

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1485

Honolulu, Hawaii

March 23, 2007

RE: S.B. No. 796
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2007
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 796, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CIVIL DEFENSE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to ensure that the State is prepared for natural disasters and other catastrophic occurrences.

Specifically, this measure:

- (1) Authorizes general obligation bonds to fund the installation of additional sirens to the state civil defense warning system;
- (2) Permits the Governor to order the release of up to ten per cent of interest earned on funds in the emergency and budget reserve fund to provide grants of emergency assistance up to an unspecified dollar amount for an unspecified percentage of uninsured damages after a natural disaster;
- (3) Appropriates an unspecified amount of funds for:
 - (A) Emergency supply caches;
 - (B) The state civil defense major disaster fund;



- (C) Non-declared disaster activation and response;
- (D) The state civil defense emergency supply program;
and
- (E) The Ethnic Education Foundation of Hawaii to assist them in disseminating information in the event of a disaster.

Testimony in support of the measure was received from the Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness, Research, and Training, the Congress of Visayan Organizations, the Ethnic Education Foundation of Hawaii, the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc., the Oahu Filipino Community Council, the Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii, the United Filipino Council of Hawaii, and one individual. The Department of Budget and Finance and the Department of Defense submitted comments.

Your Committee finds that the State, the counties, and private agencies have greatly improved their ability to respond to natural disasters and other catastrophes. However, more needs to be done to upgrade equipment and decrease coverage gaps in existing warning systems. Similarly, the development of new residential housing within tsunami inundation zones needs to incorporate warning systems that can be linked to civil defense systems.

Your Committee also finds that it is important to ensure that victims of natural disasters receive prompt emergency relief after a natural disaster. It is also imperative that statewide dissemination of information is provided in a format that is accessible and understandable by everyone, including those who do not speak or read English and those with special communications needs.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

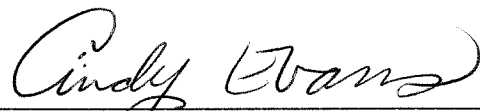
- (1) Deleting the authorization for the Director of Finance to issue general obligation bonds to finance the installation of additional sirens for the state civil defense warning system;



- (2) Requiring the counties to condition the approval of permits for the construction of new residential housing in tsunami inundation zones on the installation of tsunami warning sirens;
- (3) Requiring the disability communications access board to identify and report to the Legislature on internationally recognized symbols to be used in the event of a disaster or emergency to communicate notice through visual digital communications to persons that do not understand verbal or written communications; and
- (4) Making technical nonsubstantive changes for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 796, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 796, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Public Safety &
Military Affairs,



CINDY EVANS, Chair



