



## UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

THE SENATE  
KA 'AHA KENEKOA

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

### COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair

Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Monday, March 30, 2026, 3:01 PM  
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on SCR147/SR139 - REQUESTING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING TO INCREASE COMPENSATION FOR ADULT CORRECTIONS OFFICERS EMPLOYED BY THE STATE OF HAWAII'S DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION**

Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO ("UPW") supports the intent of SCR147/SR139. As the exclusive representative of the adult corrections officers ("ACOs") who maintain the safety and security of Hawaii correctional facilities, we appreciate each measure's recognition of the severe staffing crisis within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation ("DCR").

ACOs are currently performing high-risk duties under increasingly dangerous conditions. Despite DCR's recruitment efforts, the vacancy rate has not shown significant improvement for years, and this has resulted in increased workloads, which further leads to burnout and attrition. The continued reliance on emergency hires and recruit classes is a "band-aid" solution for a systemic wound. Without competitive compensation and long-term retention incentives, the State will continue to lose experienced officers, undermining the safety of staff and incarcerated individuals alike.

While UPW advocates for the pursuit of supplemental funding to support compensation adjustments, we are concerned about the long-term sustainability of federal funding when priorities shift, which may leave the State unable to maintain higher compensation. Furthermore, under the current administration, federal funding may be accompanied by mandates that circumvent state labor protections provided by the Hawaii State Constitution and Hawaii statutes.

Again, UPW appreciates the committee's consideration of these resolutions which raise awareness about the dire situation our ACOs are experiencing. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of these measures.

---

**HEADQUARTERS**

1426 North School Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-1914  
Phone 808.847.2631

**HAWAII**

362 East Lanikaula Street  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336  
Phone 808.961.3424

**KAUAI**

2970 Kele Street, Suite 213  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1803  
Phone 808.245.2412

**MAUI**

841 Kolu Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436  
Phone 808.244.0815

1.866.454.4166

Toll Free - Molokai/Lanai only