



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

LATE

**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
H.B. NO. 1790, RELATING TO POLICING.**

**BEFORE THE:
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Tricia M. Nakamatsu, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments, with suggested amendments.

The purposes of this bill are to require: (1) law enforcement agencies and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data regarding law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the "central reporting entity"; and (2) the "central reporting entity" to collect and publish incident-level information and an annual report on the data collected.

The Department defers to the state and county law enforcement agencies and police oversight agencies on their ability to provide the data on police stops, arrests, uses of force, and complaints detailed in the bill. Aside from potential logistical and/or financial issues, we note the following concerns and offer suggested amendments.

Laws of statewide concern

This bill adds a new part to chapter 139, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), that defines the "central reporting agency" to be "the Hawaii Crime Lab affiliated with the university of Hawaii, or any successor entity selected by the governor to collect and report data under this part." To prevent potential constitutional challenges, we recommend adding a statement that identifies this bill as a law of statewide concern.

By mandating certain work to be done by the University of Hawai'i, this bill implicates article X, section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution, which gives the Board of

Testimony of the Department of the Attorney General

Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026

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Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Notably, section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." If this bill presents a law of statewide concern, that is within the Legislature's authority and should be made clear in this bill.

"Law enforcement" in lieu of "police"

The bill contains references to both "law enforcement" and "police," and appears to use the terms interchangeably. Because the proposed part in section 2 of this bill is being added to chapter 139, HRS, and because section 139-1, HRS, already contains definitions of "law enforcement officer" and "law enforcement agency," the Department recommends that all references in this bill to "police" be changed to "law enforcement" or "law enforcement officer," as appropriate.

Definition of "police oversight agency"

The Department recommends that the definition of "police oversight agency," on page 4, lines 11-14, be amended to clarify that police oversight agencies do not include internal offices found within a law enforcement agency, as follows (wording recommended to be added is underlined):

"Police oversight agency" means any agency, board, or commission created by a political subdivision to accept and review complaints against police officers employed by the political subdivision, but does not include any office, division, or other entity within a law enforcement agency.

Also, if the Committee anticipates that multiple oversight agencies may exist for each law enforcement agency, additional mechanisms should be added to ensure that the central reporting entity is able to reconcile any overlapping information received from multiple oversight agencies. This may be difficult for the central reporting entity to distinguish, as identifying information will not be made available to the central reporting entity (see page 13, line 12, to page 14, line 2).

Other definitions and terminology

To clarify the definition of "physical force," we recommend amending page 4, line 6, as follows:

"Physical force" means the use of physical effort or the application of a **physical** tool, technique, or weapon intended to induce a person's compliance or overcome a person's resistance.

Related to this recommendation, we also recommend that the word "physical" be added in multiple areas of the bill, wherever it appears the term "physical force" was intended to be used. See, for example, page 8, lines 6 and 19; page 9, lines 16, 17, and 21; and page 10, lines 4, 6, and 9.

To clarify the definition of "serious bodily injury," the Department recommends using the existing definition under section 707-700, HRS, as follows:

"Serious bodily injury" has the same meaning as in section 707-700. This would avoid confusion for law enforcement personnel, including police, sheriffs, and prosecutors, who have been using the existing definition under section 707-700, HRS, for many years. Although the definition in this bill appears to have essentially the same meaning as the existing definition, there are slight differences in wording that could lead to an inference that the terms have different meanings.

The word "requiring" as used in the definition of "use of force," on page 5, line 3, should be amended to provide more objective parameters. As written, it is ambiguous and may be difficult for law enforcement officers to interpret what is meant by "any . . . injury **requiring** medical treatment or evaluation," as stated on page 5, lines 2 through 3 (emphasis added). As an alternative, the Committee should consider amending that to: "any . . . injury that results in medical treatment or evaluation," or "any . . . injury for which medical treatment or evaluation is requested or provided."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JON N. IKENAGA
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STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

February 2, 2026

HB 1790: RELATING TO POLICING:

Chair Garrett, Vice-Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) **supports** HB 1790 which establishes a comprehensive, standardized framework for collecting and publishing data on law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints in Hawai'i.

The OPD represents individuals at the point where law enforcement practices intersect most directly with constitutional rights, liberty interests, and community trust.

In individual cases, disputes often arise about the basis for a stop, the justification for a search, or the necessity of force. Those disputes are typically litigated in isolation, without broader context. Cases are evaluated on single encounters without access to aggregate data that could reveal whether a particular practice is routine, exceptional, or disparate.

This bill addresses that gap. By requiring consistent reporting on the reasons for stops, outcomes, searches, perceived mental health crises, uses of force, and complaints, this bill allows policymakers and the court to better understand how policing functions in practice, not just in theory.

From the OPD's perspective, this information is essential to:

- Evaluating whether stops and arrests are being conducted lawfully and proportionately;

- Identifying potential disparities that may not be visible in individual cases; and
- Informing policy decisions that reduce unnecessary justice system involvement while maintaining public safety.

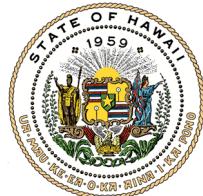
The OPD is particularly concerned with law enforcement encounters involving individuals experiencing mental health or behavioral crises—situations that frequently lead to arrest or use of force rather than care or diversion. This measure’s requirement that agencies track perceived mental health crises and use-of-force circumstances provides critical data to assess whether current approaches are effective or whether additional resources, training, or alternatives are warranted. These are precisely the types of encounters that place strain on officers, communities, and the justice system alike. Data is a necessary first step toward better outcomes.

The bill also allows Hawai‘i to take advantage of available federal grant funding under Section 1906 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, supporting data collection without placing the full fiscal burden on the State.

For these reasons, the Office of the Public Defender **supports** HB 1790.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
Director

ERNEST J. ROBELLO
Deputy Director
Administration

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
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STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
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JARED K. REDULLA
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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1790

RELATING TO POLICING

Before the House Committee on

HIGHER EDUCATION

Wednesday, February 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 309

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) submits comments on House Bill 1790, which requires law enforcement agencies and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data on law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the Hawaii Crime Lab, an affiliated unit of the University of Hawaii. This bill establishes a comprehensive framework for data collection and reporting on critical law enforcement activities, including stops, uses of force, and complaints. It designates the Hawaii Crime Lab at the University of Hawaii as the repository for this information and requires it to collect, analyze, and publish incident-level information, as well as annual reports on the collected data. Additionally, the bill directs the Department of the Attorney General to adopt rules in coordination with the Hawaii Crime Lab to implement these requirements.

The DLE recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability in law enforcement operations and acknowledges that comprehensive data collection can support evidence-based policy decisions and improve community relations. However,

Department of Law Enforcement Testimony on

HB1790 Relating to POLICING

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we wish to highlight several considerations for the committee's attention as this bill moves forward:

1. Implementation of these new data collection requirements may place additional administrative burdens on law enforcement agencies. Adequate resources, technical support, and reasonable timelines should be provided to all affected agencies.
2. There should be clear guidelines regarding data standardization across different agencies to ensure the information collected is consistent and comparable. This will be essential for meaningful analysis and reporting.
3. Appropriate safeguards should be established to protect sensitive information, including personal identifiers of both civilians and officers, while still maintaining the transparency goals of this legislation.

The DLE is committed to professional standards in law enforcement and supports initiatives that enhance accountability. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Hawaii Crime Lab and the Department of the Attorney General to develop practical implementation protocols should this measure advance.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this bill.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

'ÖNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony
Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'olelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

By
Denise Eby Konan, Dean
College of Social Sciences
and
Vassilis Syrmos, PhD
Interim Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1790 – RELATING TO POLICING

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i College of Social Sciences (CSS) is in strong support of HB 1790. HB 1790 would require law enforcement and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data – including statistics on law enforcement stops, uses of force and public complaints – to the Hawai'i Crime Lab. This legislation would also require the Hawai'i Crime Lab to collect and publish incident-level information, as well as an annual report on the data collected.

The Hawai'i Crime Lab is a faculty project led by Dr. Ashley T. Rubin, an associate professor of Sociology within the College. Dr. Rubin is a nationally and internationally recognized criminologist in her area of focus. She has also submitted testimony in support of this bill.

CSS respectfully request that the legislation be amended to establish a new unit, the Hawai'i Criminal Justice Research Center, to be housed in CSS, specifically in the College's Social Sciences Research Institute (SSRI). The Hawai'i Criminal Research Center would house the Hawai'i Crime Lab and carry the functions described by HB 1790. This new Center will provide a hub for faculty and student scholarship, and would establish collaborations with other entities across campus, such as the William S. Richardson School of Law.

If you ask members of the public – both nationally and locally – to name the biggest and highest priorities that they want their government leaders to tackle, crime consistently ranks as a top-tier concern. This bill was introduced last year naming the Hawai'i State Office of the Attorney General as the possible repository for crime data but, for various reasons, the legislation did not pass.

This bill is being reintroduced this session with the intent and hope that the UH Mānoa/CSS Hawai'i Crime Lab could serve as a repository of data and statistics about crime topics, including guns (possession, statistics regarding violent crime, etc.). Our proposed amendment would make this possible. As a member of the Gun Violence and Violent Crimes Commission, Dean Denise Eby Konan has prepared us to assemble researchers, including Dr. Rubin and the Hawai'i Crime Lab, and to pursue grant funding for research that depends on the state's mandate and having access to reliable data on crime. It is noteworthy that about \$1 million in federal funding is available for the state to access via National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Section 1906 funds. If passed this legislative session, it is possible to apply for and receive this federal funding by 2027.

CSS and its research arm, SSRI, have demonstrated that university-based applied research programs can manage complex, policy-relevant data initiatives and translate them into products used by government and the public. Examples include: (1) UHERO, which conducts rigorous, independent economic research on issues that are both central to Hawai'i and globally relevant; (2) the Partnership for Wellness & Resilience and statewide quality-of-life dashboards developed with the Office of the Governor; and (3) the CSS Health Policy Initiative, which brings faculty expertise and data capacity to urgent health and well-being issues through close collaboration with state agencies.

Locating the central reporting function within UH advances the University's mission of research, learning and public service, and expands applied learning opportunities for students in data analytics, evaluation and policy analysis – skills that are increasingly essential across public-sector and community-serving roles in Hawai'i.

However, the obligations implied by HB 1790 are substantial, and should not become an unfunded mandate for UH. Publishing incident-level data and producing annual statewide reports will require sustained staffing, secure and reliable technical infrastructure, and ongoing coordination across multiple agencies with different systems and capacities.

Accordingly, we encourage support of HB 1790 along with: (1) stable and sufficient funding for the central reporting entity; (2) clear governance and source-agency responsibility for data quality and privacy protections; and (3) a phased implementation plan aligned with the Attorney General's rulemaking to allow standards, systems and training to be established before full reporting begins.

Thank you for your consideration.



Testimony for Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for HB1790 - Relating to Policing
House Committee on Higher Education (HED)
Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2PM

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the HED committee,
Mahalo for the opportunity to express **SUPPORT for HB1790**, which would require law enforcement agencies and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data regarding law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the Hawai'i Crime Lab.

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. Our organization works to build a Hawai'i where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. Affordable, accessible, and safe transportation is crucial for fostering economic equality as it enables individuals of all backgrounds to access employment opportunities, education, and essential services.

As part of our work, we seek to minimize the negative social and economic impacts of traffic enforcement. To accomplish such, we must understand which populations in Hawai'i are most impacted by traffic policing. This is currently not possible as local police agencies are not required to collect or report the racial/ethnicity data or the individuals they stop or cite.

Creating standards for how data are gathered, reported, and interpreted is critical to translate county level information into actionable insights for Hawai'i. HB1790 will ensure that important information about race, ethnicity, use of force, and department practices are collected for all stops. By standardizing data reporting practices, there is an opportunity for gathering more consistent information about race and ethnicity across counties.

Furthermore, HB1790 is important because the existing information on policing and incarceration highlights racial and ethnic disparities within our criminal-legal system:

- Native Hawaiians make up 20% of the general population but 40% of the population in prison.¹
- The Honolulu Police Department's ("HPD") own reports demonstrate that racial disparities in enforcement, and particularly in use of force, are a persistent problem. In 2019, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders made up only 25.1% of Honolulu's residents. A report by HPD

¹ West, Charlotte, "Native Hawaiians Are Overrepresented In Prisons. Cultural Education Could Help," Honolulu Civil Beat, May 2023.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/05/native-hawaiians-are-overrepresented-in-prisons-cultural-education-could-help/>

found that between 2015-2019, 34.5% of uses of force were against and 38.1% of custodial arrests were of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.²

- A national evaluation of 13,147 police departments provided scores to states ranging from 0-100%, comparing states with population. States with higher scores spend less on policing, use less force, are more likely to hold officers accountable and make fewer arrests for low-level offenses. The evaluation found that Hawai‘i police departments scored “below” average when it comes racial disparities in deadly force (23%) and deadly force per arrest (11%).³

Transparency in law enforcement is important for building public confidence in our criminal legal system. Without understanding how people become involved in the criminal justice system, it is difficult to identify solutions to support them and their communities. Existing data suggests that certain communities are bearing the brunt of policing impacts. Data transparency is a necessary measure to shine light into law enforcement and to make improvements. This is a matter of legitimacy, fairness, public safety, and smart reform.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



Abbey Seitz
Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Director of Transportation Equity

² C.Jedra and A. Hofsneider, “Significant Disparity In Use Of Force Questioned By Honolulu Police Commission,” Honolulu Civil Beat, February 2021.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/02/significant-disparity-in-use-of-force-against-some-groups-questioned-by-honolulu-police-commission/>

³ National Police Scorecard, “Police Scorecard: Hawai‘i,” accessed January 2026. <https://policescorecard.org/hi>.

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the House Higher Education Committee, I am Dr. Ashley Rubin, Associate Professor of Sociology, and faculty lead of the Hawai'i Crime Lab. I submit my testimony **in support** of HB1790, which would require law enforcement and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data regarding law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints.

This law would name the Hawai'i Crime Lab as the central state repository for this data and charge the lab with the important responsibility of analyzing this data and producing annual reports for the public on data provided by the state's law enforcement agencies.

I launched the Crime Lab in Fall 2024 with two goals.

My primary goal was to conduct research that would be directly useful to the state's policymakers, citizens, and visitors. As a professor at a public research university, I personally feel it is important to serve the community by pursuing research questions that are relevant and interesting to them. But to provide trustworthy research, I also feel it is important to set politics aside.

Particularly in our age of political polarization, misinformation, and growing distrust, I created the Hawai'i Crime Lab to be a non-partisan resource for the state and community. To that end, I emphasize that we do not take strong positions on particular criminal justice policies; instead, we focus on data analysis and providing insights based on the data available. Our goal is not to advance any particular agenda, but rather to provide scientific answers to important questions. Following the scientific process, of course, we do not know those answers until we look at the data. Data are extremely powerful. They have the power to show us that our expectations and assumptions are faulty, they can illuminate new trends that we didn't even suspect, and ultimately they can give us a better understanding of the world around us.

My second goal in creating the Crime Lab was about serving students. I wanted to provide an alternative source of criminology education for our students. Complementing our lecture- and reading-heavy courses on criminology and criminal justice, the Crime Lab provides experiential learning, so students gain first-hand knowledge of conducting and presenting research. In our weekly lab meetings, the students present to the group what they have worked on that week. Students pursue a combination of projects, some of which are assigned while students also pick projects for themselves under my supervision. They are also able to weigh in on each other's projects, offer questions about and challenges to research design and data interpretation, and generally benefit from learning through this interactive, hands-on experience.

In developing the Crime Lab, I have followed worked to build community trust in and familiarity with the lab. To that end, we began small. Before opening up the lab to students, I wrote monthly blog posts on O'ahu's violent crime trends, helping to distinguish between trends and

statistical fluctuations. With my first cohort of four students, I turned the data collection over to them; we also collectively discussed the research analyses we should run and then I conducted the analyses myself. We also read and discussed local crime news, which inspired some of our research projects. Indeed, following a survey showing fear of crime had increased among the public, two of my students and I wrote an op-ed in the spring looking at the decline of violent crime on O'ahu and the then-increasing homicide rate (which has since declined significantly).

We have also provided comparisons of Hawai'i's crime rates to similar jurisdictions on the continent — we tend to be fortunate in having a generally lower crime rate. Over the last year, I have also been meeting with members of the criminal justice community to enhance awareness about the lab and seek out new research projects. Just this semester, we received our first contract with a state agency to analyze criminal justice data. I have also been in contact with other research units around the country who have engaged in similar data repository and analysis roles to learn more about the important task we would undertake should HB1790 pass.

We would welcome legislative support to expand our work, specifically to assist with legislatively identified concerns and reach our goal of helping policymakers and the people of Hawai'i achieve an unbiased, data-driven understanding of crime and criminal justice issues.

The Hawai'i Crime Lab is not a statutorily recognized agency, but it is housed within the College of Social Sciences. Moreover, I support Dean Denise Konan's plan to move the Crime Lab into a new Criminal Justice Research Institute, which could further expand our assistance to the state.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Committee: House Committee on Higher Education
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 2pm
Place: Conference Room 309 & Via Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HB1790 Relating to Policing**

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Committee Members:

The ACLU of Hawai'i (ACLU-HI) is in **support of HB1790**, which requires law enforcement agencies and police oversight agencies to collect and report certain data regarding law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the Hawai'i Crime Lab affiliated with the University of Hawai'i. The bill also requires the Hawai'i Crime Lab to collect and publish incident-level information and an annual report on the data collected and requires the Department of the Attorney General to adopt rules in coordination with the Hawai'i Crime Lab.

Accountability and trust require transparency. The public allocates significant responsibility and resources to law enforcement and has a right to know how they are being served. The first step to ensuring that law enforcement officers are complying with their responsibilities is by understanding how they function. The proposed measure provides data that will be critical for police, prosecutors, policymakers, and the public. It will empower law enforcement teams to better evaluate their practices and can reveal to lawmakers and the public where improvement is needed. More information is an opportunity for improvement and for more insightful analysis.

Increased Transparency Builds Trust and Legitimacy

Recent federal guidance has supported the idea that data transparency for policing is a public right, and that “decades of research and practice support the premise that people are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have authority that is perceived as legitimate by those subject to the authority.”¹ Keeping the public in the dark on police practices and patterns of behavior will not foster the sense of legitimacy necessary for the public. A 2022 Executive Order elaborates on this: “Public safety therefore depends on public trust, and public trust in turn requires that our criminal justice system as a whole embodies fair and equal treatment, transparency, and accountability... Building trust between law enforcement

¹ 2014 Executive Order: Task Force on 21st Century Policing (Obama)

agencies and the communities they are sworn to protect and serve also requires accountability for misconduct and transparency through data collection and public reporting.”²

Hawai‘i Lacks Consistent and Interpretable Data

Creating standards for how data are gathered, reported, and interpreted is critical to translate county level information into actionable insights for Hawai‘i more broadly. By standardizing data reporting practices, there is an opportunity for gathering more consistent information about race and ethnicity across counties. HB1790 itself will ensure that important information about race, ethnicity, use of force, and department practice are collected.

Data Transparency Enables Reform

The myriad problems that Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system faces flow downstream from initial interactions between police and civilians. This bill establishes baseline requirements for information so that the public and their entrusted officials can evaluate law enforcement practices. By better understanding the starting points of justice involvement, we can better understand and prevent downstream problems. HB1790 is important because the information that currently exists is concerning:

- Native Hawaiians make up 20% of the general population but 40% of the population are in prison.³ This is a troubling overrepresentation, and it is important to understand where these racial disparities first arise.
- The Honolulu Police Department’s (“HPD”) own reports demonstrate that racial disparities in enforcement, and particularly in use of force, are a persistent problem. In 2019, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders made up only 25.1% of Honolulu’s residents. A report by HPD found that between 2015-2019, 34.5% of uses of force were against and 38.1% of custodial arrests were of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.⁴

² 2022 Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety (Biden)

³ West, C. (2023). *Native Hawaiians Are Overrepresented In Prisons. Cultural Education Could Help.* Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/05/native-hawaiians-are-overrepresented-in-prisons-cultural-education-could-help/>

⁴ Jedra, C. & Hofsneider, A. (2021). *‘Significant’ Disparity In Use of Force Questioned By Honolulu Police Commission.* Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/02/significant-disparity-in-use-of-force-against-some-groups-questioned-by-honolulu-police-commission/>

- A national evaluation of 13,147 police departments found that Hawaii police departments were above average when it comes to racial disparities in deadly force (60%) and racial disparities in drug arrests (72%).⁵

ACLU-HI strongly supports the passage of HB1790. Transparency into law enforcement is important for building public confidence in our legal system, and to provide a much-needed look into police practice. Without understanding how people get involved in the criminal legal system, it will be difficult to find solutions to help them and their communities. Existing data suggest that something is seriously wrong in the status quo, to the detriment of some of our most vulnerable groups. Data transparency is a necessary measure to shine light into law enforcement and to make improvements. This is a matter of legitimacy, fairness, community safety, and smart reform.

Sincerely,
Josh Frost

Josh Frost
Policy Assistant
ACLU of Hawai‘i
jfrost@acluhawaii.org

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai‘i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai‘i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai‘i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization founded in 1965 that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds.

⁵ <https://policescorecard.org/hi>

HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

HEARING:

Public Hearing on House Bill 1790, Feb. 4, 2026

DATE OF TESTIMONY:

Feb. 3, 2026

TESTIMONY OF THE POLICING PROJECT AT NYU SCHOOL OF LAW IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1790

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

The Policing Project is an organization dedicated to ensuring transparent, effective, and ethical policing. Pursuant to that mission, the Policing Project has worked with states and cities across the country to strengthen their policing data collection laws.¹ The Policing Project submits this testimony in support of H.B. 1790, which would bring Hawai'i in line with best practices when it comes to policing data collection and reporting.

Data is essential for identifying the policies that actually advance public safety. But, at present, Hawai'i does not require its law enforcement agencies to collect (or publish) some of the most fundamental policing data that many other states have been collecting for years. In Hawai'i, we simply do not know how many people are stopped, injured, or killed each year by police. Nor do we know how many complaints each agency receives per year or the results of any subsequent investigation. In short, there is a massive data vacuum that prevents lawmakers and the public from knowing whether police are effectively promoting public safety with minimal harm to communities.

H.B. 1790 seeks to fill this data gap. The bill requires the collection of stop, use of force, and complaint data from each of the state's law enforcement agencies. This bill is also the strongest

¹ As part of its mission to advance democratic accountability in policing, the Policing Project has created a number of model policies, all of which are informed by best practices in existing legislation and vetted by an advisory committee consisting of law enforcement officials, academics, police reform experts, and impacted community members. [Our comprehensive model statute on police data collection and transparency](#) was vetted through this process and it helps form the basis of our testimony.

policy to address Hawai‘i’s data deficiency yet: H.B. 1790 addresses concerns raised by law enforcement about a similar bill² in the 2025 legislative session.

Data On Officer Encounters, Uses of Force, and Civilian Complaints is Crucial and Can Be Transformative

Traffic stops are one of the most common ways the public interacts with police. Indeed, the Honolulu Police Department alone issues [approximately 400,000 traffic citations annually](#). Yet Hawai‘i has done little to collect information related to these stops. Twenty-three states, including Alabama, California, Montana, Oregon, Texas, and Washington, have laws requiring the collection and publication of traffic stop data (and, in many states, pedestrian stop data)—but Hawai‘i is not among them.

Stop data collection can lead to important improvements in policing outcomes. In Connecticut, for example, which has been collecting traffic stop data since 1999, authorities have used stop data to identify and address policing issues, contributing to [racial disparities falling year over year](#). The data collection efforts have also provided valuable information to police leaders and policymakers in assessing what works. [A 2017 Policing Project study](#) of traffic stop data in Nashville, for example, found that the department’s heavy reliance on stops for minor traffic infractions was not an effective strategy for reducing crime. The robust stop data collected by Nashville and other law enforcement agencies across the country has enabled law enforcement leaders to see which stops are effective—by, for example, turning up evidence of crime or leading to arrests—and which aren’t. This in turn permits leaders to better use officer time by prioritizing the sorts of stops that are likely to further public safety.

In addition, collecting comprehensive data on use of force will enable lawmakers and the public to determine how frequently officers are using force against members of the public, the degree of force used, and whether the force is used disproportionately against particular demographic groups. This information will allow the legislature to focus its efforts on addressing uses of force that are empirically problematic in Hawai‘i, rather than following national trends and regulating tactics that may not be used frequently here.

Indeed, the Honolulu Police Department has already recognized the wisdom of collecting use of force data, [publishing such data annually](#) in tandem with the Public First Law Center from 2021 to 2023. This data revealed that in 2022 33% of all use of force incidents were against Native Hawaiians and 9% were against Black residents even though Native Hawaiians and Black residents only make up approximately 22% and under 4% of the population, respectively. The data required to be collected by H.B. 1790 could help Oahu disseminate this vital information again, and assist the rest of Hawai‘i with identifying and addressing the sources of these and other troubling disparities.

Police misconduct complaint data can help lawmakers and researchers to determine whether law enforcement agencies (and police oversight agencies) are adequately investigating and imposing discipline on officers who engage in misconduct. It also allows the public and lawmakers to recognize demographic or geographic patterns when it comes to filed complaints. When the public

² H.B. 278 (2025).

is armed with data about their local agency, they can advocate for the solutions that their communities need based on information rather than supposition.

Learning from complaint and use of force data should help reduce the significant police misconduct payouts Hawai‘i’s cities and counties (and thus, taxpayers) must pay; the City of Honolulu, for example, [spent more than \\$17 million](#) to settle municipal claims, most of which were police misconduct lawsuits, in 2024.

In the past, some of Hawai‘i’s law enforcement agencies have opposed similar legislation by claiming that they already collect and report information. In many of the states that mandate collection and reporting of a standardized set of data, some of their law enforcement agencies were already collecting some subset of data at the time the legislation was passed. Without unifying state legislation, though, law enforcement agencies may not be collecting important data points, may be collecting different data than other agencies and thus hindering comparison, and may not be sharing data in an accessible way. What’s more, absent statewide law, agencies that voluntarily collect and publish data can stop doing so at any time, as the Honolulu Police Department has appeared to do when it comes to use of force data. We applaud agencies that have already taken steps towards transparency; indeed, such agencies should be well positioned for implementing the data collection requirements contemplated by this bill easily and efficiently.

The Data Collection Required by H.B. 1790 Need Not Be Costly Or Overly Burdensome

The many states that already require their agencies to collect and report policing data have demonstrated that data collection can occur without significant expense or burden.

A number of states, including Connecticut, Oregon, and Maryland, appear to fully fund their policing data collection and analysis programs through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s grant program under Section 1906 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act. (They appear to fully fund these programs despite implementing regulations setting forth an 80% federal share cap, *see 23 C.F.R. § 1300.20*). [Section 1906 grants](#) are available to any state that passes a law requiring the publication of demographic data for traffic stops, which H.B. 1790 would do. Indeed, Connecticut, Oregon, Maryland, and other states annually receive either \$1.15 million or \$575,000 in Section 1906 grant funding, and the amount of funding is not correlated with state size: less populous states like Nebraska and Rhode Island have successfully [applied for and received \\$1.15 million annually](#). And other federal grants besides section 1906 may be available to states to fund policing data collection.

State data reporting entities in states like Connecticut, Oregon and Maryland use Section 1906 funding to hire additional full-time statistical analysts, to pay third-party vendors for data collection software and associated apps and web forms that allow officers & local agencies to report data at no-cost, and to hire staff to train and offer any technical assistance needed to law enforcement agencies and officers.

Moreover, the reporting burden on agencies and officers is not particularly high. As the Center for Policing Equity noted in its testimony last session, Connecticut officers typically take less than a

minute to submit stop data similar to what HB 1790 requires. And Oregon ran pre-implementation beta-testing of its data collection program to ensure reporting was not too confusing or time consuming for officers. Hawai‘i can do the same.

H.B. 1790 also helps ensure smooth implementation by giving agencies until January 2028 to start collecting data, eight months after the Attorney General’s office, in coordination with the Hawai‘i Crime Lab, issues its implementing regulations. This time buffer will allow Hawai‘i’s law enforcement agencies plenty of time to work through any issues with the Attorney General’s office and the Crime Lab before starting the data collection required by H.B. 1790. It will also allow law enforcement agencies sufficient time to train officers on any new data collection procedures.

H.B. 1790 Addresses Law Enforcement Concerns Expressed Last Session

Last session, law enforcement expressed concern about one of the enforcement mechanisms in a predecessor policing data bill (H.B. 278) being overly punitive; that provision would have paused state-administered grants to any law enforcement agency that does not comply with the bill’s reporting requirements. That provision has been removed wholesale from H.B. 1790.

In addition, last session’s bill tasked the Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division of the Attorney General’s office, the state’s federally-designated statistical analysis center, as the entity charged with collecting and publishing data from each law enforcement agency. Notwithstanding the possibility of Section 1906 funding, the Attorney General’s office indicated last session that it could not satisfy that statutory role without additional resources and staffing given its other existing statutory obligations. The bill now makes the Hawai‘i Crime Lab at the University of Hawai‘i the central reporting entity, led by Associate Professor Ashley Rubin; the Crime Lab and Dr. Rubin have indicated their willingness to serve this role, and also to coordinate with the Attorney General’s office to develop rules implementing the bill, as the bill provides. A number of other states, including Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, New Mexico, and Washington, task university entities comparable to the Crime Lab with leading policing and/or crime data collection and analysis.

In short, the public, lawmakers, and law enforcement all would benefit tremendously from the passage of H.B. 1790. The bill would allow all three groups to have a significantly better understanding of what furthers public safety and what doesn’t, and would enable lawmakers and law enforcement agencies to pursue evidenced-based reforms informed by the comprehensive data collected.

Thank you for considering our testimony.



February 4, 2026

Chair Andrew Takuya Garrett
Hawai'i House Committee on Higher Education
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Testimony of the Center for Policing Equity in Support of HB 1790

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

Center for Policing Equity is a research and action organization made up of former law enforcement, academics, and community engagement specialists that uses scientific research to identify and reduce racial disparities in policing. We have worked with police departments across the country to improve their data collection policies to inform how to improve police practices and public safety. Center for Policing Equity submits this testimony in support of HB 1790 which would create policing data collection standards and reporting in Hawai'i.

In our work with dozens of law enforcement agencies we have found that improving data collection and requiring public reporting helps agencies, communities, and policymakers pinpoint the core issues driving inequity and make evidence-based decisions about what works, and what doesn't, to improve public safety. Statewide standards for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data points for stops, uses of force, and complaints are vital to effectively measure what police practices look like across the state and who is being harmed by particular practices. Without statewide standards, departments record data inconsistently, making it difficult or impossible to consistently analyze. For example, CPE was only able to measure consistent and compounding anti-Black racial disparities in traffic stops, searches at traffic stops, and use of force at stops due to California's robust data collection standards.¹

While transitions always require work to implement, we know that state laws mandating similar police data collection and reporting requirements have spurred positive changes with minimal issues for police departments. After Connecticut implemented its data collection law in 2012, several jurisdictions in the state identified racial disparities in police traffic stop practices and made reforms that reduced racial disparities with no adverse impact to crime or crashes.²

¹ Graham, Mathew A. (2024). Compounding Anti-Black Racial Disparities in Police Stops. Center for Policing Equity. <https://policingequity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/CPE-WhitePaper-Compounding-Disparities.pdf>

² Ross, M. B., Kalinowski, J. J., & Barone, K. (2020). Testing for disparities in traffic stops: Best practices from the Connecticut model. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 19(4), 1289–1303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12528>



Changes to address racial disparities in policing can also result in more effective policing. In Hamden, Connecticut, police were using pretextual stops in a primarily Black neighborhood. After shifting enforcement tactics to focus on dangerous driving behaviors, they saw a 5% drop in crime.³

The proposed data collection and reporting standards should not represent a huge burden or change for most departments. The company that runs the software police officers in Connecticut use to collect similar data points told us that officers, on average, spend less than 30 seconds recording each stop. In addition, implementing these changes should not represent a huge cost to the state. Many states fund similar data collection programs with Section 1906 grants provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.⁴

HB 1790 would help ensure that the right data are collected, empowering law enforcement agencies, lawmakers, and community members to identify exactly what is driving racial disparities in policing and make evidence-based changes to their public safety systems. We urge you to support HB 1790 and contribute to a more transparent, accountable, and equitable policing environment in Hawai'i.

³ Condon, T. (2022, January 31). After poor start, CT anti-racial profiling effort is making progress. Hartford Courant. <https://www.courant.com/politics/hc-pol-racial-profiling-20220131-s3goxbcd5fgv7blw4uejfe7gte-story.html>

⁴ Section 1906 Racial Profiling Prohibition Grants. Governors Highway Safety Association. <https://www.ghsa.org/about/federal-grant-programs/1906#:~:text=This%20program%20provides%20grants%20to,local%20or%20minor%20rural%20roads.>



LATE

Support for HB 1790 – An Act Relating to Policing
Written Testimony – National Police Accountability Project, Eliana
Machefsky, Staff Attorney
House Committee on Higher Education – Wednesday, February
4, 2026

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue. The National Police Accountability Project (“NPAP”) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to holding law enforcement and corrections agencies accountable to constitutional and professional standards. NPAP has more than 550 attorney members throughout the United States, including Hawaii, who represent plaintiffs in civil actions alleging misconduct by law enforcement officers. We strongly support HB 1790.

Public access to information about policing activity is a critical component of efforts to enhance public safety and ensure law enforcement accountability. To fully understand the effects of various policing practices, the impact of enacted reforms, and the need for additional reforms, lawmakers and members of the public must have reliable access to comprehensive data on law enforcement interactions with civilians. Data relating to police stops, arrests, and use of force can reveal deficiencies in department policies or practices in need of reform. Similarly, information on citizen complaints and officer discipline enables members of the public to determine whether the law enforcement agencies sworn to protect and serve them are adequately addressing officer misconduct and preventing future harm. HB 1790 would ensure that this critical data is collected and reported to the public.

We are pleased to see the comprehensive data sets relating to traffic and pedestrian stops that HB 1790 would require county police departments and police oversight agencies to collect. The traffic stop is the single most common



reason for contact between police officers and civilians¹ and, consequently, one of the most frequent sites of police misconduct. The data, where properly collected, show that drivers of color are disproportionately stopped for minor traffic violations and disproportionately questioned, searched, and subjected to officer force once stopped.²

In order to address racial disparities and inequities in traffic stops, it is critical that police departments collect data on all traffic stops conducted, including the purported reason(s) for the stop, the race of the stopped driver, and whether a search and/or arrest was made. This data will enable lawmakers and communities to understand how frequently drivers of color are stopped, how often those stops are for highly discretionary, low-danger reasons such as a broken headlight or tinted windows, and how regularly those stops escalate into increasingly intrusive law enforcement contact, such as questioning, search, or even arrest.

We are also pleased to see that HB 1790 would require data collection on officer use of force, including information on the type of force used, the reason for the initial contact with the civilian, and the perceived race, age, gender, and disability status of the civilian. Law enforcement officers possess immense and unique authority—to carry weapons with which they can

¹ BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, *Traffic Stops*, <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?tid=702&ty=tp>; Erika Harrell and Elizabeth Davis, *Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2018—Statistical Tables*, BUREAU JUST. STAT. 4, available at: <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cbpp18st.pdf>.

² See, e.g., David A. Harris, *Driving While Black: Racial Profiling On Our Nation's Highways*, ACLU (Jun. 1999), available at: <https://www.aclu.org/report/driving-while-black-racial-profiling-our-nations-highways>; Jordan Blair Woods, *Traffic Without the Police*, 73 STAN. L. REV. 1471, 1475 (2021) (“Several studies show that Black and Latinx motorists in particular are disproportionately stopped by police for traffic violations and disproportionately questioned, frisked, searched, cited, and arrested during traffic stops.”); Ben Poston, *Racial gap found in traffic stops in Milwaukee*, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL (Dec. 3, 2011), <https://archive.jsonline.com/watchdog/watchdogreports/racial-gap-found-in-traffic-stops-in-milwaukee-ke1hsip-134977408.html>.



threaten or end an individual's life.³ Available data shows that officers disproportionately employ force—both lethal and non-lethal—against people of color.⁴ Similarly, people living with serious mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed during interactions with law enforcement than civilians without mental illness who are approached or stopped by the police.⁵ HB 1790's data collection on officer use of force will enable Hawaiians to identify any such disparities and take corrective action.

Finally, we applaud HB 1790's inclusion of data relating to agency investigations of civilian complaints and disciplinary actions. Data on civilian complaints is a critical tool that communities can use to identify problematic officers and advocate for their removal to prevent further harm. This data also allows communities to evaluate how rigorously their police departments investigate allegations of officer misconduct and, when allegations are sustained, how departments discipline their officers for violations of law and/or department policy. For example, former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin had at least 17 complaints filed against him before he murdered George Floyd by kneeling on his neck.⁶ Only one of those complaints resulted in any type of discipline, which was a mere two letters of reprimand.⁷

Data on departmental responses to allegations of officer wrongdoing can also

³ See Katherine J. Bies, Note, *Let the Sunshine In: Illuminating the Powerful Role Police Unions Play in Shielding Officer Misconduct*, 28 STAN. L. & POL. REV. 109, 142 (2017) (“police officers have the unique state-sanctioned ability to use force on other citizens”).

⁴ See, e.g., Roland G. Fryer, Jr., *An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force*, 127 J. Pol. Econ. 1210 (2019).

⁵ Treatment Advocacy Center, *Overlooked in the Undercounted: The Role of Mental Illness in Fatal Law Enforcement Encounters* 1 (Dec. 2015), <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/overlooked-in-the-undercounted>.

⁶ John Kelly and Mark Nichols, *We found 85,000 cops who've been investigated for misconduct. Now you can read their records*, USA TODAY (Apr. 24, 2019), <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/investigations/2019/04/24/usa-today-revealing-misconduct-records-police-cops/3223984002/>.

⁷ *Id.*



National Police **Accountability** Project

reveal deficient training and problematic department policies. An officer who receives little or no discipline for objectively unconstitutional conduct raises concerns about the department's policies and procedures. Similarly, when recidivist officers are regularly assigned additional training as corrective action but continue to engage in misconduct, there is reason to suspect that the department's training is ineffective.

By ensuring access to data on police encounters with civilians, HB 1790 would provide a critical tool for enhancing public safety, fostering public trust of law enforcement, and improving agency policy, procedure, and training. We strongly support HB 1790, and encourage you to pass it out of Committee. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at eliana.npap@nlg.org.

Eliana Machefsky
Staff Attorney, **National Police
Accountability Project**
eliana.npap@nlg.org

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*Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association*

**Testimony to the House Committee on Higher Education
Wednesday, February 4, 2:00 PM Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 309, and Videoconference****RE: House Bill No. 1790 – RELATING TO POLICING**

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Coby Chock, and I am testifying on behalf of the Alzheimer's Association Hawaii Chapter with comments on HB1790 with a suggested amendment.

More than 31,200 Hawai'i residents are currently living with Alzheimer's disease, a number that will continue to grow as our population ages. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias significantly impact behavior, communication, orientation, and judgment.

Critically, approximately 60 percent of people living with Alzheimer's or related dementias will wander at some point. When this occurs, interactions with law enforcement are common—often during moments of vulnerability, confusion, or distress. These encounters may be logged as law enforcement stops, mental health or behavioral crises, or missing person responses, but currently there is no consistent way to identify or analyze when dementia plays a role.

Without this data, Hawai'i cannot:

- Accurately understand how frequently law enforcement interacts with individuals living with cognitive impairment or dementia
- Identify where these encounters are occurring across the state
- Evaluate outcomes, risks, or patterns that may inform prevention or safety strategies
- Develop evidence-based policies, training, or community supports that proactively keep people safe

HB1790 already requires the collection of perceived disability status and whether a person appeared to be experiencing a mental health or behavioral crisis. We respectfully request an amendment to explicitly include dementia or suspected cognitive impairment as a data element.

Specifically, the Alzheimer's Association requests that HB1790 be amended to require the collection of whether, during a law enforcement stop or use of force incident, the individual is suspected of having cognitive impairment or dementia.

Please support these unsung heroes by passing HB1790. They all deserve our support. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support! If you have questions, please contact me at 808-451-3410 or ckchock@alz.org



Coby Chock
Director of Public Policy and Advocacy
Alzheimer's Association - Hawaii

Hawai'i Committee on Higher Education

Public Hearing on House Bill 1790, Feb. 4, 2026

Testimony of Kenneth Barone, Manager of the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project in Support of H.B.1790

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in strong support of H.B. 1790**, which would require standardized statewide collection, analysis, and public reporting of data related to law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints in Hawai'i.

I submit this testimony as a public policy and research director with more than fifteen years of experience designing, implementing, and overseeing statewide police data collection and accountability programs, primarily through university-based research institutions. I currently serve as Associate Director of the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at the University of Connecticut, where I direct Connecticut's police data collection and transparency programs, including the statewide traffic stop data system established under the Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act. In that role, I oversee data collection and analysis for more than 100 law enforcement agencies, manage federal grant funding, supervise follow-up research with police agencies, and co-author annual public reports submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly.

In addition to my work in Connecticut, I have provided technical assistance and expert consulting to multiple states and jurisdictions, including Rhode Island, the District of Columbia, Nevada, Nebraska, Illinois, Colorado, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, California, and Oregon, helping them design and implement statewide policing data systems, analytical methodologies, and public reporting frameworks. Much of this work has involved advising legislatures, attorneys general, and university partners on how to structure data collection programs that are independent, methodologically rigorous, and trusted by both the public and law enforcement.

I have also testified before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in 2021 on traffic stop data collection and racial profiling, sharing best practices and lessons learned from statewide police data programs.

It is from this perspective, as someone who has spent my career operating these systems in practice, that I strongly support both the substance of H.B. 1790 and its decision to designate the University of Hawai'i Crime Lab as the state's central reporting entity.

As the Legislature correctly recognizes, comprehensive and standardized policing data is foundational to public trust, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking. Without reliable, statewide data, policymakers and the public are left to rely on anecdotes, isolated reports, or national trends that may not reflect Hawai'i's unique context.

H.B. 1790 would close critical gaps by requiring the collection and public reporting of data on stops, uses of force, and complaints across all law enforcement agencies, while incorporating strong privacy protections and a thoughtful implementation timeline. This approach reflects national best practices and mirrors successful models already operating in many other states, including Connecticut.

In my experience, collecting this type of data does not impose an undue burden on law enforcement when implemented thoughtfully. In Connecticut, we have used federal grant funding to integrate data collection directly into existing records management and citation systems, automating as much of the process as possible and minimizing duplicate data entry. As a result, an officer typically spends less than ninety seconds completing the required data fields following a traffic stop. Similar approaches have been successfully implemented in other states, demonstrating that comprehensive data collection can be achieved without disrupting core policing functions.

Moreover, high-quality data collection benefits law enforcement as much as it benefits the public. When agencies have access to reliable, standardized data, they are better able to evaluate whether enforcement strategies are actually improving roadway safety, reducing crime, and making efficient use of officer time. In multiple states, traffic stop and use-of-force data have helped police leaders identify which practices are effective and which are not, allowing them to refine policies, training, and deployment strategies based on evidence rather than assumption. In this way, H.B. 1790 supports not only transparency and accountability, but also more effective and focused policing.

I also believe that university-based research centers are uniquely well-suited to serve as central reporting and analysis entities for this kind of work. Collecting, managing, and analyzing policing data across dozens of agencies requires advanced statistical expertise, strong data governance practices, and the ability to translate complex findings into public-facing reports that are both accurate and accessible. These are core functions of university research centers and crime labs, which are specifically designed to conduct independent, methodologically rigorous analysis at scale.

Equally important, housing this work at a university promotes independence, credibility, and sustainability. University-based entities are well positioned to administer federal grant funding, manage technical vendors, provide training and technical assistance to agencies, and support continuous improvement over time. This structure, paired with oversight and rulemaking authority retained by the Attorney General, creates a balanced and effective model that has been successfully implemented in multiple states.

H.B. 1790 represents a thoughtful, carefully designed step forward for Hawai'i. It adopts proven national best practices, responds to concerns raised in prior legislative sessions, and places responsibility for complex analytical work with an entity well-equipped to perform it.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass H.B. 1790. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, and thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Barone

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1790
Hawai‘i House Committee Higher Education

LATE

Aloha Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I have worked in the field of public safety for more than 15 years, and strongly support H.B. 1790 which addresses a simple but serious gap in Hawai‘i’s public safety system: the State does not collect consistent, statewide data on basic police activity.

Current problem

- Hawai‘i does not require uniform reporting on:
 - Police stops
 - Uses of force
 - Misconduct complaints or outcomes
- As a result:
 - Lawmakers lack evidence to evaluate policing policy
 - The public cannot assess whether practices are fair or effective

What the bill does

- Requires all law enforcement agencies to report standardized data on stops, use of force, civilian complaints
- Replaces inconsistent, voluntary reporting with a statewide system.

Why this matters

- Traffic stops are one of the most common police interactions, yet Hawai‘i collects little data on them.
- Other states use stop and force data to identify ineffective practices and reduce harm.
- Prior HPD use-of-force data showed significant racial and socioeconomic disparities, but that reporting has stopped.
- Complaint data helps identify patterns and reduce costly misconduct litigation.

Cost and feasibility

- Many states already collect this data with minimal burden.
- Federal grants are available to support staffing, technology, and training.
- Officers in other states typically spend under one minute entering stop data.
- The bill provides ample time for implementation.

Universities as effective data partners

- Many states successfully partner with universities to house, analyze, and publish law enforcement data. These partnerships provide:
 - Technical expertise and independence
 - Stable data infrastructure
 - Public-facing analysis trusted by both policymakers and communities
- H.B. 1790 follows this proven model by assigning data responsibilities to the Hawai‘i Crime Lab at the University of Hawai‘i.

Addressing prior concerns

- Removes enforcement provisions opposed last session.
- Assigns data collection to the Hawai‘i Crime Lab, following models used in other states.

Better data supports better decisions. H.B. 1790 is a practical, measured step toward evidence-based public safety in Hawai‘i. I respectfully urge your support of H.B. 1790.

Mahalo,

Liam Chinn

Public Safety Consultant