



The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary
Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

By
Judge Barbara P. Richardson
Deputy Chief Judge
District Court, First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1659 Relating to Search Warrants.

Purpose: Allows courts to authorize a person or entity, other than an officer of justice, to carry out a search warrant. Allows courts to authorize an officer to obtain technical assistance if the search warrant granted pertains to an electronic device or storage media.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary takes no position on House Bill 1659 and respectfully offers the following comments.

It is understandable that law enforcement may need technical expertise and assistance in executing a search warrant, particularly where the search relates to “electronic devices or storage media.” The proposed amendment in HB 1659 can be read to mean that “a person or entity authorized by the court to assist the officer” could be directed to execute a search warrant without the presence of a law enforcement officer. This may not be what is intended.

The bill would require a judge to decide if the selected “person or entity” is capable of performing the search or assisting a law enforcement officer in the execution of a search warrant. The courts do not have the regulatory power or the knowledge, staff and resources to determine what persons or entities are capable of executing a search warrant or assisting, and therefore “authorized” to assist, a law enforcement officer in executing a search warrant.



House Bill No. 1659, Relating to Search Warrants
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Tuesday, February 9, 2016 2:00 PM
Page 2

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 1659.