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THE PULSE OF PARADISE

50¢ ON OAHU

Booze sting snares 116 stores

- Sales to minors remain 'persistent and widespread,' says the state health director
- Liquor licenses may be revoked or suspended, and \$2,000 fines may be issued

By HELEN ALTONN
Star-Bulletin

A state and city sting operation this year uncovered 116 Oahu businesses illegally selling alcohol

to underage youths, officials said today.

The businesses were cited by Liquor Commission investigators, and the cases are pending before the commission. Liquor licenses for the businesses may be revoked

or suspended, and they could be fined as much as \$2,000.

Store clerks were also cited by Honolulu police officers, and those cases were referred to the Honolulu Prosecutor's Office and the District Court.

Sale of alcohol by a store clerk to anyone under age 21 is a misdemeanor subject to fines of as much as \$2,000 or up to one year in prison, or both.

The state Department of Health began planning liquor stings after a 1996 survey of students showed that 24 percent of sixth-graders, 38 percent of eighth-graders, 46 percent of 10th-graders and 59 percent of 12th-graders could easily

buy alcohol.

Legislation was adopted last year to provide immunity to 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds to participate in the sting activities.

The Health Department's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division worked on an education and enforcement program with the Prevention and Control Program of

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