REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & ECONOMY

Voting Members:
Augie Tulba, Chair; Esther Kia'āina, Vice Chair;
Scott Y. Nishimoto, Val A. Okimoto, Andria Tupola

Committee Meeting Held
August 21, 2025

Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair, City Council
City and County of Honolulu

Mr. Chair:

Your Committee on Public Safety & Economy, which considered Resolution 25-222 entitled:

"RESOLUTION URGING THE HONOLULU POLICE COMMISSION TO IMPROVE THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE CHIEF OF POLICE THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A TRANSPARENT, COMPREHENSIVE VETTING PROCESS THAT INCORPORATES INPUT FROM RANK-AND-FILE POLICE OFFICERS,"

introduced on August 1, 2025, reports as follows:

The purpose of the resolution is to urge the Police Commission to improve the selection process for the Chief of Police through the implementation of a transparent, comprehensive vetting process that incorporates input from representatives of rank-and-file police officers to define desired candidate attributes and experience had to participate in the vetting process.

Laurie Foster, Vice Chair of the Police Commission, spoke in support of the measure. She testified that the commission is committed to strong community engagement and a process that is thorough, broad, professional, and timely. The Police Commission voted to hire a search firm and provided Departmental Communication 652 outlining an estimated schedule for the search firm hiring process and the police chief hiring.

ADOPTED ON SEP 3 2025

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 298

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Voting Members:
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Your Committee amended and approved the resolution to a CD1 version that makes the following amendments:

A. Amends the title to include, "AND CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT."

B. Amends the ninth WHEREAS clause by adding, "and civilian employees of the HPD," after "rank-and-file police officers."

C. Amends the BE IT RESOLVED clause by adding, "and civilian employees of the Honolulu Police Department," after "rank-and-file police officers."

D. Makes miscellaneous technical and nonsubstantive amendments.

Your Committee on Public Safety & Economy is in accord with the intent and purpose of Resolution 25-222, as amended herein, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as Resolution 25-222, CD1. (Ayes: Kia'āina, Nishimoto, Okimoto, Tulba, Tupola – 5; Noes: None.)

Respectfully submitted,

Committee Chair

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. **25-222, CD1**

RESOLUTION

URGING THE HONOLULU POLICE COMMISSION TO IMPROVE THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE CHIEF OF POLICE THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A TRANSPARENT, COMPREHENSIVE VETTING PROCESS THAT INCORPORATES INPUT FROM RANK-AND-FILE POLICE OFFICERS AND CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT.

WHEREAS, as the primary law enforcement agency of the City and County of Honolulu ("City"), the Honolulu Police Department ("HPD") plays a vital role in maintaining public safety by preventing crime, enforcing laws, and responding to emergencies across the island of O'ahu; and

WHEREAS, Section 6-1603 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition), as amended ("Charter"), establishes the position and qualifications of the Chief of Police ("Chief") of the City; and

WHEREAS, Charter Sections 6-1603.1 and 6-1603.2 require that the Honolulu Police Commission ("Commission") appoint the Chief to serve at the pleasure of the Commission for a term of five years; provided that the Commission may remove or suspend the Chief at any time for any reason, prior to the expiration of the five-year term; and

WHEREAS, as the head of the HPD, the Chief is responsible for directing HPD's operations and administration, making the selection of the Chief one of the most consequential decisions impacting the HPD's effectiveness, morale, and public trust; and

WHEREAS, on June 2, 2025, the 12th Chief announced his retirement, and on June 18, 2025, the Commission selected an interim Chief to oversee the HPD while the Commission considers and establishes a process for selecting a new Chief; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, the Commission's selection process for the 12th Chief extended over a year and involved engaging a third-party consultant, a process that alone took the Commission six months to complete; and

WHEREAS, following the selection of the 12th Chief, the Commission acknowledged the public criticism concerning the prolonged timeline to hire a third-party consultant and complete the selection process; and

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. **25-222, CD1**

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2025, the City Council ("Council") adopted Resolution 25-160, CD1, which established the Police Department Staffing and Retention Task Force and underscored the urgent need for effective leadership and accountability at all levels of the HPD; and

WHEREAS, rank-and-file police officers and civilian employees of the HPD, rather than outsourced third-party consultants, are better positioned to provide timely and invaluable insight into the day-to-day operational needs and organizational culture of the HPD, as well as the leadership qualities essential for the next Chief; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that establishing a transparent selection process for the next Chief—one that includes soliciting references from the candidate's superiors, peers, and subordinates—will strengthen the process and help ensure that the selected candidate demonstrates the necessary leadership and integrity and has a proven track record; and

WHEREAS, the Council further believes that the selection process for the 13th Chief must be conducted in a timelier manner, be completed by the end of 2025, and incorporate broader input from across the HPD to ensure leadership continuity and departmental stability; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the Police Commission ("Commission") is urged to improve the selection process for the Chief of Police ("Chief") through the implementation of a transparent, comprehensive vetting process that incorporates input from representatives of rank-and-file police officers and civilian employees of the Honolulu Police Department to define desired candidate attributes and experience and to participate in the vetting process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission's vetting procedure for evaluating candidates for Chief should further include, at a minimum:

- Obtaining and reviewing references from each candidate's superiors, peers, and subordinates, including employee unions, as applicable;
- Conducting comprehensive background checks, media audits, and performance evaluations;
- Requiring proof of work product in areas pertinent to candidate's qualifications;

RESOLUTION

- Incorporating, as appropriate, the findings and recommendations of the Police Department Staffing and Retention Task Force, as established by Resolution 25-160, CD1; and

- Requiring candidates to provide the Commission with full access to their employee personnel files; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Chair of the Honolulu Police Commission, the Interim Chief of Police, the President of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers, and the Honolulu Police Department Staffing and Retention Task Force.

INTRODUCED BY:

Andria Tupola

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

August 1, 2025
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

Report Title:
Honolulu Police Department ("HPD"); Honolulu Police Commission; Chief of Police; Selection Process; Vetting Process; Rank-in-File Officers and Civilian Employees of HPD

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.