



HAWAII WING HEADQUARTERS
CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
419 Lele St.
Honolulu, HI 96819



31 January 2024

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2241
RELATING TO CIVIL AIR PATROL**

**TESTIMONY TO:
REPRESENTATIVE MARK J. HASHEM, CHAIR
CORY M. CHUN, VICE CHAIR
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS**

**BY:
COLONEL STACY HARUGUCHI
COMMANDER, HAWAII WING, CIVIL AIR PATROL**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT, AS AMENDED** HB 2241, Relating to the Civil Air Patrol. This bill proposes an appropriation of funds for operational expenses of the Hawaii Wing of the Civil Air Patrol.

The Civil Air Patrol is the auxiliary of the United States Air Force and is composed of volunteers across the country. Its mission includes emergency service, aerospace education and cadet programs. Last year alone, Hawaii Wing delivered \$3,006,935 worth of volunteer hours to the state during 10 Search and Rescue Missions, 2 Disaster Relief Missions, and 7 air defense intercept training and evaluation missions, and state support missions besides providing 495 cadet and Air Force Junior ROTC orientation flights.

The Hawaii Wing of the Civil Air Patrol has over 700 volunteers, 42 aircrew members, 360 emergency service qualified members, 7 radio repeaters, 81 VHF/FM radios, 4 HF radio stations, a Starlink terminal, 10 aircraft and 14 corporate vehicles distributed between all four counties at 10 different operating locations. Although the Federal Government provides approximately \$5 million worth of equipment and the funds for maintenance, it does not cover overhead costs associated with facility maintenance, utility costs, phone and internet services and some state specific training such as tsunami warning missions. In years past, the State of Hawaii was gracious enough to assist CAP with these costs. In 2019, the State redirected CAP funding to support critical COVID 19 activities. As this emergency has become manageable, CAP seeks to reestablish funding for our mission.

In the last 2 years, the Hawaii Wing carried out its missions through alternative funding sources ranging from donations collected from its members to fundraisers. However, this alternate revenue stream was found to be inadequate and forced the Wing to operate at an approximate \$10,000 per year deficit. It is for this reason that we ask that our funding be restored so we may focus on carrying out our mission and serving our community.

Over 80 years ago, Civil Air Patrol was created to prepare our country in the event of a foreign attack. Over the years, this role has evolved to now include providing support to our emergency management agencies during natural disasters. The Hawaii Wing has provided critical services to the State of Hawaii in times of emergencies and has worked closely with local emergency management agencies in all four counties and the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. We have conducted missions that included, but not limited to: Search and rescue, damage assessments, aerial photographs of impacted areas, alerts and notifications, and transportation of supplies to remote locations.

Most recently, CAP conducted numerous missions after the Lahaina Fires. Missions included damage assessments, the loan of a Starlink terminal to augment internet availability in Lahaina, aerial photography and alerts and notifications via CAP aircraft with loudspeakers to provide notification in areas that were not serviced by cellular or ground based loudspeakers. In addition, CAP members volunteered for approximately 2 months in the Maui County Emergency Operations Center acting as the “air boss” and coordinating FAA flight restrictions over Lahaina. Additional tasks considered, but thankfully not required, included acting in coordination with the Maui Fire Department and Army National Guard as aerial fire spotters during high or extreme fire conditions. Although CAP is willing to support, our lack of training as fire spotters and lack of interoperable radio equipment with some agencies limits our utility.

In situations where the State is threatened by a tsunami, CAP aircrew are called upon to use aircraft mounted speakers to alert remote areas not otherwise serviced by the state’s emergency alert system. For over 50 years, Hawaii Wing has been an integral part of the State of Hawaii Tsunami Warning System and historically provided aerial warnings along the shorelines, potentially saving the lives of thousands of residents and visitors. Hawaii Wing provides a critical service to the State covering areas where there is poor cell coverage, no ground emergency broadcast system sirens exist, or where sirens are inoperative. Governmental agencies will be stretched to their limit during an actual tsunami due to the compressed response times involved. Consequently, it is essential to maintain equipment and personnel to competent currency levels required to perform this life saving mission. Your support is key to our long term ability to provide quality and reliable Volunteer emergency support services to the State of Hawaii.

In order to facilitate our ability to fulfill these missions, I request that the following amendments be included in the bill:

1. HRS 42F-103(b)(2) be amended to read as follows:

“(2) Has bylaws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which a grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided [-] ;

provided that the requirements of this subsection shall not apply to any incorporated agency or instrumentality of the United States wholly owned by the United States or by a corporation wholly owned by the United States.”

2. HRS 261-6(a) be amended to read as follows:

“(a) [Beginning] Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, including chapter 42F, beginning in fiscal year [1988-1989 and in accordance with chapter 42F,] 2024-2025, the sum of \$190,600 annually or so much thereof as may be necessary shall be [granted] appropriated by the legislature from the general fund to carry on the operations and defray the expenses of the Hawaii, wing civil air patrol; provided that not less than [\$3,000] \$10,000 shall be allocated to each Hawaii based civil air patrol unit that meets minimum requirements established by national headquarters and has demonstrated its capability to respond to emergencies within the State. Beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, funds required to be appropriated under this subsection shall be included in the department of defense’s annual budget request.”

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT AS AMENDED** HB 2241, Relating to civil air patrol.