



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okolokolo, Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026 Regular Session

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 19, 2026, 10:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

By

Paul Quick
Special Assistant to the Administrative Director of the Courts for Judiciary Security

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 2382, SD1, Relating to Law Enforcement

Purpose: Establishes the Kūpa'ā Retention Bonus Program to be administered by the Department of Law Enforcement to provide \$15,000 retention bonuses to eligible sworn law enforcement officers that have worked a minimum of two thousand hours during the preceding fiscal year, subject to collective bargaining negotiations. Requires the Department of Law Enforcement to report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of the Kūpa'ā Retention Bonus Program. Appropriates funds for the Kūpa'ā Retention Bonus Program. Sunsets 6/30/2028. (SD1)

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of this measure, which would ensure the retention of eligible sworn law enforcement officers.

The Department of Law Enforcement provides essential law enforcement services for the Judiciary, as well as at the Legislature and for Executive branch locations. The Department of Law Enforcement is currently experiencing a higher-than-normal vacancy rate and is experiencing difficulty staffing required assignments throughout the state. In addition, a pay disparity exists between Department of Law Enforcement sworn law enforcement officers and



similar sworn officers employed by county police departments, complicating retention of Department of Law Enforcement sworn law enforcement officers.

Issuance of a retention bonus would allow the Department of Law Enforcement to retain sworn law enforcement officers, and at the same time, be useful as a recruitment tool to recruit and retain Hawai'i's best for the Department of Law Enforcement. The availability of a retention bonus might also help the Department of Law Enforcement to recruit the United States' best applicants into a law enforcement career and to bring those best recruits to Hawai'i in order to provide a safe environment for the protection of the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive branches. The retention bonus allows the Department of Law Enforcement to potentially build capacity for its core functions of protecting Legislative and Judiciary facilities, as well as public officials in the Legislative and Executive branch.

The Judiciary has a strong interest in ensuring the success of Department of Law Enforcement operations, as the administration of justice requires effective protection of Judiciary personnel, facilities, and the public. The Judiciary looks forward to enhancing its partnership with the Department of Law Enforcement through this measure, which will improve the Department of Law Enforcement's ability to retain sworn law enforcement officers, as well as to use this bonus as a recruitment tool, in order to ensure adequate levels of security resources to protect Legislature and Judiciary operations, employees, and the public.

We respectfully request that any appropriation provided not supplant the Judiciary's existing funding or budget requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

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To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Carlotta Amerino, Director

Date: February 19, 2026, 10:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Re: Testimony on S.B. No. 2382, S.D. 1
Relating to Law Enforcement

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill, which would create a kupaa retention bonus program for sworn law enforcement officers. The Office of Information Practices (OIP) takes no position on the substance of this bill, but is concerned that the confidentiality provision in proposed section 353C-__(b)(4), HRS, which would bar disclosure of personally identifiable information about the bonuses, would conflict with the requirements of chapter 92F, HRS, the Uniform Information Practices Act (UIPA).

Specifically, section 92F-12(a)(14), HRS, requires specified information about government employees to be public notwithstanding the UIPA's exceptions to disclosure. That public information includes employee compensation (exact salary or, for civil service and union employees, salary range), hours worked, leave time taken, and dates of service, among other things. Since the type of information used to determine eligibility for the bonus is required to be public information, and employee compensation is required to be public information, the prohibition against disclosing personally identifiable information about bonus recipients sets up an apparent conflict of law.

If this Committee's intent is to ensure that the department's reports on the program include only aggregated information and the department does not proactively publish individually identifiable information, **OIP recommends adding the phrase "except as required under chapter 92F" to the end of paragraph 353-__ (b)(4), on bill page 4, line 16,** so the paragraph ends ". . . and shall not disclose personally identifiable information except as required under chapter 92F."

Thank you for considering OIP's testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
Director

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STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2382, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT
Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS
Thursday, February 19, 2026, 10:30 AM
State Capitol Conference Room 211
WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Bill 2382, Senate Draft 1. This bill establishes the Kupaa Retention Bonus Program, which would provide \$15,000 retention bonuses to eligible sworn law enforcement officers who have worked a minimum of two thousand hours during the preceding fiscal year, subject to collective bargaining negotiations. The bill requires the DLE to report to the Legislature on the program's effectiveness and appropriates necessary funds for implementation. The program would be sunset on June 30, 2028.

Law enforcement agencies across the nation, including those in Hawaii, have been facing significant challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified officers. This legislation directly addresses the retention aspect of this challenge by providing a meaningful financial incentive for experienced officers to continue their service. The minimum requirement of two thousand hours worked ensures that the bonus rewards officers who have demonstrated substantial commitment to their duties.

The DLE believes this program will be an effective tool to retain experienced and dedicated law enforcement professionals. Experienced officers are invaluable assets to our departments and communities as they possess critical institutional knowledge, refined skills, and community relationships that take years to develop. By reducing turnover, this program would also lower the substantial costs of recruiting and training new officers, while maintaining higher levels of service quality and continuity.

The DLE requests the following amendment on page six, line four, in section four: the appropriation for year one is \$5,040,000.

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

JOSH GREEN, M. D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



J.N. MUSTO, PhD
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR
KE PO'O KŪKĀKŪKA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
KE KE'ENA MĀLAMA LIMAHANA AUPUNI
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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Statement of
J.N. Musto, PhD
Chief Negotiator, Office of Collective Bargaining

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Thursday, February 19, 2026
10:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB2382 SD1, RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

(WRITTEN TESTIMONY)

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and the members of the committee:

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) respectfully opposes SB2382 SD1, which establishes the Kupaa Retention Bonus Program administered by the Department of Law Enforcement, and provides \$15,000 retention bonuses to eligible sworn law enforcement officers that have worked a minimum of two thousand hours during the preceding fiscal year, subject to collective bargaining negotiations.

The OCB is concerned that appropriating funds for compensation increases yet to be negotiated is inappropriate and immature and may significantly diminish the Employer's ability to collectively bargain on the compensation of not only department law enforcement officers, but all public sector employees. The OCB notes that historically, and in accordance with 89-10 HRS, cost items including wages, are submitted to the Legislature after agreement between the Employer and Union is reached and ratification by the concerned employees is complete.

Furthermore, the OCB is extremely concerned about the unintended consequences this measure may have on current and future negotiations affecting all public sector employees. For example, bargaining units may see this as an opportunity to get "two bites of the apple" by seeking items both at the collective bargaining table and through the legislature.

Based on the above, the OCB respectfully requests that this measure be **amended** to remove appropriations that would fund compensation increases that have not yet been negotiated under Chapter 89.

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



UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

THE SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 19, 2026, 10:30 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Re: Testimony on SB2382, SD1 – RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 12,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties.

UPW provides **comments** on SB2282, SD1, which Establishes the Kupaa Retention Bonus Program to be administered by the Department of Law Enforcement (“DLE”) to provide \$15,000 retention bonuses to eligible sworn law enforcement officers that have worked a minimum of two thousand hours during the preceding fiscal year, subject to collective bargaining negotiations.

We recognize the issues that this bill is trying to address and believe that sworn personnel employed by the DLE should be compensated comparably to their counterparts within county police departments. However, we are gravely concerned by any legislation that could potentially circumvent, or even undermine, the collective bargaining provisions in Chapter 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes, (“HRS”). Despite a provision that states the proposed two-year program would be subject to collective bargaining, the criteria prescribed in this measure constrains “good faith” negotiations by limiting the scope of the negotiations and could prove to be biased toward the employer. We believe that these types of discussions should remain between an employer and the employees’ exclusive representative.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 19, 2026

S.B. 2382, S.D. 1 — RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports S.B. 2382, S.D. 1, which establishes the Kupaa Retention Bonus Program to be administered by the department of law enforcement to provide \$15,000 retention bonuses to eligible sworn law enforcement officers that have worked a minimum of two thousand hours during the preceding fiscal year.

Our organization represents state law enforcement officers organized into Bargaining Unit 14. This idea would help with the retention of our law enforcement officers, especially at a time when the department faces a shortage of officers and struggles to compete with the respective county police departments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 2382, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director