



Committee: Senate Committees on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs and on Education
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 21, 2018, 2:46 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 229
Re: *Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in opposition to S.C.R. 65, Requesting Federal Funding to Provide Resource Officers in Every School in Hawai'i*

Dear Chair Nishihara, Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("*ACLU of Hawai'i*") writes *in opposition to* S.C.R. 65, which, in light of recent school shootings, including the recent shooting in Parkland, Florida, requests the Honolulu Police Department to report the costs of funding on-campus school resource officers in intermediate schools and high schools on the island of Oahu.

The ACLU of Hawai'i supports taking a hard look at the systems designed to protect our children in Hawai'i and there are a number of effective measures that do not raise any civil rights concerns, including investing in community mental health services, adding more school counselors, and expanding programs to help our youth develop the skills to navigate crises.

Students, however, should not have to bear the burden of additional measures. Already, kids, especially Native Hawaiians, Filipino, Marshallese, Palauan, Micronesian, and students with disabilities, are being referred to law enforcement for misbehavior once handled by school administrators. Adding more school resource officers without defining their role will inevitably increase such referrals, which in Hawai'i already appears to be high according to U.S. Department of Education data.

School shootings and school violence are complex problems that require a thoughtful response. Over policing students—just as arming teachers—is neither effective nor fair to the students. For example, in Florida, eighty percent of districts already have an officer at every high school; many have more than one. And yet, they are too often involved in routine discipline, resulting in increased youth interaction with the criminal justice system. We have heard similar anecdotal evidence from Kaua'i where school resource officers are also used.

In summary, hastily reacting to tragedy without examining the current system to keep students safe would be counterproductive. Therefore, we respectfully request that your Committee defer the matter to consider what set of measures would be most effective to keep Hawai'i students safe without compromising their civil rights.

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LATE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Mateo Caballero
Legal Director
ACLU of Hawai'i

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for 50 years.

LATE

SCR-65

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 6:58:52 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2018 2:46:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Vehemently OPPOSE this bill. WE do not need a KNEE Jerk reaction to the shootings on the continent. WE need to make decisions that are based on what is best for our community schools. OUR schools are not prisons, nor should they be made to act like them. JUST because you put an officer in a school does not make the school safer. The FACT that we have military surrounding our entire island of O'ahu does not keep us safer. We do not need HPD in the schools, we need the legislature, the State etc. to stop the school to prison pipeline. We need to feed kids who are hungry and those who have no home.

We already have police officers standing around watching cars in a construction zone. How much overtime are they going to lock in by standing in a school "just in case".

PLEASE rethink this and any other bill being put forward that arms or puts arms into a school.

C. Burghardt

Retired educator