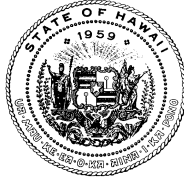


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'



KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.G.A, M.P.H
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
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doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2345 SD2
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION**

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Friday, March 15, 2024, 9:00 AM, Room 329/VIDEO

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (Department) supports this measure and
2 offers comments.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) provides the following
4 testimony on behalf of the Department.

5 The Department supports this measure, which proposes establishing the role of crisis
6 intervention officers within state and county law enforcement agencies. It also requires the
7 Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) to coordinate its crisis intervention training with other
8 agencies as appropriate. Officers trained in crisis intervention are equipped with additional
9 knowledge, empathy, and improved de-escalation techniques to respond to behavioral health
10 emergencies more effectively and safely.

11 AMHD already contracts with The Queen's Medical Center for the Mental Health
12 Emergency Worker (MHEW) program, designed to comply with Section 334-59(1), HRS, to
13 provide consultative support for law enforcement officers and promote timely assessments of
14 individuals who may have mental health issues, offering treatment options rather than
15 incarceration. MHEWs authorize involuntary transportation and hospitalization (also referred to
16 as "MH-1"), where a law enforcement officer or ambulance will transport the client to a

1 designated psychiatric receiving facility. In 2023, MHEWs made 2,280 MH-1 authorizations for
2 law enforcement statewide. All county police departments in Hawaii have successfully begun
3 offering crisis intervention training to their officers and should serve as models for
4 implementing this type of training among state law enforcement.

5 The Department requests that county and state law enforcement agencies continue to
6 consult with an MHEW. MHEWs are trained in emergency mental health assessment, including
7 signs and risks associated with serious mental illness, substance abuse, suicide, trauma,
8 domestic violence, and problems and risks unique to juveniles and the elderly, as well as other
9 issues relevant to the interaction between the person in crisis (also known as PIC) and law
10 enforcement. MHEWs are trained in de-escalation/disarming techniques, have a working
11 knowledge of case law concerning civil rights protections related to involuntary evaluation and
12 treatment, have completed training in police culture, police psychology, Assisted Community
13 Treatment (ACT), police assisted diversion (PAD), and best practice standards regarding
14 interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals experiencing mental health and
15 substance use related crises. MHEWs are licensed in Hawaii and have practical supervised
16 experience during the onboarding process, including supervised MHEW calls.

17 The Department is working with the DLE and the Police Departments to determine a
18 process to allow law enforcement officers to secure the safety of a situation upon coming upon
19 an individual who is putting themselves or others at imminent risk, and a delay in physically
20 assisting them may result in irreparable harm.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JON N. IKENAGA
STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER

DEFENDER COUNCIL
1130 NORTH NIMITZ HIGHWAY
SUITE A-254
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

HONOLULU OFFICE
1130 NORTH NIMITZ HIGHWAY
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STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

HAYLEY CHENG
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MAUI OFFICE
81 N. MARKET STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
TEL. No. 984-5018
FAX No. 984-5022

March 14, 2024

Committee on Health and Human Services
Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
415 Sout Beretania Street, Conference Room 329
State Capital
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony in Support of S.B. 2345, H.D. 2
Hearing: March 15, 2024, 9:00 AM

Dear Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Committee Members:

This letter is in support of S.B. 2345, H.D. 2 which would establish the role of crisis intervention officers in law enforcement and require the department of law enforcement to coordinate training of crisis intervention officers for state and county law enforcement agencies. The Office of the Public Defender supports this bill to the extent that it does not adversely impact priorities identified in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request for FY2025.

During a mental health crisis, law enforcement is usually the first to arrive on scene. The responding officer's interaction with the individual in crisis directly impacts how the situation will evolve. Training law enforcement to recognize situations where the individual is suffering from a mental health crisis and how to communicate with the individual in a manner which de-escalates the situation is vital in today's society. A law enforcement officer who is trained in "mental health first aid," including crisis intervention, de-escalation and prevention efforts, can prevent a mental health crisis from becoming dangerous or perceived as dangerous, thereby saving lives.

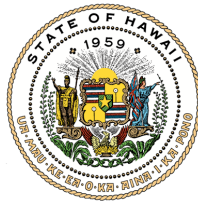
Crisis intervention training for law enforcement is critical in that law enforcement officers controls by their determination whether the individual will be arrested or transported for medical treatment. Under S.B. 2345, the individual can be safely transported to an appropriate medical facility for apt medical assistance. This is a significant step towards alleviating the burden on both the criminal justice system and the hospitals. A law enforcement officer trained in mental health first aid can divert those who should be treated for their medical issues as opposed to prosecuted and released from confinement without treatment. These individuals who suffer from substance abuse issues and/or mental illnesses are best served through and crisis intervention and treatment rather than the judicial system and endless hospitalizations, both of which are costly and are only a temporary panacea.

S.B. 2345 is a vital for those who struggle with mental health issues. They are a segment of our community which is omnipresent, but marginalized and struggling with frequent law enforcement contacts. Crisis intervention training will be another tool to assist this group and others who suffer a mental health crisis. Not only will S.B. 2345 assist law enforcement, but it will also benefit the criminal justice system, the agencies involved with the criminal justice system and the community as a whole.

Thank you for taking these comments into consideration.

Sincerely,
/s/ Taryn Tomasa
Deputy Public Defender

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



JORDAN LOWE
DIRECTOR

MICHAEL VINCENT
Deputy Director
Administration

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai

715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2345, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Before the House Committee on Health and Homelessness

Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 a.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 329, Via Videoconference

Testifier: Michael Vincent

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) **strongly supports** Senate Bill 2345, Senate Draft 2 and offers an amendment for consideration by the Committee.

This bill 1) requires the DLE to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers, 2) requires the Department of Health to coordinate the certification and training of crisis intervention officers by the DLE, 3) defines "crisis intervention officer," and 4) establishes positions and makes an appropriation.

The law enforcement goals of this bill are significant to all sectors of our community. Courts and legislative bodies have made it clear that our law enforcement officers are required to take a closer look when they arrive on scene, if they can safely do so, with the goal of better understanding any interaction, encounter, or response for the purpose of helping those who may be in crisis, suffering from some form of crisis or impairment whether physical, developmental, cognitive, psychological, mental health, or substance disorder influencing their behavior. When they can safely do so, officers do their best to look at the entire picture of the encounter when formulating what action needs to be taken. Training like this is a vital component to safe community-oriented policing.

The DLE strongly supports this bill this bill which helps our law enforcement agencies with the court and legislative mandates to train officers to respond and help those they encounter who may be suffering from some form of crisis or impairment whether physical, developmental, cognitive, psychological, mental health, or substance disorder influencing their behavior. The previous committee sought to ensure the ability for specially trained crisis intervention officers to determine if a person is imminently dangerous to themselves or others and have them transported to a designated behavioral health crises center for further evaluation. However, for clarification, the DLE is recommending an additional sentence in Section 4 of the bill by amending subsection 334-59(a)(1) to read as follows with the new proposed language to begin on Page 4, Line 5 of this bill:

(1) If a law enforcement officer has reason to believe that a person is imminently dangerous to self or others, the officer shall call for assistance from the mental health emergency workers designated by the director~~[]~~ or a crisis intervention officer. Upon determination by the mental health emergency workers that the person is imminently dangerous to self or others, the person shall be transported by ambulance or other suitable means~~[]~~ to a licensed psychiatric facility or designated behavioral health crisis center for further evaluation and possible emergency hospitalization. If a crisis intervention officer has probable cause to believe that the person is imminently dangerous to self or others, the person shall be transported by ambulance or other suitable means to a designated behavioral health crisis center for further evaluation and possible emergency hospitalization. A law enforcement officer may also take into custody and transport to any facility designated by the director any person threatening or attempting suicide. The officer

shall make application for the examination, observation, and diagnosis of the person in custody. The application shall state or shall be accompanied by a statement of the circumstances under which the person was taken into custody and the reasons therefor, which shall be transmitted with the person to a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or psychologist at the facility.

The DLE is requesting that the appropriation amount in Section 6 be \$500,000.

The DLE is requesting that the appropriation amount in Section 7 be \$163,000.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this very important bill.



SB2345 SD2 RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION
Meeting of the House Committee on Health & Homelessness

March 15, 2024

9:00 AM

House Conference Room 329

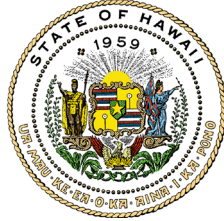
The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2345 SD2** which would require the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies. **OHA believes that this legislation would be a beneficial step in helping protect the public by ensuring that police officers have training to respond to mental health crises.**

The proposed measure aims to establish a new role for crisis intervention officers (CSI) within the state and county law enforcement agencies. It also requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate with other service agencies for crisis intervention training. Officers who undergo such training acquire additional knowledge, empathy, and improved de-escalation techniques. This enables them to respond more effectively and safely to behavioral health emergencies. The bill also requires the Department of Health to certify crisis intervention officers and authorizes such officers to order persons determined to be imminently dangerous to themselves or others to be transported to a designated behavioral health crisis center.

This measure directly addresses the ‘ohana pillar while supporting one of our four directions: health outcomes. By providing crisis intervention officers, it offers Native Hawaiian communities a compassionate and effective approach that is culturally sensitive and community oriented. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, as a program integrated with the wider mental health care system, including non-police crisis response, can serve as part of a comprehensive approach as far as how Hawai‘i addresses mental health crises in a more compassionate, culturally sensitive, and appropriate manner.¹

OHA appreciates the opportunity to testify on **SB2345 SD2** and urges the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui.

¹ Eric Westervelt, *Mental Health And Police Violence: How Crisis Intervention Teams Are Failing*, NPR, September 18, 2020.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING**
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR
Executive Office on Aging

Telephone
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2345 SD2
RELATING TO THE STATE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HOMELESSNESS
REP. DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR
REP. JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing: Friday, March 15, 2024, 9:00 A.M., Conference Room 329

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
- 2 Health (DOH) supports SB2345, SD2 provided that its enactment does not reduce or replace
- 3 priorities within the Administration's executive budget.
- 4 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates funds to the Department of Law Enforcement.
- 5 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of this bill is to establish the role of crisis intervention
- 6 officers within state and county law enforcement agencies; and require the Department of Law
- 7 Enforcement to coordinate the training of crisis intervention officers for state and county law
- 8 enforcement agencies and with other appropriate service agencies.

1 By 2025, the number of people living with Alzheimer’s disease in Hawai’i is expected to rise to
2 35,000. A person with dementia may not remember his or her name or address—and can
3 become disoriented. Additionally, six in ten people with dementia will wander at some point.
4 Encounters between individuals with dementia and law enforcement may increase.
5 EOA commends the legislature for acknowledging the magnitude of Alzheimer’s disease and
6 dementia. Providing officers with training that includes: (1) ways to recognize the signs of
7 Alzheimer’s disease and related types of dementia; (2) strategies to assess cognition; (3) best
8 practices on how to interact with persons living with the disease; and (4) strategies to best
9 identify and intervene in situations where the persons may be at particular risk of abuse or
10 neglect is essential for the safety and well-being of those living with Alzheimer’s disease or
11 dementia.

12 **Recommendation:** EOA supports the intent of this measure and defers to the Department of
13 Law Enforcement for implementation.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • TTY (808) 586-8162 • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 15, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Senate Bill 2345 SD2 – Relating to Crisis Intervention

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Bill 2345 SD2 – Relating to Crisis Intervention.

This bill requires the Department of Law Enforcement to certify crisis intervention officers and to coordinate their training on behalf of state and county law enforcement agencies.

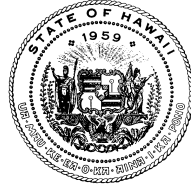
This bill will help individuals suffering from a mental health or substance-abuse crisis to receive appropriate responses from crisis intervention officers and treatment for their conditions. This treatment could reduce or eliminate the individual's reoccurring involvement with the criminal justice system.

Thank you for considering our position.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA
MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I



KATHERINE AUMER, PhD
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378, Room 256
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

**WRITTEN
TESTIMONY
ONLY**

STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Homelessness
COMMENTING on S.B. 2345 SD2
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Friday, March 15, 2024 9:00 a.m., CR329/Video

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IMMEDIATE PAST

CHAIRPERSON:

Richard I. Ries PsyD, MEd

EX-OFFICIO:

Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director
Behavioral Health Administration

WEBSITE:

scmh.hawaii.gov

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doh.scmhchairperson@
doh.hawaii.gov

Chairs Belatti, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii law, HRS §334-10, established the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) as a 21-member body to advise on the allocation of resources, statewide needs, and programs affecting more than one county as well as to advocate for adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbances, individuals with mental illness or emotional problems, including those with co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Members are residents from diverse backgrounds representing mental health service providers and recipients, students and youth, parents, and family members. Members include representatives of state agencies on mental health, criminal justice, housing, Medicaid, social services, vocational rehabilitation, and education. Members include representatives from the Hawaii advisory commission on drug abuse and controlled substances and county service area boards on mental health and substance abuse.

The State Council on Mental Health members unanimously support the intent of SB2345 SD2. In supporting this measure, the Council is looking for a continuum of care that can honestly respond to the treatment and recovery of individuals who have a mental illness. Recognizing that law enforcement officers are often the first people who can help individuals with mental illness and are in crisis, past and present Council members persistently advocated for crisis intervention teams (CIT) and CIT training across the State. The Council supports adequate funding for these components of the continuum of care.

VISION: A Hawaii where people of all ages with mental health challenges can enjoy recovery in the community of their choice.

MISSION: To advocate for a Hawaii where all persons affected by mental illness can access necessary treatment and support to live full lives in the community of their choice.



The Institute for Human Services, Inc.
Ending the Cycle of Homelessness

TO: Honorable Rep. Della Au Belatti,
Chair, House Committee on Health and Homelessness

Honorable Rep. Jenna Takenouchi,
Vice Chair, House Committee on Health and Homelessness

FROM: Connie Mitchell, Executive Director
IHS, The Institute for Human Services, Inc.

RE: SB2345 SD2 RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION.

HEARING: Friday, February 15, 2024 at 9:00 AM

POSITION: IHS supports the passing of SB2845

The Institute for Human Services, IHS, supports the passing of SB2345 and the coordination of intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers based on our experience working with chronically homeless persons who are afflicted with serious and persistent mental illness, requiring mental fitness assessments.

SB2345 requires that if a law enforcement officer(s) has reason to believe that a person is "imminently dangerous to self or others," the officer shall call for assistance from a mental health emergency worker or crisis intervention officer.

We have seen an increase in the need for specialized care for individuals struggling with mental illness, which often results in, often repeat, engagement with law enforcement. As such, NAMI Hawaii and Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction have coordinated crisis training for the Honolulu Police Department and Hawai'i County. So far, over two hundred officers have received such training to equip them with de-escalation skills, trauma response, and how to assist while protecting themselves. SB2345, as proposed, would empower law enforcement officers across the state to intervene in crisis situations with resources to de-escalate situations and better direct the individuals for additional mental health evaluation or assistance.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Homelessness
Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2345, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION.

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 2345, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Establish the role of crisis intervention officers within State and county law enforcement agencies; and
- (2) Require the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate the training of crisis intervention officers for State and county law enforcement agencies and with other appropriate service agencies.

This bill would also take effect on July 1, 2050.

On February 2, 2024, the Senate Joint Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs and Health and Human Services heard Senate Bill No. 2552, a measure that would require the Law Enforcement Standards Board to develop training materials related to the recognition and signs of Alzheimer's disease and related types of dementia, and require law enforcement officers to review training materials for at least one hour per year.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2345, Senate Draft 2
Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 a.m.
Page 2

After receiving unanimous support in written testimony, the Committee announced that the mandated training for dementia and Alzheimer's disease would be incorporated into Senate Bill No. 2345, another measure on that same agenda.

In that regard, the HPCA continues to support mandated law enforcement training for dementia and Alzheimer's disease. According to the Center for Disease Control:

- Alzheimer's disease is one of the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States;
- The 6th leading of death among US adults; and
- The 5th leading cause of death among adults aged 65 years or older.

In 2023, an estimated 6.7 million Americans aged 65 year or older had Alzheimer's disease. **This number is projected to nearly triple to 14 million people by 2060.**

Further, death rates for Alzheimer's disease are increasing, unlike heart disease and cancer death rates that are on the decline. Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, has shown to be under-reported in death certificates and therefore the proportion of older people who die from Alzheimer's may be considerably higher.

In Hawaii, Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health crisis:

- 29,000 people aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's in Hawaii;
- 6.7% of people aged 45 and older have subjective cognitive decline;
- 60,000 family caregivers bear the burden of the disease in Hawaii;
- 91 million hours of unpaid care are provided by Alzheimer's caregivers;
- \$1.9 billion is the value of the unpaid care; and
- \$240 million is the cost of Alzheimer's to the State Medicaid Program.

For these reasons, during the interim prior to the 2024 Regular Session, the HPCA worked closely with the Hawaii Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association in researching, drafting, and providing outreach on the bill that is presently before you. Accordingly, we are honored to partner with the Alzheimer's Association on this important measure and urge your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiipca.net.



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

To: The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members, House Committee on Health & Homelessness

From: Jacce Mikulanec, Director, Government Relations, The Queen's Health System

Date: March 15, 2024

Re: Comments on SB2345 SD2 – Relating to Crisis Intervention

The Queen's Health System (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 10,000 affiliated physicians, caregivers, and dedicated medical staff statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide comments noting our concerns with SB2345 SD2, requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers; and defining "crisis intervention officer" (CIO) and establishing positions. We appreciate the intent of SB2345 but, respectfully ask the Committee to please consider focusing on Section 2 of the bill that provides for training efforts by law enforcement and not on establishing the CIO position via statute.

Queen's Manamana (Punchbowl) emergency department is the busiest in the state and we have serious concerns that this program could exacerbate an already serious problem with individuals being transported to our emergency departments in the absence of adequate numbers of alternative behavioral health crisis centers. While training and equipping law enforcement officers with better skills to identify individuals experiencing a mental health crisis is beneficial it does not replace the clinical expertise of a mental health emergency worker or other trained licensed health professional in the assessment process (per HRS334-59).

The current AMHD emergency mental health emergency worker program (administered by Queen's) has worked effectively to provide law enforcement with timely assessments of individuals they encounter who are experiencing a mental health crisis.

We are committed to working with the stakeholders to further examine appropriate training and protocol to best accomplish the laudable and shared intent of safely providing crisis intervention services to those most in need while also keeping our community and law enforcement officers safe.

Mahalo for your considerations of our concerns on SB2345 SD2.

The mission of The Queen's Health System is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.

2024 Hawaii Leadership Board

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Community Advocate

Dr. Pokii Balaz, Immediate
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Tricia Medeiros, Past Chair
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Michael Robinson
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Gino Soquena
*Executive Director
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Companies*

Caroline Witherspoon
*President
Becker Communications*

LJ R. Duenas
*Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association*

Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Homelessness Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 a.m. Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329, and Videoconference

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2345 SD2 – RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Chair Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Ron Shimabuku, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the Alzheimer's Association. We testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill No. 2345 SD2.**

The Alzheimer's Association was established to assist those facing Alzheimer's disease and other dementias by providing local support groups and educational resources while advancing crucial research and public policy initiatives.

Alzheimer's disease is a public health crisis across the country. In Hawaii, approximately 29,000 individuals aged 65 and older live with Alzheimer's disease. This figure is projected to increase to over 35,000 by next year. A person with dementia may not remember his or her name or address—and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Six in ten people with dementia will wander at some point. When individuals with dementia are lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility—all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. As the disease progresses and individuals with dementia forget family members and societal norms, there may be cases of false reports and victimization, indecent exposure, and shoplifting.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- 1) Establish the role of crisis intervention officers within state and county law enforcement agencies; and
- 2) Require the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate the training of crisis intervention officers for state and county law enforcement agencies and with other appropriate service agencies.

We would like to underscore the definition of a **“crisis intervention officer” within in this bill, that is, a law enforcement officer who has been trained to recognize and communicate with a person in crisis or suffering from some sort of impairment, whether from dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or any physical, developmental, cognitive, psychological, or substance disorder influencing their behavior.**

On February 2, 2024, the Senate Joint Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs and Health and Human Services held a public hearing on Senate Bill No. 2552 which would require the law enforcement standards board to develop training materials related to the recognition and signs of Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. **Law enforcement officers would then review these materials annually at no cost for a minimum of an hour.** The training would include (1) strategies for recognizing the key signs of Alzheimer's disease and related types of dementia; (2) strategies for assessing cognition; (3) best practices for interacting with persons living with the disease; and (4) strategies to best identify and intervene in situations where the persons may be at particular risk of abuse or neglect. The bill received numerous supports from public and private sector organizations, and the community. The Joint Committee moved to place the dementia training language into Senate Bill No. 2345 which is before you for decision-making.

The Alzheimer's Association applauds the Department of Law Enforcement for acknowledging the significance of Alzheimer's disease and related dementia training. The "Silver Tsunami" is upon us. Dementia training for law enforcement officers is critical to meet the growing prevalence of the disease and ensure our state is dementia capable of protecting these individuals now and in the future. **We ask you to pass Senate Bill No. 2345 SD2.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. If you have questions, please contact Ron Shimabuku at 808.451.3410 or rkshimabuku@alz.org.



Ron Shimabuku
Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
Alzheimer's Association – Hawaii



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

March 12, 2024

The Honorable Della Au Belatti
Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi
Vice-Chair
House Committee on Health & Homelessness
Hawaii State Capitol, Rooms 420, 333
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **SB 2345 SD2 – Certified Crisis Intervention Officers**

Dear Chair Belatti, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, 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 **support** of SB 2345 SD2. This bill will enhance community response to those experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis by allowing certified crisis intervention officers specially trained to recognize and communicate with a person suffering from a mental health or substance use disorder crisis to serve as first responders.

In particular, this bill requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers. The current version of the bill tasks the Department of Law Enforcement and county law enforcement agencies with identifying one or more nationally recognized organizations that can provide training and certification for crisis intervention officers. The bill also authorizes officers to call for assistance from crisis intervention officers when that officer has reason to believe that a person is imminently dangerous to self or others.

As you are aware, our community is struggling to adequately respond to an unprecedented wave of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health and substance abuse. Police officers regularly must respond to calls involving persons experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis, who are often struggling with rational decision making and clear communication. Law enforcement officers are not specifically trained for such encounters nor do they have the skill set and adequate resources to assist these individuals as compared to crisis intervention officers, who will be certified to have the training, expertise and authority needed to provide appropriate assistance.

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The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Health & Homelessness
March 12, 2024
SHOPO Testimony Page 2
Re: SB 2345 SD2 – Certified Crisis Intervention Officers

We support this bill as it offers critical crisis intervention support on calls where rehabilitative assistance, and not just law enforcement response, may be beneficial. Having certified crisis intervention first responders may also help to avoid any potential miscommunication during such encounters that can put the individual, the officer, and the community at risk, and to help to lower arrest, incarceration, and recidivism rates.

For our community, it is imperative that emergency calls involving a mental illness or behavioral health crisis be addressed humanely and efficiently. Certifying specially trained crisis intervention officers as first responders is one step in that direction.

We thank you for allowing us to be heard on this very important issue and we hope your committee will unanimously support SB 2345 SD2.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT “BOBBY” CAVACO
SHOPO President



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**The State Legislature
House Committee on Health and Homelessness
Friday, March 15, 2024
Conference Room 329, 9:00 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
FROM: Keali'i Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawai'i
RE: Support for S.B. 2345, SD2 – Relating to Crisis Intervention

Aloha Chair Belatti and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez, and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 140,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP Supports S.B. 2345, SD2 which requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate the training of crisis intervention officers for State and county law enforcement agencies. We appreciate that this bill was amended to include training materials related to the recognition and signs of Alzheimer's disease and related types of dementia.

With the rapidly aging population in Hawaii, the number of person afflicted with the Alzheimer's disease or other dementia-related conditions is also increasing. Unfortunately, six in ten people with dementia will wander. A person with Alzheimer's may not remember his or her name or address — and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Law enforcement officers may often be the first responder to encounter a missing person with dementia. Unfortunately, people with Alzheimer's may present as uncooperative, disruptive, and combative when they have difficulty communicating and understanding what is happening. Law enforcement officers may not know how to work with people in these situations — leading to more confusion. Therefore, requiring dementia training for law enforcement officers benefits both parties. Being educated of the disease and training in de-escalation tactics can often effectively address the situation and ensure the safety of individuals with dementia as well as the safety of the law enforcement officers.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. 2345, SD2.



March 14, 2024

House Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
House Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Testimony to the House Committee on Health & Homelessness
Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 am. State Capitol, Conf. Room 329 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 2345 SD2 – RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Health & Homelessness:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii (EFH), we urge your **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2345 SD2, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION**. This bill requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers, defines "crisis intervention officer," establishes positions, declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded, and makes appropriations.

The Epilepsy Foundation is the leading national voluntary health organization that speaks on behalf of the at least 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy and seizures. Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii, advocates and provides services for the almost 14,000 individuals living with epilepsy throughout Hawaii. Collectively, we foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services. Epilepsy is a medical condition characterized by seizures, which are sudden surges of electrical activity in the brain, that affect a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy, and approximately 1 in 10 people will experience a seizure, at some point in their lifetime.

Epilepsy is a chronic medical problem that for many people can be successfully treated. Unfortunately, the treatment doesn't work for everyone. AT LEAST 1 million people in the United States have uncontrolled epilepsy, which is considered a disability by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Epilepsy does not discriminate. It can affect anyone of any age, gender, ethnicity, or size and is often comorbid with other disease states. For many, their epilepsy is debilitating.

The passing of this bill marks a crucial step in the evolution of law enforcement training. Crisis Intervention Officers will be equipped with the necessary skills to effectively recognize and communicate with individuals in crisis or suffering from various impairments. Whether it be dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or any other physical, developmental, or cognitive disorder impacting behavior, these officers will be trained to handle these situations with sensitivity and understanding. Furthermore, funds will be allocated to train and certify officers in mental health first aid, crisis intervention, and de-escalation efforts. This significant investment in officer training signals a shift towards a more holistic approach to law enforcement, one that prioritizes the well-being and mental health of individuals in crisis.

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii and our Board of Directors, we humbly thank you for the opportunity to testify and urge your **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2345 SD2**.

Our mission is to lead the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives. **Please learn more about our advocacy work at epilepsy.com/advocacy.**



Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina Hulama". The signature is enclosed in a thin, light gray rectangular border.

Kristina Hulama
Program Coordinator
Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii

Our mission is to lead the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives. **Please learn more about our advocacy work at epilepsy.com/advocacy.**

SB-2345-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2024 9:49:37 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/15/2024 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Louis Erteschik | Hawaii Disability Rights Center | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In support.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i

March 14, 2024

House Committee Health and Homelessness

Hearing Time: 9:00 AM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 329

Re: SB2345 SD2, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Aloha e Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i hui, we are writing in **strong support** of SB2345 SD2, relating to crisis intervention. This bill Requires the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers.

Crisis intervention tactics within communities are a proven resource that reduces recidivism and provides proper treatment for individuals suffering from mental health emergencies. It is a step forward to consult with nationally reputable organizations that have developed successful crisis intervention programs in the past and can provide guidance for our state's law enforcement. Additionally, allowing a crisis intervention officer to respond in tandem with law enforcement offers the opportunity for on-site care and assessment of the situation before escalation.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i is a collaboration of organizations and individuals committed to reducing the harmful effects of a punitive incarceration system for youth; promoting equity in the justice system; and improving and increasing resources to address adolescent and young adult mental health needs. We seek to improve the continuity of programs and services for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult status; eliminate youth houselessness and housing market discrimination against young adults; and promote and fund more holistic and culturally informed approaches among public/private agencies serving youth.

Please support SB2345 SD2.

SB-2345-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 9:42:51 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/15/2024 9:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Rick Tabor | Individual | Support | In Person |

Comments:

Thank You for hearing this very important bill. I strongly support all officers being trained in crisis intervention. I was asked to chime in, as the Dementia training was included in this training. Truth told, the dementia training should stand alone. But to save time, for this year a training covering both topics would be better than no training at all.

Lets back up, I'm recently retired after being a Mental Heath Professional since 1975. I worked at Seattle Mental Health for 30 years. Moving to Honolulu in 2017. My mother struggled with Dementiia, dying on Feb. 7, 2024. It was a tough go for her. Those familiar with Dementia did ok with her. One of my brothers filmed her troubled times, and it was clear who was trained and who was not. This holds true regardless who and where we are. I strongly support this important bill!

I'll add, our agency (Seattle Mental Health) helped develop and implement the Crisis Intervention Trainings in Kig County (Seattle) Washington State. I was an active trainer, and I saw first hand how effective this training is. It's history and effectiveness is well documented.

Thank you for your time & consideration on this important matter, Our Alzheimers Association Aloha Chapter is available if help is available if you have questions... i've been a Champion with then for seven years. Mahalo Nui Loa