

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



JORDAN LOWE
DIRECTOR

MICHAEL VINCENT
Deputy Director
Administration

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

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2193, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1

RELATING TO FIREWORKS

Before the Senate Committees on

Ways and Means

And

Judiciary

Thursday, March 28, 2024; 9:45 a.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 211, Via Videoconference

Testifier: Jordan Lowe, Jared Redulla, or Michael Vincent

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and members of the Committees:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) **strongly supports**, House Bill 2193, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1.

Act 67, Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2023, established the Illegal Fireworks Task Force to ". . . plan, coordinate, and engage in law enforcement operations to interdict illegal fireworks; develop a comprehensive strategic plan to stop the importation of illegal fireworks and explosives into Hawaii; promote compliance with the state fireworks control laws; and ensure the safety and security of the airports, harbors, and other facilities and institutions in the State against the discharge of illegal fireworks and explosives."

The Illegal Fireworks Task Force has been operational for a very short time, but following the organization of the partner agencies, appropriate training, and law enforcement operations, almost 200,000 pounds of illegal fireworks have been taken off the streets of Hawaii and operations and investigations continue. This bill establishes a

series of provisions to address some of the weaknesses identified by the Illegal Fireworks Task Force which include requirements for licensing, recording, and reporting of fireworks related commodities; inspection and disposal authorities for state and county agencies; and a mechanism to recover costs associated with the storage and disposal from those responsible for any illegal fireworks confiscated by authorities.

The appropriation is crucial for the Illegal Fireworks Task Force to continue to successfully operate. The appropriation is necessary for the hiring of necessary administrative support staff for the Task Force, operation of the Task Force, and reimbursement of funds to law enforcement agencies for Task Force-related law enforcement operations, including law enforcement personnel, overtime and other salary-related payments, charges for fuel, equipment, and storage and disposal of confiscated fireworks.

DLE requests \$1,200,000 is the amount of the needed appropriation.

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

TESTIMONY OF
LARRY S VERAY

TO THE COMMITTEE'S ON WAYS AND MEANS & JUDICIARY

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2193 HD1, SD1

RELATED TO FIREWORKS

March 25, 2024

Aloha, Chair's Dela Cruz and Rhoades, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Gabbard and Committee members. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB2193 HD1, a very important House Bill that could positively impact hundreds of families who live in communities and residential areas where illegal fireworks are being stored. I am Larry Veray, Chair for the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21; I am submitting this testimony representing our board as a whole based on our previous resolutions and outgoing letters to our Congressional staff to interdict illegal fireworks from arriving in Hawaii. It is the illegal aerial bombs that have the most negative impact on our neighborhoods.

We desperately require law enforcement to detect, interdict, locate and make arrests on individuals who are involved in organized crime making millions of dollars on shipments of illegal fireworks arriving in Hawaii all year around in Trojan Horse shipping containers. After these illegal fireworks are arriving in Hawaii, the distribution individuals move the fireworks to covert locations where they make their sales. Regretfully, many of these storage areas are in residential areas. I am very concerned that it is only a matter of time where an entire neighborhood could experience loss of life from an accidental garage or warehouse explosion.

Our Hawaii Law Enforcement Fireworks Task Force requires the necessary funding to make an impact on countering illegal fireworks from being shipped to Hawaii and a means to destroy them while holding the bad actors accountable for those funds expended by enforcement.

Please pass HB2193 HD1, SD1. Mahalo!

Larry S. Veray



Hawaiian Humane Society
People for animals. Animals for people.

2700 Waiālae Avenue Honolulu, Hawaii 96826
808.356.2200 • HawaiianHumane.org

Date: March 26, 2024

To: Chairs Sens. Karl Rhoads & Donovan Dela Cruz
Vice Chairs Sens. Mike Gabbard & Sharon Moriwaki
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary &
Committee on Ways and Means

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Director of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in support of HB 2193, HD1, SD1: Relating to Fireworks
Thursday, March 28, 2024, 9:45 a.m., Room 211 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for House Bill 2193, HD1, SD1, which authorizes law enforcement and fire officers to enter and inspect any licensee's or permittee's premises to verify compliance with the State's Fireworks Control Law; establishes procedures for the Department of Law Enforcement to conduct administrative inspections of controlled premises; requires certain licensees and permittees to keep records and maintain inventories; requires licensees and permittees to report any stolen fireworks or articles pyrotechnic; authorizes a law enforcement agency or county fire department to safely dispose confiscated fireworks and articles pyrotechnic; requires violators to be held liable for storage and disposal costs; authorizes the Department of Law Enforcement, in addition to the counties, to enforce the Fireworks Control Law; and appropriates funds.

Hawaiian Humane has lobbied for increased protections from illegal fireworks for years, finally seeing progress with the passage of Act 67 by this body in 2023. In just a year, the Illegal Fireworks Task Force has succeeded in keeping more than 75 tons of destructive material off the local black market. That is the equivalent of nearly four full shipping containers worth of dangerous explosives.

We commend the resolve of law enforcement to interdict illegal fireworks and prevent the bombardment of our neighborhoods by illegal explosives. We support the tools offered by HB 2193, HD1, SD1, toward advancing that work. Please pass this measure with adequate funding. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2193-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2024 7:50:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2024 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It appears the deck is stacked against law enforcement and the people. This bill is an important tool in combatting illegal fireworks. Please pass.

I also urge the legislature to stop playing games and to delete the defective effective date.

HB-2193-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2024 7:54:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2024 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beverly Heiser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I Strongly Support HB 2193 HD1 SD1

The Department of Law Enforcement’s Illegal Fireworks Task Force has been making excellent progress in seizing illegal fireworks at the ports. I was impressed that three containers of illegal fireworks were seized at the ports during the month of December in such a short time. Add to this, a recent seizure of 200,000 pounds of professional grade fireworks that occurred on 2/15/24. This indicates the flow of illegal fireworks coming in not just for holidays, but throughout the year. It also supports the need for the provisions this bill establishes and additional appropriations to continue successful operations.

The amount of illegal fireworks this past New Year’s Eve indicates the magnitude of the problem and the need to continue funding this multi-agency task force capable of handing what may be linked to criminal networks or organizations. I have read the 2024 report submitted to the Legislature by Director Jordan Lowe and am pleased with the results. I am grateful for the updates to the public on the illegal fireworks seized, and what is forthcoming.

While not all areas of the Island may have experienced a significant difference yet, I have noted a difference in the area where I live in the months prior and after New Year’s Eve. There was also less debris to pick-up in my yard from aials. I belong to a group on NextDoor called “Stop All Illegal Fireworks”. What started with just 100 members has grown to 397 members from different neighborhoods. Many tell their stories of how illegal fireworks continue to affect their lives, to include property damage, health issues, disputes with neighbors, and traumatized pets. Stolen Stuff Hawaii has posts of pets that have run away spooked by fireworks.

Please support HB 2193 HD1 SD1 that can further enhance the Department of Law Enforcement's and the Illegal Fireworks Task Force’s efforts to reduce the amount of Illegal Fireworks.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2193-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2024 1:46:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2024 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Esteemed committee members,

I stand in **STRONG** support of this bill. I am a combat Veteran with PTSD and random, excessively loud aerial fireworks creates anxiety and stress. Please support this legislation to address this out-of-control problem.

Mahalo for allowing me to testify in support of this bill.