
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE ON ETHICAL POLICING TO EVALUATE THE EFFICACY AND IMPACT OF WEED AND SEED PROGRAMS IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, Weed and Seed programs were originally developed
2 by former President George H. W. Bush and involve increased
3 policing in communities having high crime rates; and
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5 WHEREAS, evidence suggests that this strategy
6 disproportionately targets marginalized communities and results
7 in the militarization or over-policing of low-income
8 neighborhoods; and
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10 WHEREAS, the program may also result in unjustly high
11 criminal sentences for persons who are arrested in designated
12 Weed and Seed areas; and
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14 WHEREAS, a reevaluation of Hawaii's Weed and Seed programs
15 is needed to ensure that the programs are effective at reducing
16 crime without militarizing the State's neighborhoods or
17 disproportionately impacting marginalized communities; now,
18 therefore
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20 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
21 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
22 Session of 2024, that the Department of Law Enforcement is urged
23 to establish a task force on ethical policing to evaluate the
24 efficacy and impact of Weed and Seed programs in the State; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to
27 comprise:
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- 29 (1) A representative from the Department of the Attorney
30 General;
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H.R. NO. 197

- 1 (2) A representative from each branch office of the Office
2 of the Public Defender;
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- 4 (3) A representative from the Office of the Prosecuting
5 Attorney for each county;
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- 7 (4) A representative from the Hawaii Correctional System
8 Oversight Commission;
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- 10 (5) A representative from the Judiciary;
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- 12 (6) A representative from the Department of Law
13 Enforcement;
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- 15 (7) A representative from the Office of the Governor;
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- 17 (8) The President of the Senate, or the President's
18 designee;
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- 20 (9) The Speaker of the House of Representatives, or the
21 Speaker's designee;
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- 23 (10) A representative from the University of Hawaii College
24 of Social Sciences having a background in criminal
25 justice research;
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- 27 (11) A representative from an organization involved with
28 the communities affected by Weed and Seed programs, to
29 be selected and invited to participate by the chair of
30 the task force; and
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- 32 (12) A member of the public having a background in criminal
33 justice work, to be selected and invited to
34 participate by the chair of the task force; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is urged to use
37 crime, arrest, prosecution, and policing data from the onset of
38 Weed and Seed programs in Hawaii, compiled with the assistance
39 of the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center, to evaluate the
40 efficacy and impact of Weed and Seed programs in Hawaii,
41 including the programs' effect on:

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H.R. NO. 197

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- (1) Crime rates in designated Weed and Seed areas;
- (2) Crime rates in communities adjacent to designated Weed and Seed areas;
- (3) Arrest rates in designated Weed and Seed areas for persons who are black, indigenous, or persons of color, including Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders;
- (4) Arrest rates in designated Weed and Seed areas for low-income persons and unsheltered persons;
- (5) Average sentence lengths for persons arrested in designated Weed and Seed areas and convicted of the subject offense;
- (6) The average number of law enforcement officers present in designated Weed and Seed areas; and
- (7) The perception of residents and workers in designated Weed and Seed areas of the quality and frequency of their encounters with law enforcement officers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Attorney General, Public Defender, Prosecuting Attorney from each county, Chief Justice, Director of Law Enforcement, Dean of the University of Hawaii College of Social Sciences, and Administrator of the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center.

OFFERED BY: 
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