

POLITICS

Pushing For More Police Oversight

Two police reform measures that aim to improve oversight and accountability received key approval Tuesday from the House Finance Committee.

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Police shootings and in-custody deaths could receive more scrutiny in Hawaii if a

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[Senate Bill 2196](#) passed unanimously and without much discussion. The bill sets the stage for the state to create an independent review board to oversee the criminal investigations into [officer-caused deaths and injuries](#).

The board — which would be part of the [Hawaii Attorney General's Office](#) — would be able to review cases and make recommendations to county prosecutors. Those prosecutors, however, would not have to follow the board's recommendation, according to the current proposal.

Cory Lum/Civil Beat



Use of force investigations could get an added layer of oversight if Hawaii lawmakers continue their push for more police accountability.

Officials with good government groups, including [Common Cause Hawaii](#) and the Civil Beat Law Center for the Public Interest, have [expressed concern](#) about SB 2196, particularly as it relates to public records access.

They worry that the confidentiality clauses in the bill would bar the public from seeing criminal investigative reports for years, which would result in less transparency than exists today.

Another measure passed unanimously by the Finance Committee Tuesday — [Senate Bill 2755](#) — would create a statewide standards and training board for police officers.

Hawaii is the [only state](#) without such as board that sets the minimum training requirements for law enforcement officers.

Both bills now must head to House floor for a vote.

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