RES25-200
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 398

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

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

Support: 8

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christy Lopez	christy.lopez@georgetown.edu	20912
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 3, 2025 @ 04:56 AM

Testimony:

Honorable Members of the Council:

I am a former head of the police practices group of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice; former co-chair of the Washington D.C. Police Commission, and a Professor at Georgetown Law, teaching courses on policing and criminal procedure, and I am writing in support of Chris Magnus to serve on the police commission of the city and county of Honolulu.

Honolulu is fortunate that Chris has decided to serve his community as a member of the police commission. I have known Chris for over 10 years, since I led the U.S. Department of Justice investigation of the Ferguson Missouri Police Department. In that role, I selected Chris to be a police expert on issues of police use of force, accountability, management, and related topics. Chris was excellent in that role—deeply sensitive to the concerns of both officers and community members. I have sought his advice on many police-related projects since that time.

Chris has a unique blend of deep knowledge and respect for policing and the people who perform that job, and a clear understanding that policing too often lacks the accountability and leadership that communities, and police officers themselves, need to keep everyone—officers and community members--safe. He also understands that accountable policing and effective policing are inextricably intertwined, and he has dedicated his career to implementing that vision.

For many years, I have known of his commitment and family ties to Hawaii, and I was not at all surprised when he told me he was moving there and plans to retire there. Nor am I surprised that he has felt the tug to become involved in policing in his own community-this is how he has lived his life.

Mostly though, I am glad that Chris is willing to serve on the commission because the commission will be more effective with him on board. I have evaluated countless police commissions and related oversight entities over the decades and have found that, when functioning well, they can be important components of accountability; but when functionally poorly they are quite literally worse than nothing. Key to a well-functioning oversight commission is ensuring it has deep knowledge of policing. Ironically, without policing knowledge, oversight commissions tend to defer to police assertions when they shouldn't, and, sometimes, not defer when they should. Chris understands how truly difficult and often thankless the job of a police officer is, and knows how to ensure that accountability mechanisms make that job easier and more fair, even as they make communities safer. Chris also understands that police agencies must be encouraged to be innovative, and thus must be allowed to fail sometimes, but must always learn from failed experiments, and improve accordingly.

I commend the Mayor for selecting Chris to serve on the commission and urge the Council to approve this selection.

Finally, I thank all the members of the Council for your public service. We need more people with your dedication to community, now more than ever.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Christy Lopez

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Tamara Whitney	tami.s.iida@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Aug 3, 2025 @ 03:48 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Members of the City Council,

I am writing in strong support of Chris Magnus's appointment to the Police Commission. Chris has extensive experience in public service and brings a unique and valuable perspective to the commission. His background, combined with his commitment to the well-being of the community, makes him an ideal candidate for this important role. I believe his insights will lead to meaningful improvements in the Commission's work, ensuring the decisions reflect the best interests of the community.

Thank you for considering this recommendation.

Me ka pono,

Tami Whitney

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Seth Williams	seth.a.williams@gmail.com	19103
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Aug 4, 2025 @ 08:55 AM

Testimony:

Honorable Members of City Council:

I am pleased to write in support of Christopher Magnus’ appointment to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

During Mr. Magnus' service as the Deputy Auditor for Public Safety in the District of Columbia, I had the opportunity to work closely with him. Through a competitive process, the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor retained the firm where I work to conduct a detailed staffing and allocation study of the District's Metropolitan Police Department. Mr. Magnus was the District's lead for this complex and complicated work.

Throughout the engagement, I found Mr. Magnus to be a thoughtful and inclusive leader who leveraged his more than 40 years of experience in policing to inform the study's work on best practices, data-driven management, and efficiency. Most importantly, Mr. Magnus was a consistent champion to ensure that those the government served received exemplary service to better meet the District's holistic safety needs.

The work of the Police Commission deserves a thoughtful, experienced leader like Mr. Magnus. As his resume indicates, his commitment to public safety, policing, and public service has been his life's work – work that I am certain will continue in Honolulu, where he and his family have long-standing roots, and from which the Police Commission and City/County of Honolulu will benefit.

Respectfully submitted,

Seth Williams

Name: S. Rebecca Neusteter	Email: RebeccaNeusteter@uchicago.edu	Zip: 60602
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 4, 2025 @ 11:17 AM

Name: Tinna Harper	Email: happytinnaharper@gmail.com	Zip: 96815-1506
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 4, 2025 @ 10:09 PM

Testimony:
Chris Magnus had been doing an outstanding job as the Chief of Police in Tucson, AZ. His many years of excellent work experience, hard working and dedication to help people make him the best candidate for the Police Commissioner position.

Name: Robert Couls	Email: rcouls@yahoo.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 5, 2025 @ 02:56 AM

Testimony:

To whom it may concern,

I have enjoyed the distinct honor of knowing Chris Magnus for 16 years through family events. In that time Chris has consistently demonstrated the highest of moral, ethical, social and cultural standards.

Professionally, Chris has an unassailable record of success and has been in great demand as a pillar of civic fidelity. He has answered the highest office at least twice during national tribulations.

It’s my opinion that the city and county of Honolulu would improve substantially by retaining Chris Magnus’ decades of experience, commitment, heart and vision that he gives with everything he does.

Robert R Couls

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Purnima McCutcheon	mccutcheon.purnima@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 04:42 PM

Testimony:

I fully support Chris Magnus’s appointment to the Police Commission.

Chris's résumé documents over 40 years of experience in policing, including two decades as a Police Chief. Chris is nationally recognized as a policing expert.

As the architect for Chris’s family home renovation in Honolulu, I got to know Chris personally. He is compassionate - he cares deeply for his communities. He is an advocate for a modern, trusted, and fully staffed HPD. He is a listener to all voices, yet capable of making the hard decisions tasked to the Police Commission.

I believe Chris will be a valuable asset to the Police Commission.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christin Johnson	christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov	96813
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 05:06 PM

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Science in Service of Cities.

Honolulu City Council
Office of the City Clerk
Honolulu Hale
Room 202
530 South King Street
Honolulu, HI 98613

August 4, 2025

Regarding: Confirming the Appointment of Christopher Magnus to Serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu

To whom it may concern:

I write this letter in strong support of Christopher Magnus's confirmation to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu. For over a decade, I have had the opportunity and privilege to work closely with Christopher. Over this time, we have partnered in a variety of capacities. Moreover, I was familiar with and admired Christopher's work for a far longer time than when I first had the opportunity to work with him.

Prior to his retirement, Christopher was one of the world's leading police chiefs. To this day, he continues to be one of the field's foremost experts. I have been on multiple exchanges with Christopher across the U.S. and abroad. He is consistently looked upon as a creative and stalwart professional and is always striving to advance constitutional and procedurally just policing.

Over our years working together, I spent a great amount of time with Christopher and his executive leadership team in Tucson, Arizona, where he retired as chief of police. Our work and collaborations have continued from that time and includes our having written multiple pieces together, including a book chapter and presenting in numerous forums.

Christopher's leadership and expertise are unparalleled, as are his curiosities and commitment to building bridges and understanding perspectives that differ from his own. In my career, I don't believe I have ever worked with anyone before who remains as committed to understanding differences, building trust, and solving problems as is Christopher Magnus. The field of policing would benefit tremendously if more of its leaders and line-level professionals were as openminded and dedicated as Christopher has proven himself to be—time and time again—over the course of his career. I have personally benefited from his expertise and curiosities, as have many public safety agencies and other professionals around the world.

In my current role as Executive Director of the University of Chicago Health Lab, I lead a portfolio of projects—including work involving policing. Christopher regularly serves as an advisor to me and

our work and has been a long-term collaborator on some of the most impactful efforts in policing over the past 25 years.

I have no doubt that the City and County of Honolulu and its Police Commission will also benefit tremendously from Christopher's dedication, wisdom, as well as his lifelong commitment to learning and understanding. It is without hesitation that I share my strongest endorsement and recommendation for his confirmation.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or like to discuss my endorsement further.

Sincerely,



S. Rebecca Neusteter, PhD
UChicago Health Lab
Executive Director

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

MARTHA TORNEY

HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MAʻEMAʻE NŌ
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th Floor
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 587-4160

TO: Tommy Waters, Chair
Andria Tupola, Vice Chair
Honolulu City Council

FROM: Christin M. Johnson, Oversight Coordinator
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: Resolution 25-200, Confirming the appointment of Christopher Magnus to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu
Hearing: Wednesday, August 6, 2025; 10:00 a.m.

Council Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

My name is Christin Johnson, and I serve as the Oversight Coordinator for the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission. I am writing in strong support of Resolution 25-200, Confirming the appointment of Christopher Magnus to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

The Honolulu Police Commission plays a critical role in maintaining the public's trust in law enforcement by ensuring integrity, fairness, and accountability within the Honolulu Police Department. With responsibilities that include appointing and removing the Chief of Police, reviewing departmental rules and budgets, and receiving and investigating public complaints, Commissioners must bring not only relevant expertise, but also impartiality, integrity, and a deep understanding of community dynamics.

Chris Magnus is exceptionally well-suited to this role.

Chris brings over four decades of experience in policing, including 23 years as a police chief in diverse communities such as Tucson, Arizona, and Richmond, California. He has led major police departments through reform and has worked extensively with the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division on Pattern and Practice investigations in cities such as Ferguson, Baltimore, and Seattle. His work focused on addressing systemic misconduct and rebuilding public trust – an experience that aligns directly with the Commission's role in receiving and investigating complaints from the public. Mr. Magnus's qualifications are embedded in accountability, community trust, leadership, and speak directly to the mission of the Honolulu Police Commission.

Chris is also active in national oversight and reform organizations including NACOLE (National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement), PERF, IACP, ASEBP, and the Policing Project. His professional affiliations reflect his commitment to best practices and his readiness to contribute meaningfully to the Honolulu Police Commission's oversight responsibilities.

As a resident of Mānoa and a proven public servant, Chris understands the unique needs and perspectives of our local communities. His appointment would bring a wealth of knowledge, unwavering integrity, and a collaborative spirit to the Commission.

I respectfully urge the City Council to confirm Chris Magnus's appointment. His presence on the Honolulu Police Commission would be a powerful step forward in strengthening public confidence in our law enforcement oversight system.

Should you have additional questions, the Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson, can be reached at 808-900-2200 or at christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.