



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI
PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
FEBRUARY 1, 2024**

HB 1865 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE CAREER CRIMINAL PROSECUTION PROGRAM

Good afternoon, Char Tarnas and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901 and is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to supporting the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, on-line sellers, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

We are in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1865. This measure appropriates moneys to the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu for the career criminal prosecution unit; and declares that the appropriation exceeds the state general fund expenditure ceiling for 2024-2025.

Everyday retail stores are being repeatedly targeted by thieves and we are seeing an increase in shoplifting. Many people who steal are repeat offenders who are part of organized retail crime. In other words, they feel that that is their job to steal for a living and sell the items themselves or to someone who can fence these stolen items. These offenders often feel that they can get away with their crimes as they are non-violent and they are often not sentenced, fined, or given any consequences by the courts for their actions. However, over the past couple of years we are seeing a difference with the prosecutors taking on the career criminal cases and sending out the word those habitual offenders that will be prosecuted.

We ask that you please pass this measure.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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**THE HONORABLE DAVID TARNAS, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawai'i**

February 1, 2024

RE: H.B. 1865; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE CAREER CRIMINAL PROSECUTION PROGRAM.

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Takayama and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in **strong support** of H.B. 1865. This bill is part of the Department's 2024 legislative package, and we thank you for hearing it.

The purpose of H.B. 1865 is to provide the additional funding needed to maintain full coverage for the Department's Career Criminal Prosecution ("CCP") Unit. The amount needed to maintain operations for fiscal year 2024-2025 is **\$747,267**. This accounts for the difference between actual costs, and costs covered by funding from the Department of the Attorney General and the City and County of Honolulu.

Pursuant to legislation passed in 1979, and codified as Sections 845-1, 845-2, and 845-3, of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, the CCP program was created as a legislative mandate to address the disproportionate amount of serious crimes are committed by a relatively small number of multiple- and repeat-felony offenders, commonly known as "career criminals." The program, was originally provided full funding for county career criminal units. In recent years, the Department's CCP Unit had to be scaled back when there was insufficient funding to maintain full staffing. Money spent on CCP is an efficient use of resources, as it provides swift and effective justice to address some of Oahu's most worrisome individuals, and reduces heavy caseloads and long court delays. With your support, the Department will continue to have the resources necessary to protect our public from career criminals.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu **strongly supports** the passage of H.B. 1865. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

HB-1865

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 10:19:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/1/2024 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
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| Dara Carlin, M.A. | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Stand in SUPPORT