



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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News Release No. 2003-01 January 8, 2003

LAW ENFORCEMENT COALITION LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE, 2003

Attorney General Mark J. Bennett announced today that:

The Hawaii Law Enforcement Coalition legislative package for the 2003 legislative session is composed of four important bills that have the complete support of Governor Linda Lingle. The Law Enforcement Coalition is composed of the Attorney General, Hawaii's four prosecuting attorneys, and Hawaii's four chiefs of police.

The first bill would create the procedures necessary to implement last year's constitutional amendment allowing criminal defendants to be charged on the basis of sworn affidavits ("information charging"). The second bill would update Hawaii's electronic surveillance laws to the standard existing in most other states. The third bill would support Hawaii's law enforcement officers by creating a felony level offense for those who knowingly or intentionally assault law enforcement officers. The fourth bill would modify Hawaii's manslaughter law to make extreme mental or emotional distress an affirmative defense.

Attorney General Bennett noted that "support of Hawaii's law enforcement community is a very high priority of the Department of the Attorney General. These four bills have the support of every prosecutor in Hawaii, every chief of police in Hawaii, and they certainly have my support and the support of the governor. All of us in the Law Enforcement Coalition are excited at the prospect of being able to make significant improvements to Hawaii's criminal laws."

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