BILL046(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 377

*PUBLIC SAFETY & ECONOMY (PSE)

***PUBLIC SAFETY & ECONOMY (PSE) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Jul 24, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 15

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 1

Name:	Email:	Zip:
KRISTINA LOCKWOOD	kristina.lockwood@khon2.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KHON2	Support	Jul 20, 2025 @ 12:03 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eddie Fujioka	puunui@msn.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jul 21, 2025 @ 07:12 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Penelope Hazzard	pennyhazz@yahoo.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 07:52 AM

Testimony:

I support news organizations access to police scanner information

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natalie Graham-Wood	ngrahamwood@hotmail.com	96712-9719
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 10:22 AM

Testimony:

I support Bill 046(25). My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I am a resident of Sunset Beach, Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brenden Nakamine	bnakamine@kitv.com	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KITV	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 01:44 PM

Testimony:

Speech to the Honolulu City Council

Re: Restoring Police Scanner Access for Newsrooms

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Brenden Nakamine, and I represent KITV. I respectfully urge you to support the restoration of police and emergency scanner access to accredited TV newsrooms. This is not about chasing headlines — it's about keeping our communities safe.

On the night of March 16, multiple gunshots were fired near the H&M on Kalākaua Avenue in Waikīkī — a busy area filled with both residents and visitors. The situation unfolded quickly, and it understandably caused confusion and fear.

But no official information was shared with the public for hours. People were left to guess what was going on, relying on social media posts and secondhand video of the shooting. Tourists didn't know if it was safe to return to their hotels. Residents didn't know if the suspect had been caught.

Days later, Honolulu Police Chief Joe Logan publicly apologized. He admitted, "We fell short," and explained that the chain of command had failed to notify the public in a timely way.

This wasn't just a breakdown in communication — it was a missed opportunity to keep people informed and safe. Had newsrooms been able to monitor police scanners that night, we could have quickly provided accurate, real-time updates. We could've told people what streets to avoid, where it was safe, and when the situation was under control.

Unfortunately, that wasn't an isolated incident.

Just a couple of months later, on May 30, a fast-moving brush fire tore through the Māʻili community. It left a 94-year-old woman critically injured — she later passed away. But what's even more troubling is that many neighbors told our reporters they had no idea evacuation orders had been issued.

In the middle of a growing fire, families were left confused. Some only realized they had to flee when flames were already approaching their homes. That kind of delay is dangerous — and avoidable.
Compounding the issue is Hawaii's current emergency alert system. It's opt-in, relying on residents to sign up in advance.

Again, this is where scanner access matters. If newsrooms had been able to hear emergency radio traffic during the Māʻili fire, we could have more quickly gathered information and alerted residents on-air and online. We could've shared evacuation maps, fire conditions, and real-time safety updates. In moments like that, accurate information can save lives.

Right now, Honolulu's newsrooms are too often left waiting for official statements that arrive long after a crisis begins. And in that vacuum, misinformation and fear spread faster than facts.
Across the country — in cities like Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago — credentialed journalists are granted scanner access under reasonable restrictions. It's a model that works. It promotes transparency, improves emergency response coverage, and builds public trust.

We're not asking for unrestricted access. We're asking for a partnership — a way to responsibly monitor public-safety incidents so we can help keep our communities informed in real time. We are willing to work within clear guidelines that protect investigations and prevent interference with law enforcement.

Chair, Councilmembers — the situations in Waikīkī and Māʻili weren't just about violence or fire. They were about delayed communication. Let's not make the same mistake again. Let's give the public the information they need, when they need it.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to public safety.

Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dennis Francis	dfrancis@staradvertiser.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Honolulu Star-Advertiser and Oahu Publications Inc.	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 04:11 PM

Testimony:

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser and Oahu Publications Inc. support the City Council's efforts to direct the Honolulu Police Department to restore news media access to emergency dispatch scanners. Since February 2022 when this vital source of public information was silenced, Oahu residents have been cut off from timely news about crime, fires and other emergencies in their neighborhoods.

The Star-Advertiser and other local news representatives have consistently advocated for a return to the media's limited access to dispatch communication so that we can keep the public properly informed. Instead, HPD has offered a series of scattered online and emailed alternatives that have fallen far short of the reliable real-time information that came from police scanners. To be clear, we are not asking for full access to emergency response communications. We have shared with the City Council, the Blangiardi administration and HPD a 2018 agreement between Las Vegas police and local media that allows limited access to encrypted emergency dispatch communication under tight controls. That agreement is still in place and serves as an example of how the news media and the city can work together for the good of the community.

In opposing such an agreement, HPD officials have cited officer safety and the possible dissemination of personal information as reasons to deny media access. However, these concerns ignore decades of responsible scanner use by the Honolulu Advertiser, Star-Bulletin and Star-Advertiser as well as local broadcast news organizations. We have yet to hear one real-life example of how our use of newsroom scanners over all those years endangered an emergency responder or led to the inappropriate publication of personal information.

On the other hand, there are real-life examples of how the absence of newsroom scanners has been detrimental to the public's safety and right to know. In perhaps the most glaring example, for much of the day on Jan. 1, 2024, Honolulu media and residents were kept in the dark as police officers chased and exchanged gunfire with a shooting suspect across the island. There can be no doubt that working newsroom scanners on that day would have alerted reporters and editors, who in turn could have alerted the public to the imminent danger on Oahu's roadways.

Honolulu residents rely on trusted, professional news sources during emergencies. Restoring news media access to limited emergency communications will go a long way in helping us keep the public informed. Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

Dennis E Francis
President & Publisher
Oahu Publications Inc.
Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Muhtadia Rice	muhtadia@yahoo.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 07:56 PM

Testimony:
Please pass Honolulu City Council Bill 46 to establish agreements with news organizations to facilitate access to police scanner communications for public safety and situational awareness.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
KRISTINA LOCKWOOD	kristina.lockwood@khon2.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KHON2	Support	Jul 22, 2025 @ 08:11 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John & Rita Shockley	shockleyjr@gmail.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Free Access Coalition	Support	Jul 23, 2025 @ 05:14 AM

Testimony:
Aloha Councilmembers!
The Free Access Coalition strongly supports free public access to the Honolulu Police Department radio scanner system. This access has been taken away for too long.

There is no harm for police transparency and is actually a good restraint on any trash talk on the radio.

Please implement Bill 046(25) for the public interest and safety.

Mahalo for your time and hopefully your kokua.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chris Shomo	chris.shomo@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 23, 2025 @ 07:09 AM

Testimony:

I urge the City Council to approve Bill 024(25) which will reopen the public access to the HPD radio system that has been closed off to the public for too long.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Linda Jenks, M.D.	linda.jenks@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 23, 2025 @ 08:07 AM

Testimony:

I strongly support restoration of limited access of HPD's radio communications to legitimate news media outlets. As a member of the community, I believe we deserve timely information on emergency-related situations. We have seen the tragedies that occur when accurate information is not given to the public. Do the right thing and pass this legislation.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chris Leonard	chris@hawaiibroadcasters.com	96839
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Association of Broadcasters	Support	Jul 23, 2025 @ 09:56 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jason Hagiwara	jhagiwara@kitv.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Island News / KITV Inc.	Support	Jul 23, 2025 @ 11:30 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Walter Miske	wchuckm1@yahoo.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	I wish to comment	Jul 23, 2025 @ 02:10 PM

Testimony:

I can understand the media getting access to scanner not the Public.

Name: Judith Mick	Email: ppchawaii@yahoo.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 23, 2025 @ 04:14 PM

Testimony:

Please pass Bill 046(25). Allowing the media to access the police scanners will improve help to the public to stay safe.

Mahalo. Judy Mick, Kailua

Name: Chris Hart	Email: Chrish@espnhonolulu.com	Zip: 96701
Representing: KKEA/KHKA- FEMA's Primary Entry Point (PEP) Emergency Broadcast Facility	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 24, 2025 @ 08:50 AM

Testimony:

Dear Public Safety Committee Chair Tulba and Committee Members,

On behalf of the ESPN Honolulu and CBS 1500, we respectfully submit this letter expressing our strong support for preserving timely access to accurate information for credentialed media, including our stations to access to Honolulu Police Department scanner communications.

Right now, O'ahu's police scanners remain inaccessible to members of the media. This restriction limits our ability to perform a fundamental role to the community— providing fast, reliable information, especially during high-stakes situations when time is of the essence. Whether it's a wildfire, a serious traffic collision, or a missing person case, real-time access to scanner broadcasts can greatly enhance the speed and precision of the news we deliver to the public.

As broadcasters, we take our responsibility to report accurately and ethically very seriously. Our journalists are trained professionals who verify facts before releasing information to the public. We recognize and respect the crucial mission of law enforcement to safeguard our communities. The media is not a threat — we are allies in ensuring timely, factual communication during critical events.

Granting media access to police scanner information would restore an essential tool in our efforts to inform the community, strengthen public trust, and promote government transparency.

We respectfully ask the Honolulu City Council to stand up for the public's right to information by working collaboratively with both the media and the Honolulu Police Department to establish policies that protect both public safety and the free flow of vital information.

Respectfully,

Chris Hart

Station Manager ESPN Honolulu/CBS 1500

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Matt Piacente	matt.piacente@hawaiinewsnow.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii News Now	Support	Jul 24, 2025 @ 09:30 AM

Testimony:

Media access to scanners is vital for public safety. We have several platforms to get the message out to the public. We are here to work with authorities and help keep the public safety.

July 20, 2025

Chair Tommy Waters and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Support for Bill 46 - Media Access to Police Scanners

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

For the last 12 years, I have served as Vice President and General Manager of KHON2. On behalf of our Station, I write to express our strong support for Bill 46 and to urge the Council to restore credentialed media access to police scanner communications.

KHON2 has served the people of Hawai‘i for more than 70 years. Since 1952, our station has been committed to providing trusted news, public service content, and accurate information to help keep our communities informed, prepared, and safe. That mission is more important today than ever before.

Our Newsroom is held in high regard because of our commitment to excellence and credibility, and the years of hard work serving our community. We do not take this responsibility lightly. We understand the power and impact of the work we do — especially in times of crisis when every second counts. Whether it’s a wildfire, a major traffic accident, or a missing child, our team is dedicated to delivering timely and verified information when our viewers need it most.

The current lack of scanner access on O‘ahu limits our ability to fully understand and report on breaking news as it unfolds. Without real-time access to this information, we are unable to provide the public with timely, accurate information — which can compromise both awareness and safety.

Our journalists are highly trained professionals, guided by strict editorial standards, ethical reporting practices, and a newsroom culture that prioritizes responsibility, accuracy, and service to the public. Our work aligns with the very mission of the Honolulu Police Department: to create a safer community and protect the people of Hawai‘i. We want to do our part — but the

current flow of information lacks transparency and often does not provide enough context for us to accurately understand unfolding events or respond appropriately in real time.

Scanner access is not about scrutinizing or undermining law enforcement. Our intent is not to interfere with investigations or portray police negatively — it's to support public awareness and safety through accurate, real-time reporting. It enables media to quickly relay emergency information, reduce confusion, and help save lives. With proper credentialing and responsible use, this access can be restored in a way that supports both public safety and operational security.

We respectfully ask the Council to pass Bill 46 and work toward a balanced solution that fosters thoughtful collaboration between media and law enforcement — for the benefit of the people we all serve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristina Lockwood
Vice President & General Manager

Testimony in Opposition to Bill 46

Testimony of Eddie Fujioka on Bill 46

July 24, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair and Members,

I'm here to strongly oppose Bill 46. Granting media access to real-time police communications may seem like a step toward transparency, but in practice, it compromises public safety, jeopardizes ongoing investigations, and risks broadcasting sensitive information before facts are verified. Police radio traffic includes raw, unfiltered data—details on victim identities, tactical movements, and developing incidents that, if misinterpreted or prematurely released, could escalate situations or harm innocent parties.

Push alerts can be sent out to cell phones as needed. There are also Social Media platforms that have posts any incidents with photos, audio and video. So granted live radio to media is not needed at this time. If the bill passes there is a risk radios can be lost therefore physical equipment (radio consoles) must be limited to one console per certified and vetted media outlet and cost for the equipment and maintenance must be paid by the media outlets. Annual renewals must be part of this process.

Transparency shouldn't come at the expense of operational integrity. There are already established mechanisms—after-action reports, press briefings, public records—that balance public interest with responsible disclosure. Let's not turn emergency response into open-air theater. I respectfully urge you to reject Bill 46 and protect both our law enforcement professionals and our community's right to safe, effective policing.

Thank you.

From: Kristina Lockwood
To: Kristina Lockwood
Subject: FW: HPD Media Alert
Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 8:07:34 PM
Attachments: Media Notification- 2025.xlsx
image001.png

HPD Media Log July 2025

Date	Time	Location	Classification	Status
7/2/2025	208	Oneawa St. / Kaha St.	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/3/2025	930	91-919 Ft Weaver Rd	Robbery	HPD on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	1044	H1 WB Near the North South Off	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	1057	Kahuapaani St / Mananai Pl	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	1649	Kamaileunu Street / Kumaipo Street	Auto Theft Recovery	HPD on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	1907	916390 Kapolei Parkway	Med Assist (as of now)	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	1945	Kamananui Road / Kaukonahua Road	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/4/2025	2005	Okohola Street / Hookele Street	Reckless Engangering	HPD on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/5/2025	134	1188 N. King St.	Att. Homicide	HPD On scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/7/2025	108	98-1079 Moanalua Road (Pali Momi)	Agg. Assault	HPD On scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/8/2025	316	Auld Lane / Wong Lane	Agg. Assault	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/8/2025	436	94-1082 Ka Uka Blvd	Robbery	HPD On scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/11/2025	2315	Kalanianaole Hwy./Bell St.	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/12/2025	542	Area near 91-1669 Fort Weaver Rd	MVC	HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/12/2025	2324	200 block of Koa St.	Threatening	HPD on scene. Investigation ongoing.
				HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation

7/16/2025	609	2475 N. Nimitz Hwy	Agg. Assault	ongoing. HPD/HFD/EMS on scene. Investigation ongoing.
7/19/2025	1014	1800 Block of Wlikina Dr	Fire Call	

From: Lori Silva <Lori.silva@khon2.com>
Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 12:39 PM
To: Kristina Lockwood <Kristina.Lockwood@khon2.com>
Subject: FW: HPD Media Alert

This is the media alerts we get.

Lori Silva
NEWS DIRECTOR
Direct 808-591-4278
Email lori.silva@khon2.com
Web www.khon2.com
88 Piikoi Street | Honolulu, HI 96814

From: HPD Communications Alerts <hpdcommalert@honolulu.gov>
Sent: Saturday, July 19, 2025 10:38 AM
To: 'amcavoy@ap.org' <amcavoy@ap.org>; 'anthony.ferreira@hawaiinewsnow.com' <anthony.ferreira@hawaiinewsnow.com>; 'aphonolulu@ap.org' <aphonolulu@ap.org>; 'aschaefers@staradvertiser.com' <aschaefers@staradvertiser.com>; 'Benjamin.silva@khon2.com' <Benjamin.silva@khon2.com>; 'bdorman@hawaiipublicradio.org' <bdorman@hawaiipublicradio.org>; 'bsalgado@hawaiinewsnow.com' <bsalgado@hawaiinewsnow.com>; 'ccruz@hawaiipublicradio.org' <ccruz@hawaiipublicradio.org>; Chanel Moke Puha <Chanel.mokepuha@khon2.com>; 'cjones@ap.org' <cjones@ap.org>; 'CPascual@kitv.com' <CPascual@kitv.com>; 'cityeditors@staradvertiser.com' <cityeditors@staradvertiser.com>; 'dako@kitv.com' <dako@kitv.com>; 'Dkravitsky@hawaiinewsnow.com' <Dkravitsky@hawaiinewsnow.com>; 'dshimogawa@kitv.com' <dshimogawa@kitv.com>; 'curtwilliams@iheartmedia.com' <curtwilliams@iheartmedia.com>; Jennifer Brink <Jennifer.brink@khon2.com>; 'jkelleher@ap.org' <jkelleher@ap.org>; Joie Nishimoto <Joie.nishimoto@khon2.com>; 'Julianorton-dennis@iheartmedia.com' <Julianorton-dennis@iheartmedia.com>; 'khiraishi@hawaiipublicradio.org' <khiraishi@hawaiipublicradio.org>; Lance Kuraoka <Lance.kuraoka@khon2.com>; 'lfujimori@staradvertiser.com' <lfujimori@staradvertiser.com>; Lori Silva <Lori.silva@khon2.com>; 'ltsang@hawaiipublicradio.org' <ltsang@hawaiipublicradio.org>; 'Mokihana.aki@khon2.com' <Mokihana.aki@khon2.com>; 'mthiessen@ap.org' <mthiessen@ap.org>; 'myamane@kitv.com' <myamane@kitv.com>; Nicole Napuunoa <Nicole.napuunoa@khon2.com>; 'news@hawaiinewsnow.com' <news@hawaiinewsnow.com>; 'news@civilbeat.org' <news@civilbeat.org>; 'news@hawaiipublicradio.org' <news@hawaiipublicradio.org>; KHON-News2 <news@khon2.com>; news@kitv.com; 'pboylan@staradvertiser.com' <pboylan@staradvertiser.com>;

'patti@civilbeat.org' <patti@civilbeat.org>; 'rsubiono@hawaiipublicradio.org' <rsubiono@hawaiipublicradio.org>; 'skim@hawaiipublicradio.org' <skim@hawaiipublicradio.org>; Tasha Tanimoto <Tasha.tanimoto@khon2.com>; 'thurley@staradvertiser.com' <thurley@staradvertiser.com>; Tina DeMello <Tina.demello@khon2.com>; 'VCuba@kitv.com' <VCuba@kitv.com>; Yu, Michelle <IMCEAEX-_o=City+20and+20County+20of+20Honolulu_ou=CCHNL_cn=Recipients_cn=myu@honolulu.gov>; 'Julianorton-dennis@iheartmedia.com' <Julianorton-dennis@iheartmedia.com>; Jenn Boneza <Jenn.Boneza@khon2.com>; Justin Cruz <Justin.Cruz@khon2.com>; 'mlist@civilbeat.org' <mlist@civilbeat.org>
Subject: HPD Media Alert

CAUTION: This message was sent from outside the Nexstar organization. Please do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Hawaii Association of Broadcasters, Inc.

Testimony of Chris Leonard
President – Hawai‘i Association of Broadcasters, Inc.

Re: Bill 46 Hearing: Committee on Public Safety & Economy
7/24/2025 – 10:00am

In strong support of Bill 46 (2025) Re: Scanner Access

Good morning Chairman Tulba, Vice Chair Kia‘aina and committee members. For the record, my name is Chris Leonard and I am the President of the Hawai‘i Association of Broadcasters. The Association represents over 100 television and radio stations that serve local communities across the State of Hawai‘i.

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 46, which seeks to reestablish structured media access to public safety radio communications in Honolulu.

Local newsrooms serve as critical early warning systems for our communities. In Hawai‘i, where geographic isolation, unpredictable weather, and limited infrastructure can quickly escalate emergencies, timely and accurate information is not a luxury—it’s a lifeline. The recent closure of police scanner access to media outlets undermines this vital function. Without real-time access, journalists are delayed in alerting the public to fast-moving threats like wildfires, major accidents, or missing persons. In emergencies, every minute counts.

Scanner traffic is often the first signal of a developing crisis. Journalists use it not to sensationalize, but to mobilize teams, verify facts, and prepare accurate, timely updates. During the 2023 Maui wildfires, delayed official communication contributed to public confusion. One clear takeaway: fast, redundant information channels save lives. Scanner access is one of those channels.

Hawai‘i’s journalists are trained to report responsibly. They routinely withhold sensitive details—such as tactical positions or victim identities—until cleared by authorities. Media and law enforcement share the same goals: protect lives, preserve safety, and maintain public trust. Treating the media as partners, not adversaries, strengthens our collective ability to serve the public.

Concerns about officer safety and operational security are valid—and solvable. Potential safeguards including credentialed access for vetted users, encryption of tactical or personally

identifiable information, joint training, and audit trails can address the issues that have been raised by those that oppose this bill.

When official channels go silent, misinformation spreads. Granting media access to basic incident information helps counter rumors and builds public trust. In our close-knit communities, that trust is essential.

I urge the Council to pass Bill 46. Let's restore a vital tool for public safety, transparency, and community resilience. Together, we can ensure that Hawai'i remains informed, prepared, and protected.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Leonard
President – Hawai'i Association of Broadcasters

Testimony in Support of Media Access to Police Scanner Communications in Hawaii
Jason Hagiwara, President & General Manager

Aloha Honorable Members of the Public Safety Committee,

I am writing today to express my strong support for the Bill 46 that would allow Hawaii journalists to access police scanner communications. I believe this access is crucial not only for promoting transparency in law enforcement but also for ensuring that the public remains informed about important events that directly affect public safety.

1. Promoting Public Safety and Awareness:

Police scanner communications provide real-time information that is essential for the media to report on unfolding situations, particularly emergencies, active shooter situations, and public safety incidents. When the media has access to these communications, they can quickly relay critical information to the public, alerting them to hazards such as natural disasters, road closures, or active law enforcement situations.

Media outlets, acting as a bridge between the authorities and the public, can help save lives by broadcasting warnings and safety advice quickly and efficiently.

Consider how many lives may have been saved in the Maui Wildfires had the media been able to issue timely alerts based on scanner traffic. More immediate warnings could have helped residents evacuate faster and more safely.

During the 2023 Pearlridge Mall shooting, police responded quickly, but the suspect remained at large for hours. Media scanner access could have allowed the public to receive timely updates, stay clear of danger zones, and avoid confusion or panic.

2. Enhancing Transparency and Accountability:

Allowing media access to police scanner communications helps increase transparency and trust in law enforcement. It enables journalists to monitor activity in real-time, reducing the potential for miscommunication, misinformation, or the appearance of hidden agendas. When the media has access to what is happening on the ground, they are in a better position to verify and report accurately, contributing to an informed public.

Moreover, media access ensures greater accountability by allowing the public to understand police actions and hear real-time reports on how officers are handling specific situations. This can increase trust in law enforcement by providing a clearer picture of what is happening during critical events.

3. Addressing Concerns of Public Misuse:

While concerns about privacy and investigative integrity are valid, the concerns can be addressed through safeguards that protect sensitive information. Many states and jurisdictions across the United States have found effective ways to balance the public's right to know with law enforcement's need for operational security. This is ultimately not an access issue, but a matter of proper training and operational protocols.

4. Strengthening Journalism and Media Independence:

In an era where accurate, reliable reporting is more important than ever, allowing media access to police scanners ensures that journalists can perform their role as independent watchdogs in a democracy. The ability to listen in on scanner communications will enhance reporting on incidents that affect the community, from routine law enforcement activities to emergencies and natural disasters.

Without this access, journalists are relegated to secondhand accounts or delayed reports, which may not always be accurate or comprehensive. Access to scanners ensures timely and direct reporting, which in turn fosters better-informed communities and more effective public policy.

Conclusion:

The importance of timely, transparent, and accurate reporting cannot be overstated in our rapidly changing world. Allowing media access to police scanner communications in Hawaii will provide critical information to the public, enhance police accountability, and ensure that the media can serve its vital role in democracy.

I urge you to support this legislation and to recognize the benefits that it will bring to the people of Hawaii—both in terms of public safety and in terms of the free flow of information.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Hagiwara
President & General Manager