



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS HAWAII AIR NATIONAL GUARD
FORT RUGER, HONOLULU HAWAII

14 February 2025

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1381
RELATING TO THE HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH R. HARRIS II
CHIEF OF STAFF, HAWAII AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee:

I am Major General Joseph Harris, Chief of Staff, Hawaii Air National Guard, State of Hawaii, Department of Defense.

I am providing written testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB1381.

This measure amends Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), Chapter 121 and authorizes the department to appoint either the Chief of Staff or Assistant Adjutant General-Air to command the Hawaii Air National Guard as a Major General. Currently this isn't possible due to the Brigadier General rank ceiling on the Assistant Adjutant General-Air position.

Most states are only authorized a Brigadier General to lead their Air National Guard, and that Brigadier General is assigned as the Assistant Adjutant General-Air. In 2016, the Department of the Air Force authorized Hawaii a Major General to lead the Hawaii Air National Guard, due to the size and complexity of the Hawaii Air National Guard. This higher-grade authorization should have been assigned to the Assistant Adjutant General-Air position, but could only be assigned to the Chief of Staff position because of the HRS rank ceiling on the Assistant Adjutant General-Air position.

Most Air National Guard instructions refer to the Assistant Adjutant General-Air as the leader of the State's Air National Guard. However, due to the Assistant Adjutant General-Air rank ceiling of Brigadier General in the State of Hawaii, the Chief of Staff leads our organization as a Major General. This incongruity currently leads to

confusion in the chain of command and could lead to missteps in administrative and operational taskings.

We support this change to clarify and align the Air National Guard chain of command in Hawaii with applicable Air National Guard instructions and the other 53 states and territories.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Maj Gen Joseph R. Harris II, joseph.harris.1@us.af.mil; 808-789-1670