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

Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai

715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2910
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Before the Senate Committee on
Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Wednesday, January 31, 2024; 3:01 p.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 225, Via Videoconference
Testifier: Michael Vincent

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) **strongly supports**, Senate Bill 2910.

This bill appropriates funds for an additional 15 sheriff positions for transitional law enforcement activities in Lahaina.

Historically, recovery efforts following major disasters span a protracted period of time. The rebuilding of Lahaina will be no different. While recovery and rebuilding efforts are under way, there will be a significantly increased demand for law enforcement presence in the area to provide for the safety of the public, protection of property, and the enforcement of law. This bill is essential to help the people of Maui and the Maui Police Department by providing additional officers to support the community during the recovery and rebuilding period.

Rather than use currently unfilled positions to fill this need, the DLE would like to establish these positions as permanent to fill future law enforcement roles on Maui and would ask that the bill be amended to establish the additional positions. Once the Lahaina recovery and rebuilding operations are at a point where these officers are no

longer needed in the area, the DLE plans to transition these officers to other DLE growth on Maui. To establish the positions, the bill should be amended with the addition of a new section 2 with the sections that follow to be appropriately numbered.

SECTION 2. The following positions are established within the department of law enforcement:

- (1) Eleven full-time equivalent (11.0 FTE) deputy sheriff positions;
- (2) Four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) permanent supervisory deputy sheriff positions;

Section 3 of the bill should also be amended to read as follows:

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for an additional fifteen full-time equivalent (15.0 FTE) sheriff deputy positions for ~~transitional~~ law enforcement officer activities in Lahaina and Maui.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of law enforcement for the purposes of this Act.

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

SB-2910

Submitted on: 1/26/2024 7:30:48 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/31/2024 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this measure to ensure that needed resources will be available to assist activities on Maui. Thank you for your consideration on this matter. Aloha.

LATE

SB-2910

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 8:42:32 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/31/2024 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I know that Lahaina needs all the support to rebuild and live on after the fires, but I don't see how this bill helps in that effort. Lahaina needs support and comfort for the people living there, as well as tools and materials to rebuild homes, parks, schools, roads, and clean air and water. I could be mistaken, but I have not heard anything about how the fire has impacted the Sheriff's office in Lahaina that they need 15 more positions. What is increasing the amount of sheriffs going to do? How will having more Sheriffs make any difference compared to their existing number? While I understand the need for public safety, I feel money would be better spent on other things as well, and more social programs would help Lahaina rebuild in the long run.

LATE

SB-2910

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 11:07:02 AM
Testimony for PSM on 1/31/2024 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carrie Ann Shirota	Testifying for ACLU of Hawai'i	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante and Committee Members:

The ACLU of Hawai'i offers comments on SB 2910 which proposes to appropriate funds for the Department of Law Enforcement for an additional fifteen full-time sheriff positions for transitional law enforcement officer activities in Lahaina.

This bill raises many questions:

1. What is the rationale for increasing law enforcement positions on Maui in the aftermath of the devastating wildfires, tragic deaths, limited mental health treatment options, houselessness and continued displacement of people from their homes and community in Lahaina?
2. What transitional activities in Lahaina are envisioned that require 15 full time armed law enforcement officers?
3. Are community members of Maui, and particularly of Lahaina, driving this request for fifteen full time- sheriff positions?

In closing, we have serious concerns about filling 15 full-time law enforcement positions on Maui in the face of the recovery efforts, and are counting on lawmakers to gather more information and justification for this appropriation. Otherwise, this will be a monumental mismatch between community problems and how the government responds to them.

Sincerely,

Carrie Ann Shirota

ACLU of Hawai'i Policy Director