BILL046(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 390

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 6, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 11

Oppose: 3

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pikachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
www.Ohanaunityparty.com	Support	Aug 1, 2025 @ 02:36 PM

Testimony:

Subject: Strong Support for Bill 46: Supercharge Our Coconut Wireless to Catch ‘Em All! #CriminalsGottaCatchEmAll

Aloha Honorable Councilmembers, elected officials, and community leaders,

People of O‘ahu, let’s spark a revolution! I’m Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM, Chairman of the Ohana Unity Party, representing the Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands and our ‘ohana from Wai‘anae to Kahuku. Bill 46 (2025) is a game-changer, mandating the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) Chief to craft a strategic plan for sharing critical info with the media and public, open dispatch radio communications to local media, and report to you, the Council. This is our super coconut wireless—a lightning-fast network to stop crime and uplift our community. I’m here with a detailed case, packed with stats, Pokémon-powered logic, and actionable solutions to make O‘ahu safer. Let’s catch ‘em all—criminals, pedophiles, and bad actors—while empowering our good guys. To test if you’re reading, share your favorite Pokémon at the next Council meeting! #CriminalsGottaCatchEmAll

Intel is our greatest weapon, and Bill 46 arms us. O‘ahu’s crime rate climbed 15% from 2023 to 2025, with 12,500 property crimes and 1,800 violent crimes (HPD 2025 stats). HPD’s down 300 officers (18% understaffed, 1,650 vs. 1,950 needed, per 2024 reports), and lawsuits from former Chief Arthur Logan have cost $5M since 2022, draining resources (Civil Beat). Bill 46’s transparency plan is a Pikachu Thunderbolt, blasting opacity and rebuilding trust. By opening dispatch radios and mandating reports, you’re giving our ‘ohana real-time intel to stay safe, like my fights for Kānehili’s safety wall and against Bill 37’s Hale‘iwa rezoning.

Keeping our communities informed saves lives. Media access to HPD dispatch radios—proven in San Diego, where 2024 data shows 20% faster public response to incidents—means instant updates. Picture Aunty Leilani in Kāne‘ohe hearing a burglary alert on KITV4, locking her doors. Or Uncle Kimo in Wai‘anae spotting a suspect from a Star-Advertiser post, helping HPD nab them. This is the coconut wireless on steroids, empowering our 1.4 million residents (2025 Census). Councilmember Tupola, your R3 fair connects ‘ohana—amplify it with Bill 46’s intel. Let’s make every block a PokéStop for safety.

Accountability drives Bill 46’s power. HPD’s strategic plan ensures structured info release, not chaos. Los Angeles’ 2023 LAPD transparency initiative cut complaints by 12% by sharing data proactively (UCLA 2025). Honolulu’s 2024 HPD survey showed 65% of residents want more transparency—Bill 46 delivers. Chair Waters, your leadership can make this a national model. Senator DeCorte, your August 12 town hall can rally support. This bill catches bad guys like a Master Ball,

clean and fast.

Communities thrive when empowered, and Bill 46 makes us partners. Waiʻanae's 96792 saw 250 property crimes in 2025 (HPD), but Nānākuli's watch groups cut break-ins by 10% through vigilance (board reports). Dispatch access lets media like ʻŌlelo 49 broadcast alerts, turning residents into HPD's eyes. My anti-trafficking work with Hoʻōla Nā Pua shows informed communities stop predators—15 trafficking busts in 2024 came from tips (BISAC). #PedophilesGottaCatchEmAll. Councilmember Weyer, your Bill 37 vote showed you listen—back this too.

Helping our ʻohana means transparency. Bill 46's Council reports prevent cover-ups, like the 2023 Kalihi shooting delay that sparked protests (Civil Beat). Regular reports build trust. Rep. Muraoka, your housing focus can tie this to safe neighborhoods. Governor Green, your $291M public safety budget can fund HPD's plan. President Trump, your $500M law enforcement grants (2025) can upgrade dispatch tech. Let's zap crime like Pikachu zaps Team Rocket!

Uniting Oʻahu starts with Bill 46. Real-time crime mapping via HPD's www.honolulupd.org, enhanced with dispatch feeds, could cut response times by 15%, like Chicago's 2024 program (CPD). For Waiʻanae's 48,000 residents (40% Native Hawaiian, 2025 Census), this means safer streets. Councilmember Kiaʻaina, your environmental work can link this to resilient communities. Rep. Kila, your August 20 town hall can push this. Let's make our coconut wireless a Hyper Beam against crime.

Inspiration flows from action. Bill 46 can fund 500 community safety ambassadors by 2026, using $1M from Green's budget. Seattle's 2023 liaison program cut petty crime by 8% (SPD). Train residents via HPD's app, like my Waiʻanae housing self-build push with NAHASDA's $22.3M. Councilmember Say, your experience can guide this. Let's turn Oʻahu into a Pokémon Gym, defending every ʻohana.

Safety is our right, and Bill 46 secures it. Dispatch access warns of threats like flash floods (3 in 2024, NOAA) or trafficking rings. My work with Hope for Justice shows intel saves lives: 10 trafficking busts in 2024 from community tips (BISAC). HPD's $3M lawsuit payouts in 2025 (Civil Beat) demand accountability—Bill 46's reports ensure it. Councilmember Cordero, your youth advocacy can protect keiki. Let's make Oʻahu a no-fly zone for crime.

Aloha ʻāina includes our people. Bill 46 fights distrust—55% of Oʻahu residents distrust HPD (UH 2024 survey). My Kānehili wall protects keiki; this bill protects all. Councilmember Okimoto, your business ties can push media partnerships. Governor Green, your $600M DHHL funds show you invest in ʻohana—invest here. This is a Rare Candy, leveling up our safety.

Winning requires bold moves, and Bill 46 is one. Media access cuts evacuation delays, like Miami's 10% reduction in 2024 (FEMA). For 96792's 20% poverty rate, free intel levels the field. Councilmember Dos Santos-Tam, your urban planning can integrate this with city tech. Let's make our coconut wireless a Psychic-type move, seeing crime before it hits.

Empowering our ‘ohana is Bill 46’s heart. Fund workshops with Wai’anae’s Economic Development Council, training 1,000 residents by 2027 using $500K from Blangiardi’s budget. Denver’s 2024 radio access boosted tips by 12% (DPD). Councilmember Tulba, your roots can drive this. President Trump, your $1T infrastructure plan can fund radio upgrades. Let’s build a Pokédex of crime-fighting knowledge.

Strength comes from unity, and Bill 46 binds us. HPD’s staffing crisis leaves us leaning on ‘ohana. My emails to the Honolulu Police Commission show community solutions work. Hawaii News Now’s 500,000 nightly viewers can amplify alerts. Councilmember Tupola, your Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea dunk showed connection—connect us here. Catch criminals like a Quick Ball!

Opportunities like Bill 46 are rare. A mobile app with dispatch feeds, like Honolulu’s HNL.Info, could cut 911 response times by 7%, per Atlanta’s 2024 model (APD). Rep. Muraoka, push state funds for this. Let’s make Oʻahu a Champion’s League, where good guys win.

Momentum builds with Bill 46. HPD’s 2023 overtime fraud ($1.5M lost, Star-Advertiser) shows why reports matter. Kalihi’s watch groups gave 50% of 2024’s tips (HPD). Senator DeCorte, your town hall can amplify this. Let’s zap crime with a Volt Tackle of transparency.

Excellence is our goal, and Bill 46 sets the bar. My work with Moms for Liberty to clean DOE materials shows informed communities stop harm—15 trafficking cases flagged in 2025 (Hoʻōla Nā Pua). Councilmember Weyer, your community focus can champion this. Let’s make our coconut wireless a Pokémon Paradise, catching every bad guy!

Why Bill 46 is Critical

Oʻahu’s 1.4 million residents face rising crime, an 18% HPD staffing gap, and $5M in lawsuit costs since 2022 (Civil Beat). Bill 46 is our Master Ball, empowering our ‘ohana with intel to catch criminals and protect keiki. It aligns with my fights—Kānehili’s wall, Bill 37, and anti-trafficking with Hope for Justice. Wai’anae’s 48,000 residents need this to thrive. Governor Green, your $291M safety budget can fund it. President Trump, your grants can make it national. Council, pass this by September 2025 to show you’re with us.

Demands for Results

1. **Pass Bill 46**: Vote yes by September 2025, with a public hearing by August 15.
2. **Fund It**: Allocate $2M from Blangiardi’s 2025 budget for HPD’s plan and radio tech.
3. **Train ‘Ohana**: Launch 500 safety ambassadors by 2026, using Green’s funds, with media like KHON2.
4. **Report Publicly**: Post HPD reports on www.honolulu.gov by December 2025, updated quarterly.
5. **Join Us**: Attend my Ohana Unity Party town hall, August 20, 2025, with Rep. Kila, to plan next steps.

To my Oʻahu ‘ohana: Let’s make noise! Share on X @OhanaUnityParty, Instagram @OhanaUnityParty, and YouTube

@PikachuBillionaire with #CriminalsGottaCatchEmAll. Support via Venmo @PresidentBillionaire, CashApp $ShelbyBillionaire, or BTC 1sRfKDphW18hojoyTQVy9qQVSUtQgahYwj. Show up at the next Council meeting (check www.honolulu.gov) and demand Bill 46. Let’s be the very best, like no one ever was!

PIKACHU'S AWESOME

Mahalo for leading—let’s catch ‘em all!
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM
Chairman, Ohana Unity Party
Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands
OhanaUnityChair@gmail.com
www.OhanaUnityParty.com
YouTube: @PikachuBillionaire
X: @OhanaUnityParty, @AmericanPartyOG
Instagram: @OhanaUnityParty, @LegendaryBillionaire
Facebook: @KeikiOkalani

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacob Wiencek	jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 1, 2025 @ 05:03 PM

Testimony:
Aloha Councilmembers,

I am pleased to see Bill 46 continue to advance through our legislative process. While HPD has made some progress over the last adopting a more proactive communications and engagement posture, I am still pleased to see Council Chair Waters and Councilmember Tulba pushing this bill to ensure robust and transparent from HPD. While HPD made their operational concerns known to during the public safety committee meeting in July, I believe there is a way to get to 'Yes' and unlock the potential of greater transparency to improve public awareness, accountability and safety.

I strongly urge the Council to continue SUPPORTNG this bill through our legislative process!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brett Kulbis	brett.kulbis@use.startmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 3, 2025 @ 10:23 AM

Testimony:

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

I am submitting this testimony to express strong opposition to Bill 46 (2025) in its current form, guided by the foundational values of public safety, privacy, limited government intervention, and fiscal responsibility. While the objective of increasing transparency and public trust is laudable, Bill 46, as currently drafted, poses substantial risks and unresolved challenges that threaten to undermine core public interests.

1. Public Safety and Operational Security: Bill 46 would require the Honolulu Police Department to grant media outlets access to real-time dispatch radio communications. This directive is deeply problematic for the following reasons:

- Real-time police communications may contain sensitive information such as victim identities, confidential investigative details, home addresses, and police tactics.
- Immediate media access, even if credentialed, increases the risk that raw, unfiltered information could be misinterpreted, prematurely released, or used in a manner that actively endangers police officers, victims, and innocent civilians.
- This measure would significantly hamper police efficiency and operational discipline, as officers may become hesitant or distracted knowing their words are being broadcast live beyond command channels.

2. Legal and Privacy Implications

- There are serious concerns about compliance with HRS Chapter 138, federal Criminal Justice Information Services policies, and electronic privacy laws. HPD's leadership and telecommunications specialists have testified that real-time release of radio traffic creates unacceptable risk of legal violations, potentially exposing the city and taxpayers to expensive lawsuits and liabilities.
- The "credentialed media only" limitation does not adequately solve the problem of private and legally protected information being overheard or rebroadcasted.

3. Existing and Emerging Alternatives

- HPD has demonstrated commitment to transparency by expanding its communications team, increasing social media alerts, launching public dashboards and building a media portal to provide timely updates on critical incidents, arrests, and trends—measures that balance openness with legal and operational restraints.
- Additional transparency can be pursued by improving these systems rather than granting blanket scanner access.

4. Cost and Resource Burden

- Unfunded mandates requiring HPD to develop strategic plans, manage credentialed media access, and continually monitor compliance will compound the department's existing staffing and budgetary shortages. I oppose measures that waste taxpayer dollars or add inefficient government bureaucracy—especially amid acute police understaffing and operational strain.

5. Potential for Mission Creep and Abuse

- Once real-time scanner access is granted, it will be difficult to contain scope, prevent leaks, or revoke privileges in case of abuse or mishandling.
- The experience of other jurisdictions has demonstrated continued disputes and controversies over what constitutes appropriate use of these communications. The prudent choice is the one that best protects citizens and law enforcement while still ensuring robust, timely public notification through controlled means.

Should the Council wish to pursue some elements of Bill 46's intent, the following amendments are necessary to make the proposal acceptable to fiscal and security-minded citizens:

- Remove the mandate for direct media access to police radio dispatches. Instead, invest resources in improving HPD's curated public dashboards, structured alerts, and after-action press briefings.
- Require all releases of sensitive information to be reviewed for privacy, tactical security, and legal compliance before dissemination.
- Mandate a legal risk assessment and cost-benefit study prior to any implementation of new access provisions.
- Explicitly prohibit the transmission of any personally identifiable information, medical data, or police tactical/response plans over channels accessible to non-law enforcement individuals.

Bill 46 as written overreaches, fails to provide adequate safeguards for public safety, privacy, and fiscal discipline, and exposes the HPD to operational and legal harm. True transparency can and should be achieved without reckless disregard for the critical work of our police or the safety of our citizens. Until these concerns are robustly addressed, I urge the Council to reject or significantly amend Bill 46 in keeping with conservative values and the public interest.

Mahalo for your attention and service to the community.

Brett Kulbis
U.S. Navy Veteran
Ewa Beach

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel Bumanglag	daniel.bumanglag@me.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 4, 2025 @ 12:21 AM

Testimony:

I support this measure as it would restore transparency and accountability with the general public—something that was taken away when the HPD and HFD's dispatch channels all went P25 encrypted.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Stirling Morita	smorita1@twc.com	96818

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists	Support	Aug 4, 2025 @ 02:17 PM
Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gerald Kato	mediacouncilhi@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Media Council Hawaii	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 07:42 AM
Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brett Kulbis	brett.kulbis@use.startmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 5, 2025 @ 09:49 AM
Name:	Email:	Zip:
lynne matusow	lynnehi@aol.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 10:24 AM

Testimony:

I am outraged. HPD does not care about the public being informed. It is prioritizing protecting its rear end against our need to know. At one point, Rade Vanic appeared to support this excellent bill. Now he has done a U-turn, coming up with all sorts of excuses why we should not know what is happening. He is as bad as Logan was in communicating with the public. Hopefully the Police Commission will do its job and not give him the job.

HPD has always been a thorn in the public eye. We wanted officers to wear cameras so we could see what really happened. HPD opposed it tooth and nail until they finally lost, like they will this time too. But as it plays out to its foregone conclusion, the public loses.

The events of January 2024 are a prime example of their keeping the pubic in the dark. It was only through the hard work of a curious public and the media that we learned what was occurring, sometimes in real time.

I urge you to move this bill forward, post haste, and disregard the intimidating wall of blue which will probably be at every hearing on the subject. We need action now, before the next tragedy occurs.

lynne matusow

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chris Leonard	chris@hawaiibroadcasters.com	96839
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Association of Broadcasters	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 02:06 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Duane Shimogawa	dshimogawa@kitv.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KITV4 Island News	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 04:59 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Honorable Honolulu Councilmembers:

Let me first thank you for your time and efforts in all you do for our communities. For me, as a longtime journalist both here in Hawaii and across the Continent, it is a privilege to do what I do -- serving the communities that we call home. To be the best at serving our communities -- informing them about issues happening around the state -- we need all of the tools that help us in our efforts.

To put it plainly -- having access to first-responder scanner information is a key tool that we have utilized for decades. It allows us inform the public -- our core audience -- about what's transpiring in their communities. This is especially important during times of crises where every second counts. We hope you consider my testimony as another tool to help you make your respective decisions regarding this bill. Appreciate your time and efforts and wish you all God's abundant blessings.

Mahalo,

Duane Shimogawa

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Edward Fujioka	puunui@msn.com	96818-2792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 5, 2025 @ 07:45 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	waianaenb569@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 10:56 PM

Testimony:

The reason why I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry SUPPORT BILL 46 RELATING TO THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT, is to give the media full access to "gated communities, affluent communities, and general communities. Example Wai'anae seems to be an "open book when it comes to negative media coverage" unlike Ko Olina whereby a murder was committed and was reported only once, period.

In fairness, all HPD or 911 calls should be reported by the media and not only a targeted community like Wai'anae.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katie Pickman	katie.pickman@hawaiinewsnow.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii News Now	Support	Aug 6, 2025 @ 07:07 AM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of Bill 46

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

My name is Katie Pickman, and I am the General Manager of Hawaii News Now. I am submitting testimony in strong support of Bill 46.

We are here to work with the Honolulu Police Department to serve our community. Our coverage during the tsunami threat on Tuesday, July 29, 2025, is a clear example of the vital role local media plays in public safety. Over nine hours of continuous, multi-platform coverage, we worked with police and other officials to provide calm, accurate, life-saving information to the public. Our digital coverage alone reached over 5 million video views that afternoon/evening.

Access to timely and accurate information from HPD during emergencies allows us to inform the public quickly, prevent the spread of misinformation, and amplify critical safety messages. Our newsroom is staffed by some of the most seasoned journalists in the industry, and protecting sensitive information is a top priority in our work. We are committed to maintaining professional standards and upholding privacy while delivering information that can save lives.

Bill 46 provides a framework for responsible access to HPD radio communications for established, vetted media organizations. This is not about sensationalism, it’s about transparency, trust, and the ability to keep our community safe and informed when every second matters.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass Bill 46.

Mahalo,

Katie Pickman

General Manager

Hawaii News Now

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chris Hart	Chrish@espnhonolulu.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KKEA/KHKA- FEMA's Primary Entry Point (PEP) Emergency Broadcast Facility	Support	Aug 6, 2025 @ 09:14 AM

Testimony:

We strongly support Bill 46 before the Honolulu City Council, which would restore media access to police radio communications. Timely, accurate information is critical during emergencies, natural disasters, and breaking news events, and real-time access to police scanners allows journalists to quickly verify facts and provide the public with potentially life-saving updates. Limiting this access creates unnecessary delays and hampers transparency and accountability—both of which are essential in a democratic society. Passing Bill 46 would help ensure that Honolulu's residents remain informed, safe, and engaged with what's happening in their communities.

SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
Hawaii Chapter

Aug. 6, 2025

Honolulu City Council
Honolulu Hale
Honolulu, HI 96813

Chairman Waters and Council members:

Re: Bill 25-46

A little more than four years ago, I wrote then-Interim Police Chief Rade Vanic during the start of the digital police radios and the silencing of police scanner traffic in newsrooms:

“What will happen when the Honolulu emergency radios go silent in newsrooms across Oahu?

“Honolulu residents will get less information on a timely basis about disasters and other emergencies.

“Many leads to emergency calls that spell disaster will be gone because the news media will not know they are happening. Reporters won’t be dispatched immediately to help tell the public what is going on, and photographers won’t be there to capture emotions and other important details until later when there are no photos to take.

“As you well know, it is a quick decision to dispatch people to an emergency scene. Even with so-called databases of conversations, it is doubtful information will be readily available – IF news media know something is going on.”

Well, folks, here we are in 2025 and nothing has changed and the news media are in the dark about the initial reports of major crimes or accidents.

The current release of logs about calls to police is virtually worthless because of a lack of information and is issued twice a day.

Even if Chief Vanic issues the information via social media, it won't help because of the lack of information or descriptions about calls. Chief Vanic says it could take 15 minutes to post information. That timing is too slow for people waiting to get reporters, equipment ready to send.

Also, Chief Vanic suggested an online dashboard containing information. We would have grave reservations about that if the police logs currently sent out would be posted on social media. These logs are incredibly vague, disjointed and even missing information. No one can adequately judge whether to respond to such events with such data.

That is why we urge the City Council to pass Bill 46. We prefer the original bill, but the amended version probably help the news media get timely relevant information.

If the news media's function of informing the public is so important, why wasn't this straightened out a lot earlier?

I ask you to let the news media do their jobs with as few blinders as possible.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Stirling Morita

President, Hawaii Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists

To: **Honolulu City Council**
Hearing: **Wednesday, August 6, 2025**

TESTIMONY SUPPORTING THE INTENT OF BILL 46 RELATING TO THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and Councilmembers:

Media Council Hawai‘i (MCH) **supports the intent** of Bill 46.

We find troubling the highly restrictive definition of “local media outlet”. In the 21st century and the age of digital media, news media includes a wide range of sources and outlets that extends beyond those defined in the bill.

MCH believes much of the work done by the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) is of critical importance to the public and its claims of privacy needs is unfounded. Until relatively recently, HPD radio transmission were not encrypted and were publicly accessible. What’s more, HPD has not demonstrated in clear terms their objections, but rather have used broad and vague concerns, such as “privacy”.

In Hawaii today, there are numerous respectable news outlets, including non-traditional media, that would not meet the criteria in this bill, but nonetheless are important sources of public information for people across the islands.

The public consumes news in an array of formats that extends beyond the traditional mediums, including blogs, websites, podcasts, and more. Additionally, we believe the highly limiting definition included in this bill may be unconstitutional and subject to legal challenge.

With these concerns in mind, we would like to see the bill amended to expand the definition of “local news media” as follows:

> ***Local media outlet.*** A professional news organizations or individuals whose primary function is gathering news for dissemination to the public that operates within the ~~city~~ state and:
>
> (1) ~~Holds a valid broadcast license issued by the Federal Communications Commission~~ Delivers factually accurate reporting, analysis, and commentary through various channels; or
>
> (2) ~~Regularly disseminates news to the public and meets one or more of the following:~~

~~(A) Listed as a recognized legal or public notice publication pursuant to HRS § 1-28.5; or~~

~~(B) Has a verifiable track record of professional journalism, including the employment of full-time editorial staff, adherence to a publicly-posted code of journalistic ethics, and a history of continuous publication or broadcasting for at least 10 years.~~

Operates in the public interest on matters including politics, social issues, and cultural events.

In his 1971 concurring opinion in New York Times Co. v. United States, Justice Hugo Black stated unambiguously the need for and responsibilities of a free press:

"[P]aramount among the responsibilities of a free press is the duty to prevent any part of the government from deceiving the people and sending them off to distant lands to die of foreign fevers and foreign shot and shell."

We urge the Council to advance this bill for further consideration and amendments.

Media Council Hawai‘i works to improve access to information, strengthen the public's understanding of and support for 1st Amendment rights and freedoms, educate the electorate on the important role of the media role in a healthy democracy, and promote fair and accurate journalism in Hawai‘i and around the world.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Media Council of Hawai‘i

Testimony Opposing Bill 46 (2025) – Second Reading

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

I am submitting this testimony to express strong opposition to Bill 46 (2025) in its current form, guided by the foundational values of public safety, privacy, limited government intervention, and fiscal responsibility.

While the objective of increasing transparency and public trust is laudable, Bill 46, as currently drafted, poses substantial risks and unresolved challenges that threaten to undermine core public interests.

1. Public Safety and Operational Security: Bill 46 would require the Honolulu Police Department to grant media outlets access to real-time dispatch radio communications. This directive is deeply problematic for the following reasons:

- Real-time police communications may contain sensitive information such as victim identities, confidential investigative details, home addresses, and police tactics.
- Immediate media access, even if credentialed, increases the risk that raw, unfiltered information could be misinterpreted, prematurely released, or used in a manner that actively endangers police officers, victims, and innocent civilians.
- This measure would significantly hamper police efficiency and operational discipline, as officers may become hesitant or distracted knowing their words are being broadcast live beyond command channels.

2. Legal and Privacy Implications

- There are serious concerns about compliance with HRS Chapter 138, federal Criminal Justice Information Services policies, and electronic privacy laws. HPD's leadership and telecommunications specialists have testified that real-time release of radio traffic creates unacceptable risk of legal violations, potentially exposing the city and taxpayers to expensive lawsuits and liabilities.
- The "credentialed media only" limitation does not adequately solve the problem of private and legally protected information being overheard or rebroadcasted.

3. Existing and Emerging Alternatives

- HPD has demonstrated commitment to transparency by expanding its communications team, increasing social media alerts, launching public dashboards and building a media portal to provide timely updates on critical incidents, arrests, and trends—measures that balance openness with legal and operational restraints.
- Additional transparency can be pursued by improving these systems rather than granting blanket scanner access.

4. Cost and Resource Burden
   - Unfunded mandates requiring HPD to develop strategic plans, manage credentialed media access, and continually monitor compliance will compound the department's existing staffing and budgetary shortages. I oppose measures that waste taxpayer dollars or add inefficient government bureaucracy—especially amid acute police understaffing and operational strain.

5. Potential for Mission Creep and Abuse
   - Once real-time scanner access is granted, it will be difficult to contain scope, prevent leaks, or revoke privileges in case of abuse or mishandling.
   - The experience of other jurisdictions has demonstrated continued disputes and controversies over what constitutes appropriate use of these communications. The prudent choice is the one that best protects citizens and law enforcement while still ensuring robust, timely public notification through controlled means.

Should the Council wish to pursue some elements of Bill 46's intent, the following amendments are necessary to make the proposal acceptable to fiscal and security-minded citizens:
- Remove the mandate for direct media access to police radio dispatches. Instead, invest resources in improving HPD's curated public dashboards, structured alerts, and after-action press briefings.
- Require all releases of sensitive information to be reviewed for privacy, tactical security, and legal compliance before dissemination.
- Mandate a legal risk assessment and cost-benefit study prior to any implementation of new access provisions.
- Explicitly prohibit the transmission of any personally identifiable information, medical data, or police tactical/response plans over channels accessible to non-law enforcement individuals.

Bill 46 as written overreaches, fails to provide adequate safeguards for public safety, privacy, and fiscal discipline, and exposes the HPD to operational and legal harm. True transparency can and should be achieved without reckless disregard for the critical work of our police or the safety of our citizens. Until these concerns are robustly addressed, I urge the Council to reject or significantly amend Bill 46 in keeping with conservative values and the public interest.

Mahalo for your attention and service to the community.

Brett Kulbis
Concerned Citizen and U.S. Navy Veteran
Ewa Beach, HI

Hawaii Association of Broadcasters, Inc.

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

Re: Bill 46 Hearing: Council Meeting
8/06/2025 – 10:00am

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

Good morning Chairman Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and council 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, operational security, federal and state privacy laws 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

August 5, 2025

Testimony of Eddie Fujioka

Retired First Responder

Opposition to Bill 46

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

My name is Eddie Fujioka, I am a retired Honolulu First Responder, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in strong opposition to any proposal that would grant media access to Honolulu Police Department radio scanners.

Honolulu faces unique public safety challenges—from high-density tourism zones to remote communities and natural disaster risks. Our officers need secure, uninterrupted communication to respond effectively. Opening scanner access to media outlets risks compromising that security. Real-time broadcasts can alert suspects, interfere with tactical operations, and put both officers and civilians in danger.

Let me be clear: this isn't about hiding information. It's about timing and context. Scanner transmissions are raw and often incomplete. Officers and other first responders use shorthand codes and preliminary information that may later prove inaccurate. They're not vetted, not verified, and not meant for public interpretation. When media outlets report directly from scanner chatter, they risk spreading misinformation—especially in fast-moving situations. We've seen this happen in other cities—where scanner-based reporting led to false accusations, privacy violations, and unnecessary fear. That can lead to panic, confusion, and even reputational harm to innocent individuals.

HPD already provides robust public access through press releases, incident reports, and scheduled briefings. These channels allow for transparency without jeopardizing safety. If the concern is accountability, let's strengthen those existing systems—not create new risks by opening live tactical communications to the press. Push notifications can provide the same information that social media already is posted. There is nearly always someone near to any incident posting photos and videos with information

I suggest at least this Bill be held and a working group of stakeholders meet to draft a matrix on if any radio transmission be relayed. Stakeholders should also include City Radio and IT experts. Additional Corp Council must be consulted and engaged in the process.

Honolulu deserves thoughtful policy that protects both public safety and public trust. I urge you to reject media access to police scanners and preserve the integrity of our emergency response systems.

Mahalo for your time

Eddie Fujioka