



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 664, H.D. 1, RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 **TIME:** 12:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Melina D. Sanchez, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General offers the following comments.

This bill establishes the Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP) within the Department of Law Enforcement to conduct community outreach on gun violence, develop and administer a grant program for gun violence prevention, and develop and administer a gun violence resource bank. The bill also makes an appropriation to establish the new office.

There appear to be overlapping responsibilities with the proposed OGVP and the existing Gun Violence and Violent Crimes Commission (GVVCC), codified under chapter 134C, HRS.

GVVCC is tasked with identifying criminal data that could be used to reduce gun violence and violent crimes and to maximize the sharing of that data between criminal justice agencies. GVVCC's membership includes individuals with expertise in research from different public sectors including the Judiciary. Examples of overlapping responsibilities are:

(1) Data Identification and Collection:

GVVCC: Identify relevant data that may be used to reduce gun violence and violent crimes.

OGVP: Collect relevant data to support efforts in reducing gun violence.

(2) Identification of Data Gaps:

GVVCC: Identify areas where relevant data is unavailable.

OGVP: Identify gaps in available data.

(3) Data Sharing:

GVVCC: Maximize data sharing among represented agencies and stakeholders.

OGVP: Facilitate data sharing among law enforcement, researchers, and the public.

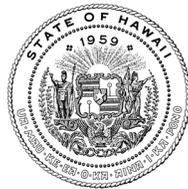
(4) Research:

GVVCC: Conduct research on gun violence and violent crimes.

OGVP: Support researchers in analyzing data and improving data collection methods.

To avoid overlapping responsibilities that may cause confusion and duplication of efforts, we recommend the Committee consider amending this bill to first consolidate GVVCC's responsibilities into the new office, and then repeal chapter 134C, HRS. Consolidating GVVCC's responsibilities into the new office will better accomplish the objectives of this bill by (1) centralizing data collection to support efforts in reducing gun violence; (2) improving collection and facilitating data sharing among law enforcement, researchers, and the public; and (3) making government more efficient by reducing duplicative meetings that public servants attend.

We are available to work with the Committee on any potential amendments to the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 664, H.D. 1

February 25, 2025
12:00 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill (H.B.) No. 664, H.D. 1:

- Establishes the Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP) within the Department of Law Enforcement, for administrative purposes only.
- Requires the OGVP to: 1) conduct public awareness campaigns in a culturally appropriate manner to educate Hawai'i residents about State and federal laws and existing resources relating to gun violence prevention (GVP); and 2) develop a plan to address gun violence in Hawai'i and coordinate, improve, and expand upon existing plans for GVP.
- Establishes a GVP grant program to be developed and administered by the OGVP to conduct community-based gun violence intervention initiatives.
- Establishes a GVP Special Fund (GVPSF) to be administered by the OGVP which will be funded by grants, donations, and appropriations made by the Legislature.

- Requires the OGVP to create and maintain a resource bank of regularly updated and accurate materials and resources as a repository for data, research, and statistical information regarding gun violence in the State.
- Requires the OGVP to submit a report to the Legislature containing a summary of its activities during the preceding year.
- Appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 26 and FY 27 to be deposited into the GVPSF.
- Appropriates an unspecified amount of special funds in FY 26 and FY 27 from the GVPSF for grants to organizations to conduct community-based gun violence initiatives.
- Appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 26 and FY 27 for the establishment of a gun violence resource bank, including the hiring of personnel.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding H.B. No. 664, H.D. 1, it is difficult to determine if the GVPSF would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
DIRECTOR

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, Hawai'i 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 664, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION
Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 12:00 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Testifiers: Mike Lambert

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

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) strongly supports House Bill 664, House Draft 1. This bill establishes the Office of Gun Violence Prevention within the Department of Law Enforcement to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to prevent gun violence in Hawaii. The office will conduct vital community outreach, administer targeted grant programs, and create a centralized resource bank for gun violence prevention initiatives.

The DLE recognizes that addressing gun violence requires a coordinated, evidence-based approach that combines law enforcement efforts with community-based prevention strategies. The establishment of this office will enable us to better coordinate with community partners, conduct research-informed interventions, and allocate resources more effectively through the grant program.

The creation of a gun violence resource bank will provide valuable data and best practices to inform policy decisions and prevention efforts. This centralized repository will help both government agencies and community organizations implement proven strategies to reduce gun violence in our communities.

The establishment of the Gun Violence Prevention Special Fund will ensure sustainable funding for these critical initiatives through a combination of legislative appropriations, grants, and donations. This dedicated funding stream is essential for the long-term success of gun violence prevention efforts in Hawaii.

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



Submitted via web portal

RE: HB 664 (Kila): Relating to Gun Violence Prevention - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Everytown for Gun Safety, and the Hawai'i Chapters of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America are writing in support of HB 664.

Everytown for Gun Safety is the nation's largest gun violence prevention organization, with nearly 11 million supporters including moms, mayors, students, gun owners, faith leaders, educators, and more. We fight to advance gun safety policies at every level of government, including state legislatures. Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America are grassroots movements working towards common-sense public safety measures. With an established chapter in every state of the country, we campaign for effective solutions to lax gun laws and loopholes that jeopardize our communities.

Creating a state Office of Gun Violence Prevention would bring Hawai'i in line with its peer gun safety states which have such offices, including California, Washington, Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois.

After the uptick in gun violence in Hawai'i over the past few years, it's critical to approach this crisis from every angle. A state Office of Gun Violence Prevention can serve as a centralized hub working towards the clear mission of ensuring Hawai'i's gun laws are reaching their maximum potential. A statewide office will support the state's gun violence prevention goals at multiple stages – from collecting and tracking data to inform policy, to increasing public awareness campaigns of secure firearm storage and ERPO, to administering funding to lifesaving community violence intervention programs that prevent shootings.

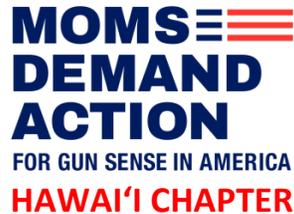
Community violence intervention programs, through their use of evidence and community-informed, comprehensive support to individuals at greatest risk of gunshot victimization, are demonstrated to reduce gunshot injury and death in areas most impacted by gun violence. State investments in these programs, which are often led by

community-based organizations, are critical to their ongoing stability.

For these reasons listed above, Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action, and Students Demand Action strongly support HB 664.

Sincerely,

Sarah Sumadi
Director, State Government Affairs, West
Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action & Students Demand Action
450 Lexington Ave.
New York, NY 10163
ssumadi@everytown.org



Feb. 25, 2025

Aloha, Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Erica Yamauchi, and I live in the Kaimukī area. As a gun violence survivor, business owner, mother of two children in our public schools, and adjunct faculty member at the University of Hawai'i, **I'm writing today in strong support of House Bill 664.**

These bills would create a state Office of Gun Violence Prevention, bringing Hawai'i in line with its peer gun safety states that already have such offices, including California, Washington, Massachusetts, New York and Illinois.

With the increase in gun violence we have witnessed in our state over the last decade, we need to ensure that we're approaching this crisis from every possible angle.

A statewide office will be able to direct, coordinate and support the state's gun violence prevention efforts at multiple stages – from collecting and tracking data to inform policy, to increasing public awareness of secure storage and extreme risk protective orders (ERPOs), to administering funding to lifesaving community violence intervention programs that prevent shootings.

Our lower incidence of gun violence historically here in the islands hasn't been by accident, but due to sound public policy and commonsense gun safety laws. On behalf of our three local groups on Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i and O'ahu, and our 2,000+ supporters across the islands, I urge you to pass this bill.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erica Yamauchi".

Erica Yamauchi, Volunteer State Co-Lead

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 6:59:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael I Rice	Individual	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

While I agree with the intent of the bill to help reduce gun violence in the state, I have grave concerns that given the State’s anti-gun bias that this office will be weaponized with the goal to tweak information to support anti-gun laws, as has been seen in similar offices throughout the nation.

Recently there have been cases where anti-gun groups have submitted manipulated data to similar offices with the goal of promoting further infringements on the Second Amendment. One includes the often repeated, and disproven statement that guns are now the leading cause of death for children. Among other offenses, the data was manipulated to include people up to the age of 25 as ‘children’, included instances of gang on gang violence where the only victims were rival gang members, and included instances of justified police shootings. The mentioned study has been fact checked by several sources and found to be false despite it being touted by the former Presidential Administration. **Simply altering the study to only include persons under the age of 18 debunked the claim that firearms are the leading cause of death in children**

Another instance resulted in the ending of a popular and successful program that was having positive effects on reducing gun violence. **Giffords Law Center**, who has the stated goal of wanting to reduce gun violence, did a study on a program known as ‘**Oakland Ceasefire**’. **In their findings it was discovered that the program reduced gun violence in Oakland by 50%**, and in 9 other cities that had similar programs reduced crime from 30% to 60%. The Oakland Ceasefire program relied upon Community Outreach and Mentorship programs for at-risk youth, as well as enforcement and prosecution of current laws.

Giffords is being accused of trying to hide the study from the public, and of using their influence to end the highly successful program because it undermined the message that the only way to reduce gun violence is to get rid of guns. **Even if these accusations are false, the reality is inconsistent with their stated goal as there is little to no fanfare regarding such a successful program**

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 9:31:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael A. Cobb Jr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this idea, wasteful spending considering the small size of the problem.

Incentivize us to protect ourselves and stop pandering to Giffords, Brady, and Moms demand action. Thank you.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:29:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE this measure. No more wasting tax payers money on low impact programs.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:18:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Uchiyama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 10:33:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a citizen who upholds the Second Amendment, individual liberty, and efficient government, I submit this testimony in strong opposition to HB664. This bill establishes an Office of Gun Violence Prevention, funded by taxpayer dollars through a special fund, to push outreach, grants, and research. While safety matters to us all, this proposal is a costly overreach that threatens rights and misuses resources. I urge you—Republicans and Democrats alike—to **VOTE NO**. Here’s why this bill fails Hawaii.

It Infringes on Second Amendment Rights

This new office, tasked with “educating” on gun laws and “best practices,” is a thinly veiled step toward gun control, eroding the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens. Its vague mandate—advising on legislation and running campaigns—could easily target responsible gun owners with red-tape restrictions. Democrats, you’ve championed personal freedoms like privacy and choice—why back a bill that risks chipping away at a fundamental right? Safety shouldn’t mean punishing the lawful majority for the acts of a few.

It Wastes Taxpayer Money on Bureaucracy

With appropriations from general revenues for staff, a resource bank, and a special fund, this bill pours millions into a new government entity when Hawaii’s budget is already stretched—education funding lags, and homelessness persists. The National Institute of Justice notes community-based violence prevention costs \$1,000-\$5,000 per participant; scale that up, and this office could drain far more than advertised. Democrats, you’ve fought for fiscal equity—why divert funds from schools and housing to a redundant agency?

It Duplicates Existing Efforts, Ignoring Efficiency

Hawaii already has law enforcement and health departments addressing violence—why add another layer? The bill’s grant program and data bank overlap with federal efforts like the CDC’s gun violence research, which spent \$25 million in 2023. Trump-era policies cut waste by streamlining agencies, boosting outcomes without new offices—violent crime dropped 4% nationally from 2016-2019. Democrats, you’ve pushed for smart government—why double down on duplication instead of strengthening what we’ve got?

It Risks Bias Over Objective Solutions

The office's focus on "culturally appropriate" outreach and disaggregated data sounds noble, but its broad power to shape policy and fund groups could skew toward anti-gun agendas, sidelining practical fixes like mental health support or tougher crime enforcement. A 2022 Rand study found inconclusive evidence that most prevention programs reduce gun violence long-term. Democrats, you've demanded evidence-based policy—why risk taxpayer dollars on unproven grants when we could target root causes like poverty and addiction?

It Betrays Our Shared Commitment to Freedom and Results

Committee members, we all want safer streets—Republicans defend liberty, Democrats seek community well-being. HB664 fails both by threatening rights, bloating government, and chasing vague goals over proven action. **VOTE NO** to reject this misguided expansion. Let's protect Hawaii with real solutions—better mental health care, stronger policing, and respect for law-abiding citizens—not a costly office that delivers more paperwork than progress.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:03:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:06:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:24:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joelle Seashell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Shall not be infringed.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:36:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:04:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruben Ongos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

What part of the 2nd Ammendment don't you understand? "SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED" IS JUST THAT! As a legal gun owner and thousands of others, legislatures are not upholding the constitution!! I LIKE TO SAY...CRIMINALS OBEY GUN LAWS LIKE POLITICIANS OBEY THEIR OATHS OF OFFICE!...I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS BILL!

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:36:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corinne Solomon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB664.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:41:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson Teixeira	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly oppose this bill as it is unconstitutional. Mahalo.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:54:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Guns can not be violent, they are inanimete. It takes a violent user to be violent. Guns are only tools.

I strongly Oppose

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:01:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Kaawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Government overreach no thank you it seems this is more directed towards law abiding citizens

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:02:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noela von Wiegandt	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose HB664. Stop going after our Constitutional Right Second Amendment. You took an Oath to defend and protect the United States Constitution, now honor your Oath. Thank you

Noela von Wiegandt

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:41:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lesha Mathes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. We do not need this. This is a waste of tax payer money to create an office to promote gun control propaganda, threatening 2nd amendment rights.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 11:18:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Reid Oya	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB664.

We don't need another government office pushing anti 2A propaganda. Instead of trying to scare people into believing guns are "bad" you guys should be promoting firearms education (proper use, safe handling) . All the anti 2A politicians should seek education also instead of pushing misinformation about firearms. Guns DON'T kill people, PEOPLE kill people. Address Mental health. Help kids in broken families

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 1:05:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorinda Ohelo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We don't need to create more government positions. Tgat would be a wasof taxpayer dollars.
Also, this threatens 2nd amendment rights. I strongly oppose this bill,

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 1:09:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gene A. Castagnetti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, please do not waste any more time and money trying to unnecessarily regulate firearms of law abiding citizens. There is already in place laws, positions, personal to address this. Stop further trying to violate our 2nd Amendment Constitutional rights.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 1:38:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stanley Mendes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB664 go after criminals not law abiding citizens we need to protect ourselves from harm we have our constitutional right. Maybe you should read the constitution. TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED....

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 3:41:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Vizcarra	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STOP INFRINGING UPON GOD-GIVEN CIVIL LIBERTIES THAT ARE
UNCONSTITUTIONAL!! GOD KNOWS AND SEES ALL!!

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 4:55:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William R Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB664 HD1

I don't believe we need the Office of Gun Violence Prevention. I do not support its goals.

Thanks for the opportunity to oppose this bill.

William R Smith

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 6:01:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brett Kulbis	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Chair Yamashita and Committee Members,

My name is Brett Kulbis, I'm a 26yr Navy Veteran and Retired Civil Servant. I live in Ewa Beach.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB-664.

HB-664 seeks to establish an Office of Gun Violence Prevention in Hawaii. I have several concerns with this proposal:

1. Creating a new office and special fund places an additional financial burden on taxpayers.
2. Existing State and County law enforcement agencies and community organizations already work on gun violence prevention. A new office may lead to unnecessary bureaucratic overlap.
3. There is no evidence that such offices significantly reduce gun violence. The federal Office of Gun Violence Prevention was recently eliminated because it did not demonstrate clear or any measurable outcomes.
4. The funds appropriated for this office could be better utilized by directly supporting existing law enforcement and community-based violence prevention programs.

Respectfully, I STRONGLY encourage you to vote NO on HB-664.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 6:12:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
S Manzon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PLEASE VOTE NO TO THIS BILL.....THIS VIOLATES OUR 2ND AMENDMENT RIGHTS. CITIZENS HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTECT THEMSELVES. IT IS A WASTE OF OUR TAX DOLLARS TO CREATE THIS COMMITTEE. THANK YOU.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:19:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy R Ajimine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE this bill as written.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:10:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Huycke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I very strongly support HB664.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:11:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J Miles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While of course I would support gun safety education, I oppose this bill as it may be used to infringe on the 2nd amendment.

Thank you.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:18:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiare Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

****Testimony in Opposition to HB664 – Relating to Gun Violence Prevention****

Aloha Honorable Members of the House of Representatives,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB664, a bill that seeks to establish an Office of Gun Violence Prevention within the Department of Law Enforcement, along with a grant program, a special fund, and a resource bank to address gun violence in Hawaii. While I share the Legislature’s concern for public safety, I believe this proposal is an inefficient, redundant, and potentially counterproductive approach to a complex issue. Below, I outline my concerns regarding this legislation.

First, the creation of a new bureaucratic entity—the Office of Gun Violence Prevention—duplicates existing efforts and strains Hawaii’s limited financial resources. The Department of Law Enforcement, county police departments, and community organizations already work to address violence, including gun-related incidents, through enforcement, education, and intervention programs. Adding another layer of government with unspecified staffing and funding needs risks diverting resources from these proven mechanisms. The bill’s appropriation of general funds for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, without clear cost estimates, further exacerbates concerns about fiscal responsibility in a state facing economic challenges like housing shortages and high living costs.

Second, the bill’s broad scope and vague mandates raise questions about its effectiveness and potential overreach. The Office is tasked with public awareness campaigns, grant administration, data collection, and advising other agencies, yet it lacks specific, measurable goals to ensure accountability. For example, the grant program’s focus on “community-based gun violence intervention initiatives” that are “evidence-informed” and avoid “mass incarceration” is laudable but ambiguous, leaving room for subjective interpretation and inefficient spending. Hawaii’s relatively low gun violence rates compared to national averages suggest that existing laws and community efforts are already effective, casting doubt on the necessity of this new office.

Third, the emphasis on gun violence as a standalone issue overlooks broader root causes—such as mental health, substance abuse, and socioeconomic disparities—that contribute to violence in general. HB664’s narrow focus on firearms risks skewing resources toward a symptom rather than addressing these underlying factors holistically. For instance, the bill’s provision for a resource bank and public campaigns about safe gun ownership and storage could be handled by

existing agencies like the Department of Health or Attorney General's office, which already promote mental health resources and public safety education. A more integrated approach would better serve Hawaii's residents without creating redundant infrastructure.

Finally, while the bill's effective date of July 1, 3000, positions it as a long-term proposal, its introduction now signals a troubling shift toward expansive government solutions that may infringe on individual rights. The Office's authority to advise on "new legislation" and "policy initiatives" could pave the way for future restrictions on law-abiding gun owners, despite the bill's lack of direct regulatory measures. Hawaii's strict gun laws already balance safety and rights effectively; additional oversight risks tipping that balance unnecessarily.

In conclusion, HB664's establishment of an Office of Gun Violence Prevention is an unnecessary and costly expansion of government that duplicates existing efforts, lacks clear justification, and diverts focus from broader solutions to violence. I respectfully urge you to vote against this bill and instead bolster current programs within existing agencies to address public safety comprehensively and efficiently. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiare Smith

To: Members of the Hawaii House Committee on Finance
From: Agustin Cabrera, Giffords State Legislative Manager
Subject: Support for HB 664
Date: February 25, 2025

Submitted via email

My name is Agustin Cabrera and I am a State Legislative Manager with Giffords, the gun violence prevention organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords. I write to you today in support of HB 664, a bill that would establish an office of gun violence prevention to conduct community outreach, develop a grant program for gun violence prevention efforts, and develop a resource bank on gun violence in the state.

Sixteen states have state offices of gun violence prevention. These offices are structured specifically to address gun violence and community violence and allow for a more direct approach to learning more about and addressing sources of gun violence in the state.

Creating an office of gun violence prevention allows for a fuller and more long term gun violence prevention strategy

HB644 not only creates an office of gun violence prevention, but tasks the new office with a series of responsibilities that would help the state craft community centered, data-driven responses to gun violence prevention in Hawaii. Community violence is increasingly understood as a multi-dimensional crisis that touches on many issue areas, including housing policy, education, employment, mental health, and healthcare. States that are having the most success in addressing this violence are building the infrastructure to direct the efforts of these diverse systems, both across government agencies and through public-private partnerships.

In supporting HB644, Hawaii would be acting in line with what other states have done in creating offices of gun violence prevention. In Colorado, for example, the OGVP is housed under the department of public health and is tasked with creating public information campaigns to educate on safe gun owning and storage practices as well as updates on new laws and requirements; maintains a database of gun violence prevention resources; and submits an annual report to the Colorado Department of Public Health on the status of their work and on gun violence in the state. In partnership with the University of Colorado, they recently published a study highlighting the importance of their ability to collaborate which has allowed them to enhance their gun violence data infrastructure and public-facing access to the data; translate research evidence to practical approaches to solutions; and evaluate state gun violence prevention strategies to inform on potential improvements.¹ Should Hawaii follow and create an

¹ Wright-Kelly E, Buck-Atkinson J, Brooks-Russell A, et al. Research–Practice Partnerships to Advance a State-Level Public Health Approach to Firearm Injury Prevention in the United States: A Colorado Case Study. *Public Health Reports*®. 2025;0(0). doi:10.1177/00333549241303278

office of violence prevention, the state would only be strengthening its ability to respond and craft solutions for gun violence prevention.

Creating Offices of Gun Violence Prevention is a growing trend among states

Creating Offices of Gun Violence Prevention is a growing trend in the fight against gun violence across the country. In 2024, for example, Governor Wes Moore signed a bill creating the Maryland Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention within the Department of Health as a way to improve the state's coordinated response to gun violence. In 2023, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper used an executive order to create the Office of Violence Prevention within the Department of Public Safety, with a mission to "promote local success in violence prevention by enhancing coordination across state agencies, improving data collection and sharing, offering technical assistance to local officials, promoting collaboration and sharing of best practices between localities, and managing grant programs to pursue and direct available federal funding to law enforcement and community-based organizations focused on reducing gun violence." At the beginning of 2025, Wisconsin created the Office of Violence Prevention through an executive action by Governor Tony Evers.

We urge the committee to support HB 684. The office of gun violence prevention that the bill would create will allow the state a greater range of gun violence prevention solutions and create a tool to help research, understand, and educate on the issue of gun violence in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Agustin Cabrera

Agustin Cabrera

State Legislative Manager | He/Him

c: (806) 335-5819

giffords.org | [@GIFFORDS_org](https://twitter.com/GIFFORDS_org)

GIFFORDS

ABOUT GIFFORDS

Giffords is a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives from gun violence. Led by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, Giffords shifts culture, changes policies, and challenges injustice, inspiring Americans across the country to fight gun violence.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 4:54:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alika Valdez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:09:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Anne Bell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to cut government spending and protect our 2nd amendment rights.

Too much government control of our lives.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:22:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn O'Brien	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives of the People of Hawai'i,

I strongly oppose HB664 as it further limits the rights granted the US citizens by the Constitution of the United States of America. Reread the 2nd Amendment.

Also it is a waste of taxpayer dollars to create ANOTHER government office to push an illegal bill against the citizenry when the current offices are already doing that i.e. this proposed bill. This is a waste of time, treasure, talent & our tribes, please stop this madness & vote AGAINST HB664.

Mahalo & Malama,

Dawn O'Brien

President, HOPE HI, Inc.

Lifelong resident & taxpaying citizen of Hawai'i

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:44:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel K	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii does need another useless government office with more paid positions. Gun violence prevention is not necessary for upright citizens and will not work on violent offenders. This is a waste of time and money.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:59:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deven English	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in Strong opposition of this bill, the perfect example of wasting tax payer money, a government office created to push unconstitutional gun control is completely unacceptable.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:01:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terry Murakami	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose. This will create another government office that will further burden Hawaii citizens with more taxes. Also "Gun Violence" programs ended up pushing ideas that go against the 2nd admendment rights. If people are so concerned about crime more focus needs to be spent on punishing criminals who have been clearly guilty of violent crimes and improving our economy.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:51:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lyle HIromoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

why do we need another government office that threatens our 2nd amendment rights. I oppose.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:20:56 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Dillon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee.

As a strong supporter of our 2nd Amendment rights I oppose this bill. I urge you to vote NO on this bill. It is a waste of taxpayer money and threatens our 2nd amendment rights.

Thank you for your consideration,

Joy Dillon, Hilo Resident

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee members:

I am testifying in support of HB664.

I'm originally from Hilo and I am a physician with a background in public health and healthcare quality improvement. I spent many years in Missouri working to improve community health in collaboration with academic faculty, a regional hospital system, and community organizations.

From that experience, I can attest that having data to focus efforts, a 'backbone organization' to help convene the many stakeholders involved with an issue, and the community partnerships to effectively engage community members is critical for ensuring that limited resources are spent wisely.

Although Hawai'i has a strong record of gun safety, the rate of gun deaths in the state has increased markedly over the last decade, outpacing the rate of increase nationally. Gun deaths and injuries cost Hawai'i an estimated \$901 million per year, of which \$19 million is paid by taxpayers.

Having an Office of Gun Violence Prevention would:

- allow resources to be spent in the areas where they are most needed,
- support coordination of efforts to avoid duplication of services, and
- engage and share information with community members, so that prevention efforts can be effective

I urge you to support HB664.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Elna Nagasako, MD, PhD, MPH
Makiki

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:25:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay Franzone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:39:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol D. Yokoyama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Please strongly OPPOSE HB664. Please do not waste our tax dollars on another new office to push gun control propaganda. Use our tax dollars wisely by additionally supporting our police department in cracking down on the high crime rates and working with our justice system in making sure criminals are serving severe sentence time.

Mahalo for your time.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:39:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Todd Yukutake	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

<p>I oppose HB664</p> <p>This is a waste of money that could be put to better use. The current Gun Violence Prevention Council did not achieve anything and wasted the police chiefs and other government officials time. Now the solution is to throw money at it to make it work.</p> <p>The bill admits that Hawaii has a low rate of gun violence so why is money going towards this? The money could be better spent on treating the mentally ill, building a new jail, more sheriffs and police, and lots of other programs especially with the potential cut in Federal funding to Hawaii </p> <p>Todd Yukutake</p> <p>8082553066</p>

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:49:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharron VanDeusen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose!

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:53:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlies Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose

What a waste of money!

we have more important things we shouldt spend our tax money on

Marlies Lee

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:54:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Giles	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose HB664,

Paul Giles

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:36:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela M Anderson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB664, which creates and funds and Office of Gun Violence Prevention. While framed as a safety measure, this bills risks becoming a taxpayer-funded propaganda machine against second amendmen rights, undermining the freedom of law-abiding Hawaii residents.

Establishing this office signals a clear intent to push an anti-gun narrative rather than address crime holistically. Similar efforts elsewhere-like the White House's 2023 push for state level gun control offices have been critiicized as political tools to erode constitutional rights, not solutions to violence. Hawaii's strict gun laws already rank among the toughest nationally, yet this office would likely churn out biased studies and policies targeting legal gun owners rather than criminals. The NRA-ILA has warned of such initiatives diverting resources to vilify firearms while ignoring root causes like mental health or enforcement gaps.

Funding this with state dollars - potentially millions over years-is a slap in the face to taxpayers struggling with Hawaii's high cost of living. Why not allocate those funds to proven measures, more polices, community programs or mental health services?

HB664 feels less about safety and more about control, once again clashing with recent federal efforts to protect second amendment rights.

I urge Hawaii law makers to look around and pay attention to the shift in sentiment and the push to preserve the Bill of Rights. It appears that much of This body's current docket is focused on further eroding those very rights, that the federal government is trying to restore.

I urge you to protect our rights, and focus on real solutions, rather than ask taxpayers to fund the very offices that are intended to erode our God-given rights, which have been fortified into law via the constitution.

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:23:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey King	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Shame on you legislators for trying to steal even more of our money to fund our own destruction with government sanctioned anti gun propaganda. It just doesn't get any worse than this. ICYMI the people are waking up to all the evil in government and voted overwhelmingly in the last election to put a stop to your agenda of propaganda, tyranny, poverty and war. You need to get on board with the people's agenda for truth, freedom, prosperity and peace, and not double down on taking away our rights, money, and freedom like you're doing now. Shame on you for following the agenda of the most evil people who have ever lived!

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:52:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaysha Mata-Peahu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:30:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James K. Rzonca	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Gun laws are unconstitutional. Shall not be infringed means shall not be infringed

HB-664-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:13:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Nichols	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose House Bill No. 664 (H.D. 1), which establishes an Office of Gun Violence Prevention, because I believe it unfairly burdens me with costs, undermines my freedoms, serves as propaganda, and fails to tackle real issues effectively. I object to my tax dollars—already limited—being funneled into this new office with unspecified appropriations for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, covering staff, a special fund, and a resource bank, when that money could repair roads or lower my taxes instead of bankrolling a program I see as wasteful and biased. I view the creation of this office under the Department of Law Enforcement, with a governor-appointed director pushing public campaigns on gun laws and safe storage, as an overreach that not only threatens my right to manage my own firearms as a law-abiding citizen but also acts as propaganda to sway opinion against responsible gun owners like me under the guise of education. I question the grant program, which uses my money to fund community groups for vague “evidence-informed” projects, because I suspect it’ll push a one-sided narrative that ignores actual criminals while promoting a state-approved agenda I don’t support. I see the resource bank, collecting data and pushing research—especially by race—as an intrusive tool that could be twisted into propaganda to justify more control over people like me rather than focusing on enforcing laws against real threats. I think this bill unfairly shifts responsibility from lawbreakers to folks like me, piling on costs and oversight with those open-ended sums that could balloon, all while its effective date of July 1, 3000 adds confusion to this costly scheme. I urge the Legislature to reject this bill, because I see it as an unfair, expensive overstep that erodes my freedom and responsibility, using my money to fuel propaganda through a state office that won’t solve the problem better than current measures could.