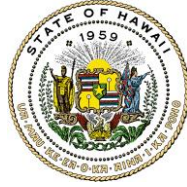


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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 958,
RELATING TO THE HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

By

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA
ADJUTANT GENERAL
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, and Members of the Committee on Corrections, Military, & Veterans.

I am Major General Kenneth Hara, Adjutant General, Director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security Advisor.

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides written testimony in SUPPORT of HB 958.

The proposal of HB 958 changes the current rank requirement to become the Adjutant General from the minimum rank of a field grade officer (Major at the grade of O4) to a federally recognized Colonel at the grade of O6 in the Army or Air Force. Furthermore, it also requires that the selected Colonel has the ability to be promoted into the rank of Brigadier General.

In today's strategic environment, the rank of Major does not have the military education and experience to operate at the level of Senior Colonels and General Officers. Yet the position of Adjutant General for the State of Hawai'i requires the Adjutant General to operate and make decisions with military education and experience commensurate of a Senior Colonel. An education and experience gap of approximately ten years exist between the rank of Major and Colonel. In order for the State of Hawaii to maintain credibility among its National and International counterparts, and have the best person possible to lead the National Guard in a natural or manmade disaster, Hawai'i needs an Adjutant General with the military education and experience that a Senior Colonel has as well as the ability to be promoted and federally recognized as a General Officer within the Army National Guard or Air National Guard.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to support of HB 958.

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