assignment of Deputy Sheriffs less challenging. Of the current 17 position in Kona, 1 of those positions is a Sergeant. Therefore, currently, 1 Sergeant manages, directs, and assigns duties for 16 subordinate Deputy Sheriffs. This span of control ratio is overwhelming for anyone. The establishment of a Sergeant's position will be a more effective, efficient, and appropriate course of action to accomplish the goal of having the sheriff division perform its duties. In addition, fiscal appropriations for a Sergeant's position will be less than that of a Lieutenants position.

As the Lieutenant for the Sheriff Division, Hawaii Island, I currently supervise 3 Sergeants. 2 in Hilo, and 1 in Kona. In the past, I have made numerous requests through my administration for an additional Sergeant position in Kona because my Kona Deputy Sheriff positions were growing but never got another Sergeant position. I have managed the Hawaii Island Sheriff Section through subordinate supervisors for the judicial facilities on Hawaii Island and other duties as I am required. Therefore, there was never a need for me, the Lieutenant, to have to be physically present at any courthouse daily. My position description identifies that I supervise functional programs through subordinate supervisors. I provide direction, advisement, and leadership to any of my current 3 Sergeants when needed. The creation of a Sheriff Lieutenant position for Kona is not only fiscally irresponsible, it is not needed, and redundant. The creation of an additional Sheriff Sergeant position for Kona would be more appropriate, effective, and efficient to carry out the mission of the Sheriff Division. Furthermore, if a Kona Lieutenant position is appropriated and the position description is similar to my current position description, the Kona Lieutenant would only be responsible to supervise 1 Kona Sergeant. More importantly, the creation of a Kona Lieutenant would in essence, separate the Hawaii Island Sheriff Section and impede the continuity of services that the Hawaii Island Sheriff Section currently provide for the Judiciary, other agencies, and the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.