

JON N. IKENAGA
PUBLIC DEFENDER

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

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

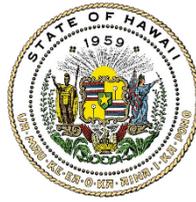
APPELLATE DIVISION
TEL. NO. (808) 586-2080

DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
TEL. NO. (808) 586-2100

FAMILY COURT DIVISION
TEL. NO. (808) 586-2300

FELONY DIVISION
TEL. NO. (808) 586-2200

FACSIMILE
(808) 586-2222



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

HAYLEY Y. C. CHENG
ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER

HILO OFFICE
275 PONAHAHAWAI STREET
SUITE 201
HILO, HAWAII 96720
TEL. NO. (808) 974-4571
FAX NO. (808) 974-4574

KONA OFFICE
75-1000 HENRY STREET
SUITE #209
KAILUA-KONA HI 96740
TEL. NO. (808) 327-4650
FAX NO. (808) 327-4651

KAUAI OFFICE
3060 EIWA STREET
SUITE 206
LIHUE, HAWAII 96766
TEL. NO. (808) 241-7128
FAX NO. (808) 274-3422

MAUI OFFICE
81 N. MARKET STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
TEL. NO. (808) 984-5018
FAX NO. (808) 984-5022

February 16, 2026

HB 1790, HD 1: RELATING TO POLICING:

**Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee on
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:**

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) **supports** HB 1790, HD 1 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, HD 1.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Wednesday, February 18, 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 HD1 – RELATING TO POLICING

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Social Sciences (CSS) is in strong support of HB 1790 HD1. It 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.

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.

The Hawai'i Crime Lab is a faculty project led by Dr. Ashley T. Rubin, an associate professor of Sociology within CSS. Dr. Rubin is a nationally and internationally recognized criminologist in her area of focus.

We respectfully suggest to amplify the impact of the Hawai'i Crime Lab changing this legislation to name the CSS research arm, the Social Sciences Research Institute (SSRI). The CSS/SSRI partnership has historically 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.

This success has been proven through the critical and public performance of: (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 a central reporting function on and about crime within UH has multiple, tangible advantages, including:

- Benefiting from the University's historic reputation and mission for unbiased research, learning and public service.
- Expanding 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.
- Increasing applied criminology and criminal justice training and research opportunities for UH students.
- Leveraging available federal and extramural resources.
- Demonstrating UH's willingness and ability to work with county and state agencies in a cooperative, consultative manner.

However, the obligations implied by HB 1790 HD1 are substantial, and should not become an unfunded mandate for UH. Publishing incident-level data and producing annual statewide reports would 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 HD1 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.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1790 HD1
RELATING TO POLICING

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Ho‘okolokolo a me ke Kuleana Hawai‘i
(House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs)
Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i
(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Pepeluali 18, 2026

2:00 PM

Lumi 325

Aloha e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, a me Members of Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Ho‘okolokolo a me ke Kuleana Hawai‘i:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers testimony in **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS to HB1790 HD1**, which establishes standardized statewide data collection and reporting on law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints. OHA supports HB1790 HD1’s goal of strengthening transparency, accountability, and public trust through consistent and publicly accessible law enforcement data. Reliable, disaggregated data is essential to understanding patterns, evaluating policy effectiveness, and ensuring that public safety practices align with community well-being.

Native Hawaiians remain disproportionately represented at multiple points within Hawai‘i’s criminal legal system, yet existing datasets often fail to accurately capture Native Hawaiian identity due to aggregation into broader racial categories. This limitation reduces the State’s ability to identify trends, evaluate outcomes, and develop effective, culturally grounded public safety policies. Ensuring accurate and transparent data collection is critical to informed decision-making and equitable policy development.

To ensure Native Hawaiian data is accurately collected and reported, OHA respectfully requests the following amendments:

Amendment 1: Insert Definition of Hawaiian.

Amend §139- (Definitions) to add a new definition to read as follows:

“Hawaiian” has the same meaning as defined in section 10-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Amendment 2: Require Data Disaggregation.

- a. Amend §139- (b)(7) – Law Enforcement Stop Data in subsection (b)(7), after “gender,” insert language requiring disaggregation:

"(7) The perceived age, race, and gender of each person involved in the stop; Hawaiian as a distinct category and shall be reported for all persons identifying as Hawaiian, whether alone or in combination with other racial or ethnic identities; provided further that for vehicle stops, this information need only be provided for the driver, unless a passenger was searched, cited, arrested, or subjected to physical force;"

b. Amend §139- (c)(6) – Use of Force Data

In subsection (c) (6), revise to read: "(6) The perceived age, race, and gender of each person involved in the use of force incident; Hawaiian as a distinct category and shall be reported for all persons identifying as Hawaiian, whether alone or in combination with other racial or ethnic identities;"

c. Amend §139- (d)(2) – Complaint Data

"(2) The race, age, and gender of the complainant, if known; Hawaiian as a distinct category and shall be reported for all persons identifying as Hawaiian, whether alone or in combination with other racial or ethnic identities;"

Amend §139- Public Access; Annual Reporting by adding a new subsection (e) to read:

"(e) The central reporting entity shall ensure that publicly available reports present Hawaiian data as a distinct category and shall be reported for all persons identifying as Hawaiian, whether alone or in combination with other racial or ethnic identities."

d. Amend §139- Rules – Consultation Requirement

"(a) No later than March 1, 2027, the department of the attorney general, in coordination with the central reporting entity, and in consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and any community advisory board established pursuant to this chapter, shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 for the collection and reporting of data required under this part."

These amendments will strengthen HB1790 HD1 by ensuring the data collected accurately reflects Hawai'i's unique population and supports evidence-based policymaking, transparency, and public trust. Accordingly, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS HB1790 HD1 WITH AMENDMENTS**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
Director

ERNEST J. ROBELLO
Deputy Director
Administration

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

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 1790, HOUSE DRAFT 1

RELATING TO POLICING

Before the House Committee on

JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 2:00 PM

State Capitol Conference Room 325

Testifiers: Mike Lambert

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) offers comments on House Bill 1790, House Draft 1. This measure requires law enforcement agencies and oversight entities to collect and report specific data on law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the Hawaii Crime Lab, an affiliated unit of the University of Hawaii. The bill further requires the Crime Lab to publish incident-level information, produce annual reports, and directs the Department of the Attorney General to adopt implementing rules in coordination with the Crime Lab.

The DLE recognizes that transparent, standardized data collection is an important component of modern and accountable policing. Establishing statewide reporting protocols will provide a stronger foundation for identifying trends, evaluating practices, and supporting evidence-based improvements across Hawaii's law enforcement community.

At the same time, DLE emphasizes that any stop-data reporting framework must be implemented carefully to ensure compliance with constitutional protections governing the duration of stops and investigative detentions. In *Rodriguez v. United States* (2015), the United States Supreme Court held that a stop becomes unlawful if it is extended beyond the time reasonably required to complete its mission—such as issuing a citation or warning—unless independent reasonable suspicion or another lawful basis exists.

Hawaii courts have similarly reinforced these limits under our state constitution. In *State v. Iona* (2019), the Hawaii Supreme Court confirmed that officers may not detain an individual longer than necessary to address the instant offense and issue a citation. Likewise, *State v. Estabillio* (2015) reflects the principle that traffic stops must end as quickly as reasonably possible.

For these reasons, the success of this measure will depend not only on what data is collected, but on how the system is designed. The key is to ensure that required reporting does not prolong stops beyond their lawful purpose. Other jurisdictions have addressed this concern through integrated technology systems that capture most required data automatically from existing records management and citation platforms.

For example, Connecticut used federal grant funding over several years to implement statewide e-citation systems and develop stop-data reporting tools embedded directly into routine enforcement workflows. Under this approach, the majority of required stop information is populated automatically, and officers complete only a few brief checkboxes after the enforcement action is concluded. This structure ensures that data reporting occurs as part of clearing the stop in the system, rather than extending the detention itself.

If Hawaii chooses to expand reporting requirements beyond vehicle stops to bicycle, pedestrian, or other encounters, the same constitutional design principles would apply. While additional data may be valuable from a research perspective, jurisdictions must

also consider frequency, sample size, and whether collection can be done in a way that does not create unnecessary burdens or prolong interactions.

DLE also notes that meaningful implementation will require sufficient planning time, technical development, and coordination before reporting mandates take effect. In other jurisdictions, statewide deployment has taken more than a year to complete prior to required reporting.

Although data collection aligns with DLE's commitment to professionalism and transparency, DLE prefers that the Hawaii Crime Lab provide law enforcement with clear reporting metrics and standardized definitions to ensure statewide consistency and meaningful comparative analysis.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT
KA 'OIHANA MĀKA'I O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 529-3111 • WEBSITE: www.honolulu.hpd.org



RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

RADE K. VANIC
INTERIM CHIEF
KAHU MĀKA'I KŪIKAWA
AARON TAKASAKI-YOUNG
RYAN T. NISHIBUN
INTERIM DEPUTY CHIEFS
NĀ HOPE LUNA NUI MĀKA'I KŪIKAWA

OUR REFERENCE **WB-THS**

February 18, 2026

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
and Members
Committee on Judiciary and
Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 1790, H.D. 1, Relating to Policing

I am Joseph O'neal, Acting Captain of the Information Technology Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD opposes House Bill No. 1790, H.D. 1, Relating to Policing.

The HPD supports transparency, accountability, and constitutional policing. However, this is an expansive bill that will reduce data reliability, prolong and complicate lawful encounters, divert limited resources from core public safety work, and create serious privacy and safety risks for the community and for officers.

This bill mandates officers to document unreliable, "perceived" characteristics to include race, gender, age, disability status, mental-health crisis status, and alcohol/drug use categories during brief safety-sensitive encounters. Therefore, the data collected will be based off of perception and yield inconsistent and misleading statistics.

Additionally, this bill will prolong stops and increase intrusiveness, jeopardizing constitutional policing and community cooperation. Stops should be resolved efficiently and lawfully and not expanded into administrative data-collection events. If this bill passes, it will add documentation tasks unrelated to the reason for the stop and expand reporting beyond traffic/pedestrian encounters into call-for-service contacts, sweeping in passengers, bystanders, victims, and witnesses. Lengthening encounters increases tension and discourages cooperation. Critically, adding time to a stop for tasks unrelated to its mission also increases the risk of violating the Fourth Amendment, which requires a stop to not be measurably extended without legal justification.

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
and Members
February 18, 2026
Page 2

This would be a major unfunded, operational mandate that would divert resources from public safety. Implementation would require a substantial redesign of citation and records-management workflows, training, supervision, quality control, and ongoing auditing to include additional staffing to meet reporting demands and handle compliance issues. Without full, dedicated appropriations, this bill will pull personnel and funding away from patrol response, investigations, victim services, and community policing and into paperwork and compliance overhead.

Incident-level public release creates serious privacy, safety, and re-identification risks. Even if names are removed, combinations of date/time, approximate location, event details, and other descriptors can enable re-identification, especially in small communities or widely discussed incidents, discouraging victims and witnesses from reporting and cooperating. Publishing officers' names and demographic details connected to incidents may lead to harassment and could further harm recruitment and retention at a time when staffing challenges already exists.

The enforcement scheme incentivizes litigation over technicalities, not better outcomes. Authorizing civil enforcement actions, including private lawsuits with attorney's fees, will predictably shift public resources toward litigation defense and compliance disputes rather than evidence-based improvements in public safety and accountability.

The HPD urges you to oppose House Bill No. 1790, H.D. 1, Relating to Policing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Joseph O'Neal, Acting Captain
Information Technology Division

APPROVED:



Rade K. Vanic
Interim Chief of Police

2026 Hawaii
Leadership Board

Travis Kikuchi, *Chair*
Senior Vice President
Central Pacific Bank

Lori McCarney, *Immediate*
Past Chair Community
Advocate

Tricia Medeiros, *Past Chair*
Chief Operating Officer
The Plaza Assisted Living

Gina Fujikami, *MD*
The Queen's Medical
Center

Kai Ohashi,
Financial Advisor Edward
Jones

Michael Robinson,
Vice President Hawaii Pacific
Health

Kimberly Soares, *Vice*
President Atlas Insurance

Gino Soquena,
Executive Director
Hawaii Building and
Construction Trade Council

Gordon Takaki, *Past*
President Hawaii Island
Chamber of Commerce

Cary Tanaka,
Past President
Island Insurance
Companies

Caroline Witherspoon,
President Becker
Communications

LJ R. Duenas,
Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Wednesday, February 18, 2:00 PM Hawaii State Capitol Conference Room 325, and Videoconference

RE: House Bill No. 1790 HD1 – RELATING TO POLICING

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, 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 HD1, supporting the intent of the bill as it relates to the safety of those living with dementia.

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

Please support those living with dementia by passing HB1790 HD1, which would collect data on law enforcement encounters with those living with dementia, so we can identify the best ways to keep them safe in our community.

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1790

Hawai'i House Committee Higher Education

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poe Poe, and JHA Committee members:

I am a resident of Honolulu and have worked in the field of public safety and police reform for more than 15 years. I 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

HB 1790 addresses these issues by

- Requiring all law enforcement agencies to report standardized data on stops, use of force, civilian complaints
- Replacing 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



Testimony for Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for HB1790 - Relating to Policing
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs (JHA)
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 2PM

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the JHA committee, Mahalo for the opportunity to express **STRONG 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

Abbey Seitz

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Director of Transportation Equity

² C.Jedra and A. Hofschneider, "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://policesscorecard.org/hi>.



Committee: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 2pm
Place: Conference Room 325 & Via Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of HB1790 HD1 Relating to Policing**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

The ACLU of Hawai'i (ACLU-HI) is in **support of HB1790 HD1**, 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 HD1 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. & Hofschneider, 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 HD1. 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

With more than 4,000 Hawaii-based members, the mission of the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United States and Hawai'i State Constitutions through legislative, litigation, and public education work. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving our communities in Hawai'i for over 60 years.

⁵ <https://policescorecard.org/hi>



Hawai'i House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Public Hearing on House Bill 1790, February 18, 2026

Testimony of Measures for Justice in Support of H.B. 1790

February 17, 2026

Chair David A. Tarnas
Hawai'i House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Strong Support for H.B. 1790

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

Measures for Justice (MFJ) is a nonpartisan organization that provides data tools and services that help communities, including the institutions that serve them, reshape how the system works. Since 2011, MFJ has partnered with state and local criminal justice entities to advance the quality and accessibility of the data they collect to inform discussions and decisions about criminal justice. While MFJ does not advocate for specific reforms, we recognize that access to high-quality data provides an essential foundation for constructive dialogue about system change based on facts and evidence of what works.

MFJ has developed a national, standardized set of police performance measures that allow for the evaluation of key areas of policing, including trust in the department and perceptions of legitimacy; use of force; least harm practices; accountability; officer wellness and safety; fiscal needs and responsibility; recruitment and training. Our comprehensive framework was developed based on the premise that you cannot solve for one issue in policing without measuring and understanding all the factors that contribute to that issue. Meaningful improvement in one area of policing requires measuring and understanding the interconnected factors that contribute to outcomes.

The policing measures we can create for a given jurisdiction depend on the availability and quality of the data that individual departments collect. When essential information is not tracked, or is

tracked inconsistently, it creates significant barriers. Law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve are left without the ability to identify meaningful patterns, assess policy effectiveness, or make informed decisions about where improvements are needed.

H.B. 1790 directly addresses this challenge by establishing a framework for collecting and reporting critical data on stops, uses of force, and complaints. Without systematic data collection of this kind, police departments and the communities they serve operate without a clear understanding of what is happening in reality. H.B. 1790's requirement for incident-level data creates a foundation for evidence-based accountability grounded in facts rather than anecdote.

By standardizing data collected by law enforcement agencies in the state, H.B. 1790 enables meaningful cross-jurisdictional comparisons and evidence-based policymaking. It enables departments to identify emerging trends early, allocate resources more strategically, evaluate whether specific policies are working, and tailor training to address documented needs. This data is paramount for leaders seeking to pinpoint where additional support may be warranted, while also highlighting effective practices that should be reinforced.

Transparency is critical to community trust in law enforcement. When law enforcement agencies can clearly demonstrate, through consistent data, how policies are implemented and public safety is promoted, it strengthens public confidence in the system. Reliable data provides both agencies and broader communities with essential context, ensuring that discussions are grounded in shared, objective information. The annual public reporting requirement in H.B. 1790 ensures that Hawai'i residents can understand how law enforcement agencies operate in their communities.

MFJ strongly encourages the Committee to support H.B. 1790. We have witnessed firsthand across the country how standardized, accessible data can lead to transformative conversations, smarter decisions, and fairer practices. This legislation establishes the infrastructure essential to informed policing practices, meaningful accountability measures, and community trust that is essential to effective public safety.



NYU School of Law
40 Washington Square South
New York, NY 10012

E: legislation@policingproject.org
P: 212.992.6950
W: policingproject.org

HAWAI‘I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

HEARING:

Public Hearing on House Bill 1790, Feb. 18, 2026

DATE OF TESTIMONY:

Feb. 17, 2026

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

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

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. 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. And, as the director of Connecticut’s police data collection, Ken Barone, noted in his testimony before the House Higher Education Committee, Connecticut officers typically take less than ninety seconds to submit stop data similar to what HB 1790 requires. Indeed, many of the data points are conditional: if there is no search conducted, no weapon drawn, no force is used, or no canine deployed, the data points in those respective categories need not be addressed. And nearly all the data points can be quickly checked off *after* the termination of the encounter, including the reason for the stop, whether a search was conducted, whether the person appeared to be suffering from a behavioral crisis, etc. Officers thus do not and need not extend encounters to collect these data points.

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.

H.B. 1790 Would Be Bolstered By An Amendment That Would Improve Accuracy Of Race/Ethnicity Data Collection

Based on feedback from stakeholders including the Department of Law Enforcement and organizations representing the interests of Native Hawaiians, we recommend amending the bill to collect data on self-identified race or ethnicity (for stops and use of force incidents), when possible, instead of perceived race or ethnicity. While generally the recommended practice is to have officers check off perceived race or ethnicity to measure disparities at the point biased decision-making is likely to occur, Hawai‘i has distinct features that make self-identified of race

or ethnicity a better option when voluntarily provided. For one thing, about a quarter of Hawai‘i’s population is multiracial, [far more than any other state](#). Self-identification is likely to yield more accurate information about the race/ethnicity of multiracial residents than officer perceptions. To further ensure accuracy, we recommend that officers check off each individual race or ethnicity for multi-racial residents; this, for example, would permit analysis of any disparities involving people who are solely Native Hawaiian or have two or more races, including Native Hawaiian.

For another thing, when officers make arrests (a type of stop), Hawai‘i’s law enforcement agencies already generally ask subjects for their self-identified race or ethnicity, consistent with [federal recommendations](#) for collection of race/ethnicity data. This suggested amendment would thus help ensure H.B. 1790 stop data, including stops that end with an arrest, align with arrest data agencies are already collecting.

The law enforcement and community stakeholders we consulted all recommended requiring collection of self-identified race or ethnicity in lieu of perceived race, when possible, and we concur with that recommendation.

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. H.B. 1790, though, would benefit from an amendment providing for self-identification of race/ethnicity, when possible, instead of perceived race/ethnicity.

Thank you for considering our testimony.

Hawai'i Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Public Hearing on House Bill 1790, Feb. 18, 2026

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

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

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. 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 and in a manner consistent with constitutional requirements. I understand that several court cases make clear that a stop may not be prolonged beyond the time reasonably necessary to complete its lawful purpose. These concerns are legitimate, and they can be fully addressed through careful system design.

In Connecticut, we used federal grant funding to integrate data collection directly into existing records management, e-citation, and e-warning systems, automating as much of the process as possible and minimizing duplicate data entry. The vast majority of required data elements are automatically populated from systems that officers already use. Officers complete only a few brief checkbox fields, which typically take only a few seconds. These additional data fields are completed after the enforcement action has been concluded. As a result, data collection does not measurably extend the duration of the stop and does not interfere with the constitutional limits articulated by the courts.

For jurisdictions that do not yet have fully integrated electronic citation systems, federal Section 1906 funding can help modernize and implement those systems before the start of reporting requirements. In Connecticut, we phased in deployment over approximately eighteen months

before reporting became mandatory, ensuring that agencies had adequate time for technical integration and officer training.

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. This structure, paired with the Attorney General's oversight and rulemaking authority, 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, addresses 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 for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth Barone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K".

Kenneth Barone

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs 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 HB 1790, which would require law enforcement and 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 and charge the lab with the important responsibility of analyzing the submitted data and producing public annual reports.

About the Hawai‘i Crime Lab

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. Sound public policy requires evidence. We cannot know what is working—or what is not—without reliable data. Data 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. Armed with this data, law enforcement, legislators, and other policymakers and practitioners can better safeguard our society.

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 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 performed them. 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 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 (Hawai‘i tends to have a 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.

Plans for a Data Repository and Analysis Responsibilities

Over the last several months, I have been actively preparing for the important role that would be assigned to my lab. In particular, I have been in contact with members of the New York University Policing Project, an organization that has been helping states adopt policies similar to those intended in HB 1790, and the University of Connecticut researcher Ken Barbone, who administers the research center that serves a role equivalent to the one envisioned for the Hawai‘i Crime Lab. So far, my goal has been to understand the standard, nationally dominant strategies for collecting and analyzing state-wide law enforcement data. I look forward to also consulting with law enforcement agencies across the state, the Attorney General’s office, and community groups to customize these strategies to our unique local context in Hawai‘i.

Should HB 1790 and its companion Senate bill pass, and following receipt of the federal grant intended to fund this work, I would work with law enforcement agencies across the state, and their vendors, to understand the reporting process for law enforcement contacts. My goal would be to understand the realities of law enforcement interactions with the public to ensure the reporting system is as seamless as possible so that the resulting data and analyses can be maximally useful in improving public safety.

I also plan to establish both a science advisory committee of fellow researchers with relevant expertise as well as a community advisory committee representing a range of community and government groups with strong interests in the data collected and reports produced. The science and community advisory committees would be resources for me and my researchers as they would

provide additional opportunities for us to learn about the advice, questions, and concerns of relevant stakeholders.

Should HB 1790 and its companion Senate bill pass, the State's Department of Transportation would apply for federal funds, which would be administered by the Hawai'i Crime Lab. The responsibilities and obligations specified in HB 1790 are, of course, significant; as such, I offer a friendly amendment to specify that the work expected of the Hawai'i Crime Lab (or its successor) is contingent on funding. Should federal funding lapse and the state choose not to appropriate replacement funds, the Hawai'i Crime Lab (or its successor) should be released from the associated statutory obligations.

Importantly, access to the data expected to result from HB 1790 presents an important opportunity for researchers across the state. Researchers in and beyond the Hawai'i Crime Lab would be able to apply for funding from the National Institute of Justice and Arnold Ventures to produce additional scientific research beyond the requirements of the proposed statute. This ability would help fund undergraduate and graduate students and bring more money to the state. Additionally, access to important data, along with the ability to apply for additional academic research grants to analyze it, would help us to attract more high-quality students and faculty to universities across the state.

Finally, I note that the Hawai'i Crime Lab is not a statutorily recognized agency, but it is housed within the College of Social Sciences (CSS), which is. 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. However, for this specific bill, my Crime Lab is available to serve whether it is in the Criminal Justice Research Institute or not. (I already manage my grants with support from the CSS Social Science Research Institute.)

Conclusion

In sum, as the lead investigator of the Hawai'i Crime Lab, I would welcome legislative support to expand our work—without requiring new appropriations—specifically to assist with legislatively identified concerns and reach our goal of helping policymakers, practitioners, and the people of Hawai'i achieve an unbiased, data-driven understanding of crime and criminal justice issues.

Thank you for your consideration.

###



House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

RE: Testimony in Support of H.B. 1790 H.D. 1, Relating to Policing
Hearing: February 18, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ben Creps. I am a staff attorney at the Public First Law Center, a nonprofit organization that promotes government transparency. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of H.B. 1790 H.D. 1.

Accountability in law enforcement is the backbone of public trust. It protects constitutional rights and improves officer safety and professionalism. And it helps communities understand whether law enforcement agencies are acting in accordance with community values and legal standards.

This bill takes meaningful steps toward greater accountability in law enforcement by requiring the collection of detailed data on stops, uses of force, and complaints. It also requires data centralization and public reporting, which helps ensure that the public, policymakers, and oversight entities have access to accurate and useful incident-level information. .

We appreciate this bill's commitment to transparency and encourage the Committee to ensure that any adopted rules prioritize clarity and public accessibility.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1790 H.D. 1.



HB-1790-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 7:43:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Redford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Promote more accountability in policing

HB-1790-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 6:54:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony today in support of HB1790 HD1.

I wish it weren't so, but we need this requirement for law enforcement and oversight agencies to collect and report data regarding law enforcement stops, uses of force, and complaints to the Crime Lab associated with UH. This will help our community hold our law enforcement and oversight agencies accountable. Requiring the Crime Lab to collect and publish incident-level information and an annual report continues that transparency.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony,

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-1790-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 8:25:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this common-sense bill

HB-1790-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 1:24:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariana Monasi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I write today in strong support for HB1790. We need more accountability from law enforcement agencies. Having more statistics about stops and arrests, will help our policy makers and community organizations address systemic issues with innovative solutions.

Mahalo