

SHOPO



STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS
" A Police Organization for Police Officers Only "
Founded 1971

February 22, 2023

VIA ONLINE

The Honorable Karl Rhoads
Chair
The Honorable Mike Gabbard
Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hawaii State Capitol, Rooms 228, 201
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **SB 346 SD1 – Relating to the Emergency Vehicles**

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Honorable Committee members:

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 **strong support** of SB 346 SD1. This bill amends HRS § 291C-26(c) to make the use of emergency sirens by authorized emergency vehicles discretionary.

As noted in the measure, the use of sirens by emergency vehicles can be and is necessary to alert other vehicles and pedestrians that an emergency vehicle is exercising its authority to disregard certain traffic laws. However, use of the sirens is not always necessary or mandatory. The unnecessary use of a siren contributes to noise pollution, especially in heavily-congested residential areas. Further, providing emergency responders like police officers with the discretion to use their sirens will alleviate noise pollution, the unnecessary disturbance of our citizens who are sleeping at night when the streets are empty of cars and pedestrians, as well as curb unnecessary traffic situations and panic. This Act will provide much needed flexibility in the use of sirens by emergency response vehicles in certain circumstances.

We thank you for allowing us to be heard on this very important issue and hope your committee will unanimously support this bill and allow this bill to take effect upon its approval.

ROBERT “BOBBY” CAVACO
SHOPO President

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SB-346-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:00:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/24/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Curtis Miller	Testifying for Liliuokalani Gardens AOA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Resolution for Reducing Siren Noise in Waikiki

Whereas sirens do NOT significantly increase the timely delivery of patients to hospitals; (1)

Whereas sirens do NOT significantly increase the timely arrival of fire personnel to accident sites; (1)

Whereas civilian safety is NOT enhanced by siren use; (2)

Whereas ambulance use of sirens is associated with increased risk of ambulance crashes. (3,5)

Whereas many motorists cannot hear sirens due to driving habits; (4)

Whereas limiting use of sirens will DECREASE risk of injury and death; (6)

Whereas siren use has LITTLE bearing on patient outcomes; (2)(7)

Whereas traffic in Waikiki is significantly reduced between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am;

Whereas fire and EMT sirens are a daily occurrence that create significant disturbances;

Whereas such disturbances greatly affect the peace and sleep patterns of residents in Waikiki;

Resolved, that the Waikiki Community Council urges the Honolulu Fire Department to eliminate

the deployment of sirens between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am.

Further, the Waikiki Community Council urges the Honolulu Fire Department to re-examine its coding policy in order to reduce the number of code three extreme emergency dispatches during all hours, day and night.

(1) Clawson, International Academies of Emergency Dispatch <https://bdnews24.com/health/sirens-loud-ineffective-and-risky-experts-say>

(2) Kupas, etal, National Association of State EMS Directors [https://naemsp.org/NAEMSP/media/NAEMSP-Documents/Annual%20Meeting/2021%20MDC%20Handouts/Joint-Statement-on-Red-Light-and-Siren-Operations-with-Logos-FINAL-\(003\).pdf](https://naemsp.org/NAEMSP/media/NAEMSP-Documents/Annual%20Meeting/2021%20MDC%20Handouts/Joint-Statement-on-Red-Light-and-Siren-Operations-with-Logos-FINAL-(003).pdf)

(3) Watanabe, etal, Annals of Emergency Medicine <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30648537/>

(4) Monmouth Ocean Hospital Service Corporation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivHTkZa7z0E>(5) Saunders, Prehosp Disaster Medicine <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/prehospital-and-disaster->

medicine/article/abs/ambulance-collisions-in-an-urban-environment/F66595C98F8D38E43FD08A54530E12EC

(6) Marques-Baptista, Prehosp Emergency Care, 2016 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20845321/>

(7) American College of Emergency Physicians <https://www.acepnow.com/article/ambulance-lights-and-sirens-should-only-be-used-when-the-benefit-outweighs-the-risks/?singlepage=1&theme=print-friendly>

SB-346-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:45:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/24/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of SD1. Thank you.

SB-346-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:32:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/24/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Robinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I am writing in **support** of this measure which can benefit both the community at-large and the operators of such emergency vehicles by reducing exposure to ear-piercing sirens.

Sound pollution from sirens is an issue that has existed for years and is only getting worse with more dense urban development, and as of now - little to no noticeable change of siren policy/sounds to accomodate the changing landscape.

In relation to Hawai'i, it feels as if the issue of siren usage and noise level has been pushed aside by finger pointing between various agencies and lip service from officials. I am hoping this measure changes that precedent and brings about more moderate and strategic usage of sirens for the benefit of emergency response personnel and the community at-large.

Mahalo,

Ben Robinson

SB-346-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:50:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/24/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doreen Cairme Nozawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this.