



SB2345 SD2
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION
Committee on Finance

March 27, 2024

2:00 PM

House Conference Room 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2345 SD2 HD1** 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 training, it has the potential to allow law enforcement agencies to offer 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 respectfully requests this committee consider restoring the mandatory language for section 2 from SD2. We believe that training should be mandatory and not

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



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

permissive to ensure the improved outcomes this measure seeks. Additionally, we would support restoring the inclusion of a crisis intervention officer in the bill if also supported by the Department of Law Enforcement.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to testify on **SB2345 SD2 HD1** and urges the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui.

JON N. IKENAGA
STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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

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

APPEALS SECTION
TEL. No. 586-2080

DISTRICT COURT SECTION
TEL. No. 586-2100

FAMILY COURT SECTION
TEL. No. 586-2300

FELONY SECTION
TEL. No. 586-2200

FAX (808) 586-2222



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

HAYLEY CHENG
ASSISTANT PUBLIC
DEFENDER

HILO OFFICE
275 PONAHAHAWA STREET
HILO, HAWAII 96720
TEL. No. 974-4571
FAX No. 974-4574

KONA OFFICE
82-6127 MAMALAOHA HIGHWAY
P.O. BOX 1219
CAPTAIN COOK, HAWAII 96704
TEL. No. 323-7562
FAX No. 323-7565

KAUAI OFFICE
3060 EIWA STREET
LIHUE, HAWAII 96766
TEL. No. 274-3418
FAX No. 274-3422

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

March 25, 2024

Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
415 South Beretania Street, Conference Room 308
State Capital
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony in Support of S.B. 2345, SD2, HD2
Hearing: March 27, 2024, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members:

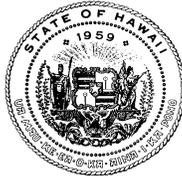
This letter is in support of S.B. 2345, SD2, HD 2 which would establish the role of crisis intervention officers in law enforcement and require the department of law enforcement to coordinate training of crisis intervention officers for state and county law enforcement agencies. The Office of the Public 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.

Mental health crises are present not only in individuals who suffer from substance abuse issues and/or mental illnesses, but in today's high stress society, it is not uncommon for many individuals to encounter 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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'ŌIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2345 SD2, HD1
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION**

REPRESENTATIVE KYLE YAMASHITA, CHAIR
HOUSE/SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 27, 2:00p and Room 308/VIDEO

- 1 **Department Position:** The Department supports this measure and offers comments.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) provides the following
- 3 testimony on behalf of the Department.
- 4 The Department supports this measure which authorizes the Department of Law
- 5 Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training (CIT) for state and county law enforcement
- 6 agencies, establishes positions and appropriate funds for such training. CIT is a best practice to
- 7 optimize the law enforcement response to individuals in a behavioral health crisis.
- 8 **Offered Amendments:** None.
- 9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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 Finance
SUPPORTING SB 2345 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH**

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1st VICE CHAIRPERSON

Kathleen Merriam, LCSW CSAC

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Fern Yoshida

IMMEDIATE PAST

CHAIRPERSON:

Richard I. Ries PsyD, MSEd

EX-OFFICIO:

Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director
Behavioral Health Administration

WEBSITE:

scmh.hawaii.gov

EMAIL ADDRESS:

doh.scmhchairperson@
doh.hawaii.gov

March 27, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. in Rm 308 and via Video

Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 SB2345 SD1. The Council is looking for a continuum of care that can honestly respond to the treatment and recovery of individuals who have mental illness. 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 of these components of the continuum of care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please contact us at DOH.SCMHChairperson@doh.hawaii.gov.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



JORDAN LOWE
DIRECTOR

MICHAEL VINCENT
Deputy Director
Administration

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

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

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2345, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION
Before the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 27, 2024; 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 308, Via Videoconference
Testifiers: Michael Vincent

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) submits the following comments on Senate Bill 2345, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1 and recommends the bill be returned to the SD2 version of this bill with a proposed amendment for consideration by the Committee.

This bill significantly changed the purpose and intent of the SD2 version of this bill. The current version of this bill adds nothing to the ability of law enforcement to respond to persons in crisis. However, the previous version of this bill 1) required the DLE to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and crisis intervention officers, 2) defined "crisis intervention officer," 3) provided options for use of the crisis intervention officers for law enforcement, and 4) established positions and makes an appropriation.

The law enforcement goals of the previous version of this bill were 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 supported the prior versions of this this bill which helped 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. However, the current version of this bill removed the very tools needed by law enforcement and adds nothing to what is currently available to law enforcement agencies in Hawai.i.

The DLE strongly recommends that this bill return to the language of the SD 2 version with the following amendment needed to ensure the ability for specially trained crisis intervention officers to determine if a person is imminently dangerous to themselves or others and take action to have them transported to a designated behavioral health crises center for further evaluation.

The DLE is recommending an additional sentence in Section 4 of the SD 2 version of this 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

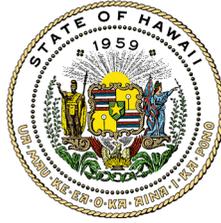
possible emergency hospitalization. If a crisis intervention officer has probable cause to believe that the person is imminently dangerous to self or others, the person shall be transported by ambulance or other suitable means to a designated behavioral health crisis center for further evaluation and 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 of \$500,000 for the three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE) crisis intervention coordinator positions.

The DLE is requesting that the appropriation amount of \$163,000 for crisis intervention training.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.



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

CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR
Executive Office on Aging

Telephone
(808) 586-0100

Fax
(808) 586-0185

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2345 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
REP. KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
REP. LISA KITAGAWA, VICE CHAIR

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

Hearing: Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 2:00 P.M., Conference Room 308

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
- 2 Health (DOH) supports SB2345 SD2 HD1 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 authorize the Department of Law
- 6 Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement
- 7 agencies; establishes positions to administer and coordinate the crisis intervention training
- 8 program; and appropriates funds for the crisis intervention training program.

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 27, 2024

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Senate Bill 2345 SD2 HD1 – Relating to Crisis Intervention

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Bill 2345 SD2 HD1 – 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirby L. Shaw", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director



SB2345 SD2 HD1 Crisis Intervention Training for Law Enforcement

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Wednesday, Mar 27, 2024: 2:00 : Room 308 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB2345 SD2 HD1:

ALOHA CHAIRS, VICE CHAIRS, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

HSAC strongly supports a mental health first aid and crisis intervention training for law enforcement officers to be able to transport to crisis intervention services or if imminently dangerous to self, transported by ambulance to licensed psychiatric facility or designated behavioral health crisis center.

We appreciate that this law will allow transport to “designated behavioral health crisis center” because crisis centers are not licensed psychiatric centers, which the current laws only allow transport to the licensed facility.

- This training would enable officers to divert patients with mental illness to health providers and services instead of to criminal justice system.

Summary

HSAC commends the legislature for training law enforcement to augment developing the diversion and crisis stabilization alternatives for people subject to their mental health or co-occurring substance use disorder disease.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 27, 2024; 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2345, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, 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, House Draft 1, 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) Permitting the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training and restricting the training to state and county law enforcement agencies.

This bill would also take effect on July 1, 3000.

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, House Draft 1
Wednesday, March 27, 2024; 2:00 p.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 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.

2024 Hawaii Leadership Board

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

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance Wednesday, March 27, 2024; 2:00 p.m. Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Videoconference

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2345 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Alzheimer's Association–Aloha Chapter serves the residents of Hawaii to help all those facing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) by providing local support groups and educational resources while advancing crucial research and public policy initiatives. We testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill No. 2345 SD2 HD1.**

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) Require the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement officers and crisis intervention officers;
- 2) Authorize a law enforcement officer to call a crisis intervention officer for assistance when the law enforcement officer believes a person is imminently dangerous to self or others; and
- 3) Appropriate funds for positions and training and certification of crisis intervention officers.

We would like to underscore the definition of **crisis intervention training within this bill, that is, "training that emphasizes methods for recognizing and communicating with a person in crisis or suffering from some form 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 "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 HD1.**

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

March 25, 2024

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita
Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa
Vice-Chair
House Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **SB 2345 SD2 HD1 – Certified Crisis Intervention Officers**

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 HD1 SD2. This bill will enhance community response to those experiencing a crisis or suffering from some type of impairment by supporting much needed crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement.

In particular, this bill permits the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies and appropriates monies for such training. The current version of the bill tasks the Department and county law enforcement agencies with identifying one or more nationally recognized organizations that can provide such training. “Crisis intervention training” is defined by the bill as “training that emphasizes methods for recognizing and communicating with a person in crisis or suffering from some form of impairment, whether from dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, or any physical, developmental, cognitive, psychological, or substance disorder influencing their behavior.”

As you are aware, our community is struggling to adequately respond to an unprecedented wave of individuals experiencing a crisis, whether it be homelessness, mental health or substance abuse. Police officers regularly must respond to calls involving such persons, 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, training and adequate resources to assist these individuals. Support of such training may 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 these types of crises be addressed humanely and efficiently. Support of training to deal with these types of encounters 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 HD1.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT "BOBBY" CAVACO
SHOPO President



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

To: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita , Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa , Vice Chair
Members, House Committee on Finance

From: Sondra Leiggi Brandon, Vice President of Patient Care, Behavioral and Pharmacy, The
Queen's Health System

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

Date: March 27, 2024

Re: Comments on SB2345 SD2 HD1 – 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 on SB2345 SD2 HD1, requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for state and county law enforcement agencies. We appreciate the intent of SB2345 SD2 HD1, and appreciate the amendments made in the previous committee to place focus on training efforts by law enforcement and not on establishing the CIO position via statute. We believe this is a balanced approach that recognizes the role of law enforcement in addressing mental health crisis events while also ensuring there is clinical expertise involved when making decisions pertaining to severe mental health diagnoses.

Queen's Manamana (Punchbowl) emergency department is the busiest in the state and we have serious concerns that without proper training and coordination the proposed 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 (MHEW) 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.

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.

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 consideration of our testimony on SB2345 SD2 HD1.

Opportunity Youth Action Hawai‘i

March 27, 2024

House Committee on Finance

Hearing Time: 2:00 PM

Location: State Capitol Conference Room 308

Re: SB2345 SD2 HD1, RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Opportunity Youth Action Hawai‘i hui, we are writing in **strong support** of SB2345 SD2 HD1, 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, authorizing 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 and should remain paramount in the response to a crisis.

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 HD1.



March 26, 2024

House Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
House Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Friday, March 15, 2024; 9:00 am. State Capitol, Conf. Room 329 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 2345 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii (EFH), we urge your **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2345 SD2 HD1, 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 HD1**.

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](https://www.epilepsy.com/advocacy).**



Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina Hulama". The signature is enclosed in a thin black 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.**

Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

P.O. Box 833
Honolulu, HI 96808

www.hawaiipsychology.org

Phone: (808) 521-8995



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

March 27, 2024 2:00 P.M Conf Rm 308 & via Video conference

Testimony in Strong Support on SB2345 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) strongly supports SB2345 SD2 HD1; which authorizes the Department of Law Enforcement to coordinate crisis intervention training for law enforcement personnel.

Behavioral Crisis Intervention is a much-needed step in developing a system of diversion towards pathways that will treat the underlying conditions that contribute to the criminal behaviors. Without effective crisis intervention protocols and properly trained "crisis intervention officers", like the ones outlined in this measure, our state is crippled of the ability to divert those with treatable mental health and substance use disorders to effective programing.

Mental Illness Should Not be Criminalized

There is a disproportionate number of individuals with severe mental health conditions who are incarcerated - Up to a 1/3 of those incarcerated have serious mental illness.

People with mental illness are 10x more likely to be incarcerated than they are to be hospitalized. The justice system is often the de facto entry point for individuals with mental health disorders, substance use disorders, or both.

Diversion programs reduce recidivism. People who participate in diversion programs are less likely to re-offend than those who are incarcerated. This is because diversion programs help people address the underlying causes of their criminal behavior, which reduces the risk of future offending.

Diversion programs promote public safety. By reducing recidivism, diversion programs help to make our communities safer. People who are receiving treatment are less likely to engage in criminal behavior, which benefits everyone.

Effective crisis intervention can provide much needed access to care

Diversion programs provide much-needed treatment. Incarceration does not address the underlying mental health or substance use issues that contribute to criminal behavior. Diversion programs offer a path to treatment and recovery, which can help people get their lives back on track.

Diversion programs are more cost-effective than incarceration.

In the long run, it is less expensive to invest in diversion programs than it is to incarcerate people with mental health or substance use disorders.

Comment on a Coordinated Legislative Approach to Criminal Justice and Mental Health

A coordinated, comprehensive and integrated behavioral health system is desperately needed to achieve the appropriate diversion of individuals with mental health disorders and substance use disorders to proper and effective care. Many bills this session target the intersection of mental illness and criminal justice, but focus on just one component. In order to have a comprehensive systemic approach, our legislation should also be comprehensive and systematic.

This bill enables specially trained and designated law enforcement officers to identify and divert those with mental illness to appropriate treatment with effective crisis intervention methods in their response (SB2345). Another bill (SB3139) creates a crisis and diversion program to develop protocols and best practices in addressing a mental health crisis. We also need a brick and mortar crisis center itself (HB1831); and an Assisted Community Treatment (ACT) program that will manage and monitor the process and put the systems in place to identify those in the legal system that are in need of treatment (SB3141); and the handling of involuntary hospitalizations and authorization for screenings for ACT (HB2159).

Without properly trained officers to get people to into treatment, these proposals will not work. Without a behavioral crisis center to divert individuals to programs that oversee and monitor them, these proposals will not work. Each of these measures needs adequate funding to make it all happen, which overall is a cost savings for the government and the public. There will be a marked reduction in recidivism, which also benefits overall public safety and quality of life for all.

As for individuals, these measures – with adequate and appropriately targeted funding – will provide services that actually help.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this important bill.

Sincerely,



Raymond A Folen, Ph.D., ABPP.
Executive Director

REFERENCES

Fader, T. & Kelly E. (2020). *Just and well: Rethinking how states approach competency to stand trial*. The Council of State Governments Justice Center. <https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Just-and-Well27OCT2020.pdf>

National Center for State Courts. (2022). *National Diversion Landscape: Continuum of Behavioral Health Diversions Survey Report*. National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness. https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf_file/0022/77143/National-Diversion-Landscape.pdf

National Center for State Courts. (2023). *State Courts Leading Change: Report and Recommendations*. National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness. https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf_file/0031/84469/MHTF_State_Courts_Leading_Change.pdf

SB-2345-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2024 2:38:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tammy Chu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this proposed bill. My neighborhood is the Ala Moana / Kakaako area where homelessness on every main street is a chronic issue. The neighborhood is touted as being a walkable one but chronic homeless encampments obstruct entire sidewalks on many streets. Homeless also cause health hazards with debris and human waste. I've seen people urinate & defecate in public. It seems a growing number of homeless are in increasing crisis. I've seen people talking to themselves and behaving in a non-rational manner and heard incohesive screaming on nights.

I full support this proposed bill which includes law enforcement officers being trained to be better equipped to manage crisis intervention situations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2345-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2024 5:34:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelene Tenno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support SB2345

SB-2345-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2024 1:29:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rick Tabor	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Thank you for considering this very important bill. I'm Rick Tabor, a retired Mental Health Professional. I was part of the King County Washington State, Crisis Intervention Training Team via Seattle Mental Health. Our First Responders seemed to bennefit from this important program. Thank you.

Chrisovolandou "Vol" Gronowski

March 27, 2024

Subject: Support for Senate Bill 2345 - RELATING TO CRISIS INTERVENTION

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

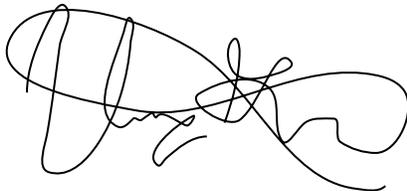
I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 2345, which aims to increase access to crisis intervention training for law enforcement personnel. As a contracted provider in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD), I understand the critical role that law enforcement plays as first responders to individuals experiencing mental or behavioral health crises.

This bill is essential for enhancing the skills and knowledge of our law enforcement officers, enabling them to respond more effectively and compassionately to mental health emergencies. By providing this psychoeducational training, we can improve community responses, reduce unnecessary traumatic experiences for those involved, and ultimately foster better care for our community as a whole.

The importance of mental health cannot be overstated, and the passage of Senate Bill 2345 represents a significant step toward creating a safer and more supportive environment for all residents of Hawaii, including our most vulnerable, keiki and kupuna. I urge the committee to pass this bill and help strengthen the partnership between mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies.

Thank you for your consideration and dedication to the well-being of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vol Gronowski", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Chrisovolandou "Vol" Gronowski