

# COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS: VEHICLE PURSUIT STANDARDS ACROSS STATES

## In Support of Hawaii LESB’s Opposition to HB277

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### I. Shared Guiding Philosophies: Public Safety Through Balanced Discretion

Across Indiana, **Kentucky, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois**, and national bodies like **IACP and PERF**, the dominant philosophy is that pursuit decisions must reflect **risk-to-benefit balancing, officer discretion, and situational evaluation**—not rigid, categorical thresholds.

“When the risks to human life and/or property begin to outweigh the benefits of capture, officers should refrain or disengage from pursuits.”

— Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, Pursuit.Guidelines (Training Policy, 2024)

“The department recognizes its responsibility to apprehend criminals and lawbreakers, but it also recognizes a responsibility to operate police vehicles with due regard for persons.”

— Kentucky Model Pursuit Policy (Agency Policy, 2024)

“The most important factors to the successful conclusion of a pursuit are proper self-discipline and sound professional judgment.”

— Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office, Vehicle.Pursuit.Policy (Agency Policy, 2025)

“The decision to initiate or continue a pursuit must be based on a careful assessment of the risks to public safety.”

— International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), Vehicular.Pursuits.Model.Policy (National Best Practice, 2019)

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## II. Discretion and Continuous Evaluation Are the Norm

In every reviewed jurisdiction, pursuit is **not automatic**, even when the subject has committed a felony. Policies demand **constant reassessment** of public risk, traffic, environment, and alternative apprehension options.

“Officers shall continually evaluate the situation and should terminate the pursuit when the totality of the risks to public safety clearly outweighs the need for immediate apprehension.”

— Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board, Resolution R2022-13 (Training Directive, 2022)

“The supervisor shall continuously review incoming information to determine whether the pursuit should be continued or terminated.”

— Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, Pursuit.Guidelines (Training Policy, 2024)

“Supervisors and officers must weigh the need for immediate capture against the risks to the community, other drivers, and police personnel.”

— Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), Managing.the.Risks.of.Vehicle.Pursuits (COPS Office Publication, 2023)

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### III. Training and Certification Are Policy Foundations

All referenced jurisdictions and national guidance emphasize that pursuit policy is most effective when paired with **training, certification, and local accountability**—not simply legislation.

“Officers shall receive four hours of emergency vehicle operations training every two years.”  
— Kentucky Model Pursuit Policy (Agency Policy, 2024)

“Pursuit tactics should only be employed by officers trained and certified in their application.”  
— Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board (Training Policy, 2024)

“Departments must ensure all personnel involved in vehicle operations are trained in pursuit policy and decision-making.”  
— IACP, Model.Vehicular.Pursuits.Policy (National Best Practice, 2019)

“Policy alone is insufficient. Supervisors must be trained to terminate unsafe pursuits and officers must be drilled in alternatives.”  
— PERF, COPS.Pursuit.Guidelines (National Guidance, 2023)

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#### IV. Statewide Oversight Models Respect Local Implementation

In every state reviewed, uniformity is achieved through **state standards boards**, POST commissions, or training authorities—not direct statutory prescriptions. This allows **data-driven flexibility** for geography, jurisdiction, and community input.

“Each agency shall adopt and file written pursuit policies... based on the seriousness of the offense and risk to the public.”

— KRS § 61.298 (Kentucky State Statute)

“This policy shall serve as the minimum standard for all police pursuits in Connecticut involving POSTC certified officers.”

— Connecticut POSTC Pursuit Policy (Statewide Policy, 2021)

“Model policies are not absolutely binding... Agencies must consider their environment, resources, and best judgment.”

— Delaware Association of Chiefs of Police, Model.Pursuit.Policy (Agency Policy, 2022)

**HB277** bypasses local risk management vetted county policy in Hawai'i; it would override LESB's current mandate to coordinate statewide standards across counties through data analysis and stakeholder consultation— just as boards in Connecticut, Kentucky, and Indiana already do;

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## **Conclusion: LESB’s Approach Aligns with National Best Practice**

The Hawai‘i Law Enforcement Standards Board is following the national standard for responsible pursuit policy:

- Engage in **data collection** and statewide policy analysis
- Develop **uniform standards with local adaptability**
- Emphasize **training and supervisor responsibility**
- Center policy on **risk-balanced discretion**, not blanket restrictions

As IACP states, pursuit policies must “balance the need to apprehend against the risk posed to public safety.” PERF generally concurs, advising that laws should support agency level policy, not dictate it in ways that may unintentionally endanger officers or the public.