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HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT
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OUR REFERENCE PB-SM

August 6, 2026

The Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Honolulu City Council Bill No. 52, Relating to Streets, Sidewalks, Malls, and Other Public Places

I am Major Paul Okamoto of District 6 (Waikīkī) of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports Honolulu City Council Bill No. 52, Relating to Streets, Sidewalks, Malls, and Other Public Places.

Tourism is the lifeblood of Hawai'i's economy, and Waikīkī is the epicenter of it in our state. Visitors often navigate through a gauntlet of peddlers that compete for their attention to sell various items and services as they walk down Kalākaua and Kūhiō Avenues. Many of these peddlers operate with little to no regulation and have no brick-and-mortar storefronts to refer their customers to. The HPD often encounters instances of tourists being scammed through aggressive sales tactics and overcharging. Victims return home and discover the scam weeks later on their credit card statements, sometimes leaving little evidence for investigators to follow. Even if the item or service being peddled is legitimate, businesses that pay for an actual storefront on Kalākaua Avenue and conduct business professionally and ethically are undercut by these people who steal their business. For these compelling reasons and many more, there is an absolute need for the government to properly regulate peddling in Waikīkī.

One challenge we face in effectively regulating peddling is that the current penalty is not a sufficient deterrence to many operators who engage in it. Many see the current fines merely as "a cost of doing business" and are not dissuaded from

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continuing their operations. Imposing stiffer fines and consequences and removing the financial incentive will help improve this problem and assist us in our efforts to keep Waikīkī a safe and desirable travel destination.

The HPD strongly urges you to support City Council Bill No. 52. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Paul Okamoto, Major
District 6

APPROVED:

David Lazar
Chief of Police