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**DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**  
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**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2723  
RELATING TO STATE SHERIFFS DAY  
Before the House Committee on  
CULTURE & ARTS  
Friday, February 20, 2026, 11:00 am  
State Capitol Conference Room 309  
**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY****

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Bill 2723, relating to State Sheriffs Day. This bill seeks to establish April 27 of each year as State Sheriffs Day to commemorate the establishment of the Office of the Marshal of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1846. This date holds significant historical importance for law enforcement in Hawai'i and particularly for our Sheriff Division.

The history of law enforcement in Hawai'i goes back centuries, with modern policing making its way to Hawai'i in 1846. King Kamehameha III led the Hawaiian Kingdom from a monarchy to a constitutional monarchy, implementing what were considered modern laws and gaining international recognition of the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent state. One of his notable accomplishments was the establishment of the Marshal of the King as part of his second Act in 1846. The DLE has its beginnings with this Marshal of the Kingdom.

To put this into perspective as law enforcement agencies in America go, the establishment of what we have in Hawai'i as the Sheriff is one of the oldest formal law enforcement agencies in America. While Hawai'i was not part of the United States at the time, King Kamehameha III's establishment of the Marshal's office predates, with very few exceptions, virtually all formal law enforcement agencies in the United States. The exceptions include the US Marshals Service (1789) and the Texas Rangers (1839).

The DLE recognizes the history and legacy of the Sheriff in Hawai'i and has ensured the continuation of that legacy by preserving the titles of Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff along with the traditional 7-point Berkley Star sheriff badge. The establishment of State Sheriffs Day will further honor this rich heritage and provide an opportunity to recognize the dedicated service of the men and women who have served in this capacity throughout Hawai'i's history.

Designating April 27 as State Sheriffs Day would acknowledge the important role the Sheriff Division plays within the Department of Law Enforcement and honor the historic connection to the Kingdom of Hawai'i's law enforcement traditions that continue to this day.

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