

SHOPO



STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS
" A Police Organization for Police Officers Only "
Founded 1971

March 22, 2023

VIA ONLINE

The Honorable David A. Tarnas
Chair
The Honorable Gregg Takayama
Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Rooms 442, 404
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **SB 346 SD1 – Relating to the Emergency Vehicles**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Takayama, and Honorable Committee members:

I serve as the President of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers (“SHOPO”) and write to you on behalf of our Union in **strong support** of SB 346 SD1. This bill amends HRS § 291C-26(c) to make the use of emergency sirens by authorized emergency vehicles discretionary.

As noted in the measure, the use of sirens by emergency vehicles can be and is necessary to alert other vehicles and pedestrians that an emergency vehicle is exercising its authority to disregard certain traffic laws. However, use of the sirens is not always necessary or mandatory. The unnecessary use of a siren contributes to noise pollution, especially in heavily-congested residential areas. Further, providing emergency responders like police officers with the discretion to use their sirens will alleviate noise pollution, the unnecessary disturbance of our citizens who are sleeping at night when the streets are empty of cars and pedestrians, as well as curb unnecessary traffic situations and panic. This Act will provide much needed flexibility in the use of sirens by emergency response vehicles in certain circumstances.

We thank you for allowing us to be heard on this very important issue and hope your committee will unanimously support this bill and allow this bill to take effect upon its approval.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT “BOBBY” CAVACO
SHOPO President

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SB-346-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2023 11:41:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Curtis Miller	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Resolution Presented to Waikiki Neighborhood Council

Whereas sirens do NOT significantly increase the timely delivery of patients to hospitals; (1)

Whereas sirens do NOT significantly increase the timely arrival of fire personnel to accident sites; (1)

Whereas civilian safety is NOT enhanced by siren use; (2)

Whereas ambulance use of sirens is associated with increased risk of ambulance crashes. (3,5)

Whereas many motorists cannot hear sirens due to driving habits; (4)

Whereas limiting use of sirens will DECREASE risk of injury and death; (6)

Whereas siren use has LITTLE bearing on patient outcomes; (2)(7)

Whereas traffic in Waikiki is significantly reduced between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am;

Whereas fire and EMT sirens are a daily occurrence that create significant disturbances;

Whereas such disturbances greatly affect the peace and sleep patterns of residents in Waikiki;

Resolved, that the Waikiki Community Council urges the Honolulu Fire Department to eliminate

the deployment of sirens between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am.

Further, the Waikiki Community Council urges the Honolulu Fire Department to re-examine its coding policy in order to reduce the number of code three extreme emergency dispatches during all hours, day and night.

(1) Clawson, International Academies of Emergency Dispatch <https://bdnews24.com/health/sirens-loud-ineffective-and-risky-experts-say>

(2) Kupas, etal, National Association of State EMS Directors [https://naemsp.org/NAEMSP/media/NAEMSP-Documents/Annual%20Meeting/2021%20MDC%20Handouts/Joint-Statement-on-Red-Light-and-Siren-Operations-with-Logos-FINAL-\(003\).pdf](https://naemsp.org/NAEMSP/media/NAEMSP-Documents/Annual%20Meeting/2021%20MDC%20Handouts/Joint-Statement-on-Red-Light-and-Siren-Operations-with-Logos-FINAL-(003).pdf)

(3) Watanabe, etal, Annals of Emergency Medicine <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30648537/>

(4) Monmouth Ocean Hospital Service Corporation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivHTkZa7z0E>(5) Saunders, Prehosp Disaster Medicine <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/prehospital-and-disaster-medicine/article/abs/ambulance-collisions-in-an-urban-environment/F66595C98F8D38E43FD08A54530E12EC>

(6) Marques-Baptista, Prehosp Emergency Care, 2016 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20845321/>

(7) American College of Emergency Physicians <https://www.acepnow.com/article/ambulance-lights-and-sirens-should-only-be-used-when-the-benefit-outweighs-the-risks/?singlepage=1&theme=print-frien>

TO: Members of the Committee Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Natalie Iwasa, aka Bike Mom
808-395-3233

HEARING: 2 p.m. Friday, March 24, 2023

SUBJECT: SB 346, SD1, Emergency Vehicle Sirens - **SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 346, SD1, which would allow drivers of emergency vehicles to not use their sirens in certain situations.

YES! Please pass this! When I ride on my bike, I cover my ears when emergency vehicles pass, because the sirens are way too loud. Sometimes there are no other vehicles around, so it is really not necessary to have that blaring noise in all instances.

Please vote "yes" and help make our roadways a bit less noisy.