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August 22, 2025

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.  
Mayor, County of Maui  
200 S. High Street  
Wailuku, HI 96793

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL**

  
Mayor  
8-28-25  
Date

For Transmittal To:

Yuki Lei Sugimura  
Chair of the Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, HI 96793

**SUBJECT: BILL 92 (2025), AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOR A JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCE (BFED-4)**

Dear Chair Sugimura,

In response to the Council's Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee questions regarding Bill 92;

1. How is "terrorism" defined for the purposes of the Joint Terrorism Task Force?

Answer: **International terrorism:** Violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups who are inspired by, or associated with, designated foreign terrorist organizations or nations (state-sponsored).

**Domestic terrorism:** Violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups to further ideological goals stemming from domestic influences, such as those of a political, religious, social, racial, or environmental nature.

- a. Does the scope extend to stochastic terrorism, online radicalization, or lone actor violence? If no, why not?

Answer: All three examples extend to the scope of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force initiatives.

- b. Would the desecration of cultural or historical sites, or political protest, be considered terrorism under this agreement? Please explain.

Answer: Depending on the motive. If the motive for the group or individual committing the desecration was tied to political cause, religious, hate crime, environmental protest, etc., then yes, it could be considered domestic terrorism.

- c. What types of resources, including funding or training, are available for education and prevention in these areas?

Answer: We send specialized officers to terrorism training, specifically the International Conference on Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism (ICTOCT) annual conference. This is a multi-day conference which covers all instances of terrorism across the United States and Foreign Countries. There are also smaller conferences which focus on Asian Organized Crime, Domestic Terrorism, Human Trafficking by Terrorist groups, etc., in which we also send personnel to update their training.

Also, case studies, trends and debriefs by the Honolulu FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force monthly meetings provide training and networking amongst Federal, State and County Law Enforcement partners.

2. What types of resources, including funding or training, are provided for prevention and education in these areas?

Answer: See above.

3. What officer liability does the agreement create, and how are County interests protected? Please explain.

Answer: Liability exists if we are not part of this task force. Quoting from the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force page;

"The FBI is committed to remaining agile in its approach to the terrorism threat, which has continued to evolve since the September 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Years after these attacks, the threat landscape has expanded considerably, and international terrorism remains a serious threat. The threat of domestic terrorism also remains persistent overall, with actors crossing the line from exercising First Amendment-protected rights to committing crimes in furtherance of violent agendas.

Many factors have contributed to the evolution of the terrorism threat on both the international and domestic fronts.

**Lone offenders:** Terrorist threats have evolved from large-group conspiracies toward lone-offender attacks. These individuals often radicalize online and mobilize to violence quickly. Without a clear group affiliation or guidance, lone offenders are challenging to identify, investigate, and disrupt. The FBI relies on partnerships and tips from the public to identify and thwart these attacks.

**The internet and social media:** International and domestic violent extremists have developed an extensive presence on the Internet through messaging platforms and online images, videos,

and publications. These facilitate the groups' ability to radicalize and recruit individuals who are receptive to extremist messaging.

Social media has also allowed both international and domestic terrorists to gain unprecedented, virtual access to people living in the United States in an effort to enable homeland attacks. The Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS), in particular, encourages sympathizers to carry out simple attacks wherever they are located—or to travel to ISIS-held territory in Iraq and Syria and join its ranks as foreign fighters. This message has resonated with supporters in the United States and abroad."

The County of Maui interests are protected by the Maui Police Department's ability to have the intelligence and support from the FBI and JTTF partners which enable us to be prepared or prevent terrorist attacks.

4. How would the Council be updated on the Department's role and activities under the Joint Terrorism Task Force?

Answer: The Council would not be updated. The JTTF discuss confidential and covert information with their counterparts within the United States and namely, the State of Hawaii. In the event of a verified terrorist threat, the Mayor's office would be notified and actions would be taken to protect the citizen of Maui County.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Deputy Chief Wade Maeda at (808) 244-6305 or email at [wade.maeda@mpd.net](mailto:wade.maeda@mpd.net).

Sincerely,



JOHN PELLETIER  
Chief of Police

## BFED Committee

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**From:** Michelle L. Santos <Michelle.Santos@co.maui.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 28, 2025 1:36 PM  
**To:** BFED Committee  
**Cc:** Cynthia E. Sasada; Erin A. Wade; Josiah K. Nishita; Kelii P. Nahooikaika; Angela Andrade (angela.andrade@mpd.net); Christina Bonacorsi - County of Maui (christina.bonacorsi@mpd.net); Jenny Y. Nakama (jenny.nakama@mpd.net); John Pelletier - County of Maui (john.pelletier@mpd.net); Wade Maeda (wade.maeda@mpd.net)  
**Subject:** MT#11198 Bill 92  
**Attachments:** MT#11198-BFED Committee.pdf