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July 24, 2018

Paul Kanoho, Research Attorney  
Legislative Reference Bureau  
State Capitol, Room 446  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Kanoho:

Per your written request and our subsequent conversation, this letter and the accompanying electronic files referenced herein provide data and other information relating to firearms and violent crimes, pursuant to Hawaii Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 116, S.D. 1 (2018). As noted earlier, the Department of the Attorney General has some, but not all, of the requested information. We are also providing additional information that may be helpful.

You requested information pertaining to paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) on pages 2 and 3 of the concurrent resolution, and we appreciate the clarifications that you added for our consideration. The specified paragraphs from the concurrent resolution and your clarifications appear below, with our responses added.

- (5) Data on the total number of instances of violent crime in the State over the past decade and, of that number, the number of instances involving a firearm, the number of deaths attributed to a firearm, and the number of firearms deaths caused by an accident or accidental discharge of a firearm;**

*LRB Adds: We have interpreted page 2, paragraph (5) to request, for each year from 2007 to the most recent year for which applicable data are available, the numbers of instances of violent crime in the State of Hawaii; of those numbers, the numbers of instances that involved a firearm and the numbers of deaths attributed to a firearm; and the numbers of deaths attributed to the accidental discharge of a firearm or other accident involving a firearm. If possible, please provide this data for the State as a whole and separately for each county.*

AG Response: The *MS Excel* workbook (and accompanying PDF print file) that we prepared for you includes a table of contents, a data spreadsheet, and 64 charts providing annual and aggregate tallies, proportions, and rates of reported violent crimes, including those involving firearms, in the State of Hawaii and in each county (and in some cases the United States as a whole) for the Calendar Years

1994-2017 period. We previously prepared a smaller, though similar, data set that covered the 1994-2013 period and was used for special analyses published in our *Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2013* annual statistical report, and we updated this file through 2017 and added several new data elements for the current project. We believe that the inclusion of data from earlier years provides a more complete and meaningful historical context in which to consider the various issues at hand. For overarching statistics, we note that, between 1994 and 2017, the State of Hawaii's rate of violent crimes committed with firearms decreased 31.5 percent, and the rate of murders committed with firearms fell 85.0 percent. Over the course of the same time period, Hawaii's rate of murders committed with firearms was on average 76.5 percent below the comparable rate for the United States as a whole, while Hawaii's proportion of murders committed with firearms relative to other weapon types was 45.8 percent below the U.S. figure. Please note that we do not have data on deaths attributed to the accidental discharge of a firearm; you may wish to check with the Department of Health's Injury and Violence Prevention Program.

- (6) **With respect to the number of instances of violent crime in which a firearm was used, the number of individuals that had already been previously prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm, differentiated by the reason the individual was prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm, including reasons involving the individual's mental health, conviction for a felony offense, or arrest or conviction for domestic violence;**

*LRB Adds: We have interpreted page 2, paragraph (6) to request the numbers of alleged perpetrators of violent crimes who had applied for but were denied authorization to own or possess a firearm in Hawaii prior to the commission of a violent crime, differentiated by the reasons each person was prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm in Hawaii, as specified in the concurrent resolution, to the extent that information is available. If possible, please provide this data for the State as a whole and separately for each county. For clarity, please also inform us how your department defines "violent crime" for purposes of the requested information; the types of violent crimes that are included in the data you provide; whether the numbers of incidents of violent crimes reflect the numbers of reports, arrests, prosecutions, or convictions for those crimes, and whether the numbers reflect numbers of persons or numbers of events; and whether the numbers exclude arrests made for nonviolent crimes allegedly committed in connection with a report of violent crime.*

AG Response: The only data we possess that are responsive to paragraph (6) include tallies of firearm permit application denials, and broadly and narrowly categorized reasons for those denials, for the 2000 through 2017 period, for the State of Hawaii as a whole. These data are published in our *Firearm Registrations in Hawaii* reports; a copy of the report for 2017 (see pages 1-3 and 7-8) is included as part of our response, and all prior editions are available from our web

site at <<http://ag.hawaii.gov/cpja/rs>>. The denial data that we receive from the police are not identifiable to individual persons. In addition, these data are recategorized and edited manually within the *MS Word* versions of our annual reports, and are reported only at the statewide level, thus it would be impracticable to provide county-level breakdowns. Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) violent crimes data that include weapons breakdowns, and which are included in the *MS Excel* workbook and were utilized for our response to paragraph (5) of the concurrent resolution, are compiled on the basis of offenses reported to the police, and a hierarchy rule is used whereby only the most serious offense is reported in incidents that involve multiple offenses. For our purposes herein, and per federal UCR definitions and rules, “violent crimes” include murders, aggravated assaults, and robberies (weapons data are not collected for the remaining UCR violent crime type, forcible rape). These offenses as defined as follows:

**Murder:** The willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another.

**Aggravated Assault:** An unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury; attempted murder. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. It is not necessary that injury result from an aggravated assault when a gun, knife, or other weapon is used which could and probably would result in serious personal injury if the crime were successfully completed. Attacks by personal weapons, such as hands, fists, feet, etc., which result in serious or aggravated injury.

**Robbery:** The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim(s) in fear. While robbery has the attributes of a property crime, it is grouped with violent crimes due to the additional attribute of force or the threat of force.

(7) **Aggregate data on the number of registered firearm owners in the State and the total number of legally permitted firearms;**

LRB Adds: *With respect to page 3, paragraph (7), please specify the number of registered firearm owners in the State and in each county and the number of legally permitted firearms in the State and in each county.*

AG Response: As noted on page 2 of *Firearm Registration in Hawaii, 2017*, “Independent estimates made during the late-1990s by the Department of the Attorney General and the City and County of Honolulu Police Department conservatively placed the number of privately owned firearms in Hawaii at ‘at least one million.’ Adding to that rough tally during the 2000 through 2017

period, a total of 561,257 firearms were registered (including some more than once, by different owners) and 276,977 were imported, but there is no way to track the number of firearms that permanently leave the state.” The police departments’ firearm registration records date back to at least the 1920s, and it would be a monumental task of limited practical value to determine which persons and firearms still exist in Hawaii. We are providing within the *MS Excel* workbook a variety of State- and county-level data and charts relating to trends in firearm registration and permitting activity throughout the period in which these data have been tracked by our Department. Also included is a series of charts that directly compare, for the State and for each county, firearm registration and permit trends against trends in violent crimes committed with firearms. Finally, we offer these overarching statistics, as excerpted from page 4 of *Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2017*: “From 2000 through 2017, the number of statewide permit applications annually processed increased by 153.4%, the number of firearms annually registered leaped 198.4%, and the number of firearms annually imported rose 192.5%.” Please see pages 5-6 of that report for statistics pertaining to each county.

We hope that this response is informative and useful. Please let me know if you have any questions or require additional information or assistance. I can be reached by telephone at 586-1420 or via e-mail to [paul.a.perrone@hawaii.gov](mailto:paul.a.perrone@hawaii.gov).

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Perrone' with a stylized flourish above it.

Paul Perrone  
Chief of Research & Statistics

**Electronic Files:**

- (1) Firearm-Related Violent Crimes and Registration Activity, State of Hawaii and Counties, 1994-2017.xls
- (2) Firearm-Related Violent Crimes and Registration Activity, State of Hawaii and Counties, 1994-2017.pdf
- (3) Firearm Registrations in Hawaii 2017.pdf