



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
H.B. NO. 2503, RELATING TO FIREWORKS.

BEFORE THE:
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

DATE: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Mark S. Tom, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) supports this bill and offers the followings comments.

The purpose of this bill is to enhance fireworks enforcement by: (1) permitting civil asset forfeiture of any property or proceeds related to certain felony fireworks offenses; (2) amending the definition of "aerial device" to include fireworks that move more than twelve feet in any direction, not just those that rise into the air; and (3) clarifying the offense of "sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery," to specifically include unaccompanied delivery.

These amendments will expand existing fireworks control laws in a reasonable manner, to address practical questions that have arisen in the course of law enforcement operations against illegal fireworks.

The proposed forfeiture provision in section 1, starting on page 1, line 4, which would add a new section to chapter 132D, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), will not cover all firework offenses, and will be limited to offenses involving twenty-five or more pounds of illegal fireworks. This distinction on the weight of illegal fireworks involved in the offense will affect similar grades of offenses differently. For example, forfeiture would be permitted for the offense of illegally importing, storing, or distributing fireworks weighing twenty-five pounds or more (see section 132D-14(a)(1)(B), HRS), a class B felony, but not the class C felony for illegally importing, storing, or distributing under

twenty-five pounds of fireworks. Also, purchasing, possessing, setting off, igniting, discharging, or otherwise causing to explode fireworks weighing twenty-five pounds or more (see section 132D-14(a)(2)(A) and (B), HRS), a class C or class B felony, while the lesser misdemeanor offense for fireworks under twenty-five pounds would not qualify for civil asset forfeiture. Therefore, the Department suggests removal of the weight requirement in section 1, on page 1, lines 4 to 6, and begin instead with the word "[A]ny" as even small amounts of fireworks can be deadly and should be susceptible to similar forfeiture consequences.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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 2503
RELATING TO FIREWORKS
Before the House Committee on
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 2:00 PM
State Capitol Conference Room 325
Testifier: Mike Lambert

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

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports House Bill 2503. This bill authorizes civil asset forfeiture related to fireworks offenses involving fireworks with a total weight of twenty-five pounds or more, amends the definition of 'aerial device', and clarifies that the offense of sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery applies regardless of whether the offender accompanies the air delivery.

The DLE has been actively engaged in combating the illegal importation, distribution, and use of fireworks in Hawaii through the Illegal Fireworks Task Force, established under Act 67, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023. Since its inception, the Task Force has removed nearly 150,000 pounds of illegal fireworks from Hawaii's streets. Despite this significant progress, continued legislative support is essential to strengthen the enforcement tools available to law enforcement agencies across the State.

The authorization of civil asset forfeiture for fireworks offenses involving twenty-five pounds or more is a critical and proportional enforcement mechanism. As established

under Chapter 712A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, civil asset forfeiture serves as a powerful deterrent to criminal conduct by ensuring that those who engage in illegal activity do not profit from or continue to use property in furtherance of such offenses. Applying this tool to large-scale fireworks offenses would deter future violations and ensure that the economic benefits of illegal activity do not outweigh the consequences. A threshold of twenty-five pounds or more ensures that this enforcement tool is applied proportionally and targets those engaged in significant illegal fireworks activity, rather than minor infractions.

The amendment to the definition of 'aerial device' provides important clarity for law enforcement officers in the field. Clear statutory definitions are essential to effective and consistent enforcement of fireworks control laws. Ambiguity in definitions can create challenges during investigations and prosecutions, potentially allowing offenders to exploit gaps in the law. By refining the definition of 'aerial device', this bill ensures that law enforcement can accurately identify and act upon violations involving dangerous aerial fireworks, thereby enhancing public safety.

The clarification that the offense of sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery applies regardless of whether the offender accompanies the air delivery is equally important. As illegal fireworks trafficking has evolved, offenders have increasingly relied on commercial air delivery services and unaccompanied shipments to import illegal fireworks into Hawaii. This amendment closes a significant loophole that could otherwise be exploited to circumvent the law. It ensures that individuals who orchestrate the shipment of illegal fireworks cannot escape criminal liability simply by distancing themselves physically from the delivery.

Collectively, the provisions of this bill directly address enforcement gaps identified by the Illegal Fireworks Task Force and provide law enforcement with the necessary legal tools to combat large-scale illegal fireworks operations more effectively. The DLE believes that these measures will serve as meaningful deterrents, protect the safety of

Hawaii's residents, and support the Illegal Fireworks Task Force's ongoing mission.

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



Hawaiian Humane Society
People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Feb. 27, 2026

To: Chair Rep. David Tarnas
Vice Chair Rep. Mahina Poepoe
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

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

RE: Testimony in support of HB 2503: Relating to Fireworks
Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 2 p.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for House Bill 2503, which authorizes civil asset forfeiture related to fireworks offenses involving fireworks with a total weight of twenty-five pounds or more; amends the definition of "aerial device"; and clarifies that the offense of sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery applies regardless of whether the offender accompanies the air delivery.

Hawaiian Humane is deeply grateful for the amazing work this committee and the state Legislature as a body did last session to strengthen our statutes combatting illegal fireworks. While we did see a decrease in lost pets on O'ahu over the most recent holiday period, illegal behavior clearly continued. We support giving law enforcement more tools to deter people who would commit these crimes and to close loopholes in existing laws.

The Hawaiian Humane Society represents the interests of our animal companions who have far more sensitive hearing than human being and are therefore more likely to be terrified by explosives going off in residential neighborhoods. But these activities pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of pets, people and property.

Please pass HB2503 and give law enforcement the tools it needs to ensure the peace and security of our neighborhoods. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 8:54:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Fireworks can be a perfect nuisance at the least, and at worst dangerous to both vulnerable adults, children and animals, companion, farmed and wild.

This concerns us greatly in Britain and we campaign against some of their uses here.

We are therefore supporting this measure as part of an ongoing effort to keep illegal explosives out of your neighbourhoods and away from your human and animal family members.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 1:33:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 6:48:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of HB 2503 Relating to Fireworks.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2503.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 8:39:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support w/comment to lower from 25 lbs to 15 lbs

2503 HB RELATING TO FIREWORKS.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 3:03:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carole richelieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please keep illegal explosives out of our neighborhoods and away from our human and animal family members.

Hawaii Kai voter

Testimony in support of HB2503 Relating to Fireworks

I support HB2503 which authorizes civil asset forfeiture related to fireworks offenses involving fireworks with a total weight of twenty-five pounds or more; amends the definition of "aerial device"; and clarifies that the offense of sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery applies regardless of whether the offender accompanies the air delivery.

This measure fine-tunes law enforcement tools to improve deterrence and close loopholes. I support this measure as part of an ongoing effort to keep illegal explosives out of our neighborhoods and away from our human and animal family members.

Signed,
Judith Aikawa, MD
37 Apali Way
Kula, HI 96790

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 4:39:04 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2503. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I live Sunset Beach, Oahu.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 4:43:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Gollero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support any measure to put an end to fireworks. The past two years have been just an absolute relief! Keep up the great work!

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 6:19:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Stefanic-Phillip	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in Support of Bill HB2403.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 6:23:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nandita Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB2503. It is crucial that the HI state legislature not rest on its laurels and continue to act to protect people and other animals in Hawaii from dangerous fireworks. It is crucial that the legislature acts to improve deterrence and close loopholes.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 6:27:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
joanna p milo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i support HB2503

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 5:37:48 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill to keep illegal fireworks out of Hawaii. Just remember the Aliamanu Fireworks explosion and the devastating effects no to mention the lifelong debility and loss that arose from it.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 6:13:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Tarnas, Vice Chair Representative Poepoe and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs.

Please support HB 2503 which strengthens existing anti-fireworks laws. This bill helps to emphasize the paramount importance of the health and safety of the people and animals of Hawaii.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:42:24 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I support bill HB 2503. I grew up around regular fireworks. Even had a firework stand. But things have gotten out of hand with the excessive noise making kind. Please do what you can to reduce dangerous and loud explosives.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:56:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

The more the merrier. I support all bills which will reduce illegal fireworks. This measure fine tunes law enforcement tools to improve deterrence and close loopholes. Again this year people were injured and property damaged. This has to stop.

Please move this bill forward.

Lynne Matusow

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 2:35:32 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taurie Kinoshita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB2503.

This bill authorizes civil asset forfeiture related to fireworks offenses involving fireworks with a total weight of twenty-five pounds or more, and amends the definition of "aerial device"; and clarifies that the offense of sending or receiving fireworks or articles pyrotechnic by air delivery applies regardless of whether the offender accompanies the air delivery.

This bill will help protect our community from the horrors rendered by unregulated fireworks.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Taurie Kinoshita

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 4:01:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie McLaughlin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this important bill.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 5:52:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill helps to refine/close loopholes regarding fireworks and I support it. Mahalo.

HB-2503

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:11:04 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suyin Freiberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, in order to keep illegal explosives out of our neighborhoods and away from our human and animal family members.