



COALITION FOR A
TOBACCO-FREE HAWAII

Email to: Committee on Health, HLTtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

**RE: House Committee on Health, hearing schedule, January 23, 2008, 8:00 A.M., Room 329.
Representative Josh Green, M.D., Chair & Representative John Mizuno, Vice Chair**

RE: Testimony in strong support of HB 2059, Relating to Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarettes.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Mizuno, and members of the Committee on Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 2059, which prohibits the sale of cigarettes in Hawaii that are not of reduced ignition propensity or “fire-safe” beginning July 1, 2009. My name is George Massengale, I am the Policy Director, for the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawaii, a statewide association of over 140 member organizations, businesses and more than 2,000 individuals committed to working together to reduce the negative impact of tobacco on the health of Hawaii’s children, adults, and visitors.

As this committee knows, the Coalition’s primary mission is reducing the harmful impact of tobacco usage among the residents of our state. Cigarette fires are the number one leading cause of fire deaths and property damage in the United States. Reduced ignition propensity cigarettes have been proven to lower the risk of fire.

We particularly support Section 4, the “Certification and Marking” provision that mandates State approval to manufacture or sell cigarettes in Hawaii. Additionally, we believe that the penalties outlined in Section 6, will not only ensure that only reduced ignition propensity cigarettes are sold in Hawaii, but will also impact the sale of black market cigarettes, as well as sales by unlicensed vendors.

In closing, we would note that 22 other States covering 52% of the U.S. population, and 14 nations around the world have passed “fire safe cigarette” legislation.

Sincerely yours,
George S. Massengale, JD
Policy Director