



February 6, 2008

Via: Email

Chairwoman Cindy Evans
House Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee

Chairwoman Evans and members of the House Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee, I am submitting this testimony regarding HB 2160 on behalf of my broadcast group (New West Broadcasting Corp.) which operates 5 Big Island Radio stations including 3 in Hilo and 2 in Kona.

I applaud your efforts to improve emergency communication on the Big Island and statewide, however I have concerns regarding HB 2160. HB 2160 calls for an emergency advisory radio station for the Big Island. However the budget requested indicates a low-power community-based emergency advisory radio station similar to Alert AM. I am not opposed to a low-power community station which I believe is what you are looking to build based on the dollars requested; however a single AM station as proposed, even at high power would not cover the entire Big Island. A low-power station would only cover a 3-5 mile radius from the transmitting point and would have limitations.

Almost all population centers on the Big Island are reached by numerous commercial and non-commercial radio stations. The Big Island is currently serviced by 20 commercial stations and a handful of non-commercial stations that reach in excess of 80% of the entire Big Island market each week.

These stations currently deliver the same emergency messages that HB 2160 proposes to broadcast on the emergency advisory station at higher power, covering larger areas. All of these stations are required by Federal Law to have Emergency Alert System (EAS) receivers online. These receivers receive and transmit emergency information from Federal, State, and local authorities twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week. In addition to the EAS system, most commercial stations will provide more information than is provided by the various government agencies throughout various emergency situations. More details on broadcast operation during emergency situations can be found in the State of Hawaii EAS Plan date June 12, 2003. The plan details the state and local procedures for disseminating emergency information.

A low-power emergency advisory station would receive its alert information through the same process providing a duplicate service to what is currently available.

New West Broadcasting Corp.
1145 Kilauea Avenue * Hilo, Hawaii 96720 * (808)935-5461 Fax: (808)935-7761

In summary, I am opposed to HB 2160 for numerous reasons. The bill does not indicate that it is for a low-power station; however it is budgeted as one. A low-power AM station provides coverage to an estimated 3-5 mile radius and would not be a viable solution for the entire Big Island . A network of 20 commercial stations in addition to several non-commercial stations currently cover the Big Island with high-power signals and broadcast emergency alert messages in addition to their regular programming. HB 2160 fails to provide new, wide-spread emergency communication for the Big Island.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Leonard", written in a cursive style.

Christopher S. Leonard
General Manager

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2160
A BILL RELATING TO EMERGENCIES

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT G. F. LEE
DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENSE

February 7, 2008

Chair Evans and Committee Members:

I am Major General Bob Lee, Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. We support the intent of HB 2160 so long as it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request.

The relatively short range (3-5 mile radius) transmitting capability of an emergency advisory radio station supports the approach of establishing a public/private partnership where local community associations can oversee the day-to-day programming while government sponsors and provides needed hardware and software for a functional system. The larger aspects of emergency alerting, however; are more effectively addressed through the existing FCC sanctioned local primary stations in each county.

The appropriation proposed by HB 2160 is based on installation cost estimates for the 48 contiguous states. Based on local procurement differentials, \$35,000 to \$50,000 may be a more realistic delivery cost for a pilot emergency advisory radio station capability.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Are there any questions?

har1-En

From: John Tarson [wvagm1@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2008 1:32 PM
To: PSMtestimony
Subject: HB2160, Emergency Advisory Radio Station; Pilot Program

My name is John Tarson.

I am the General Manager of the Waikoloa Village Association, which is a homeowners association in Waikoloa Village on the Island of Hawaii. This community has probably 7500 residents. It is sometimes dubbed "the largest cul-de-sac in America" due to only having one road in and out of the community.

We are all in support of HB2160, Emergency Advisory Radio Station; Pilot Program, authored by Rep. Cindy Evans.

In August of 2005 our community was in the path of a 25,000 acre wild fire and only suffered smoke and ash damage due to the valiant efforts of fire fighters, military personnel and many volunteers and private contractors who defended the village from the fire. Last year (2007), there were over two dozen fires in areas adjacent to or in the vicinity of Waikoloa Village. It is suspected that many of them were arson. In October of 2006, Waikoloa Village suffered along with much of the rest of the Island of Hawaii from the major earthquake that occurred. We are a community at risk from many potential perils. We are isolated. We need a means of communication that our residents can depend upon for timely and accurate information in times of emergencies. The standard methods of communication failed miserably in 2005, were exposed again for their weaknesses during the earthquake in October 2006 and left residents guessing during the many fires of 2007.

Please lend your support to this bill.

2/6/2008

Harry Kim
Mayor



Dixie Kaetsu
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i

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February 6, 2008

The Honorable Cindy Evans
Chair, Committee on Public Safety
and Military Affairs
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Evans and Committee Members:

Re: HB 2160

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on HB 2160, which will establish an emergency advisory radio station pilot project on the Island of Hawai'i.

I understand that numerous mainland communities operate emergency radio stations to advise residents of emergency situations. Here in Hawai'i, as Civil Defense Administrator and then, Mayor, we have been able to fulfill the same purpose through our partnership with the commercial radio stations on our island. They have a working relationship with all radio stations, and these stations provide coverage of the various threats and concerns that are reflected in the bill that is before you.

I am concerned that a new emergency advisory radio station would add clutter to the radio dial and might create confusion as there would be an additional station which people would have to get used to, depending on where on the island they are at any given moment.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on HB 2160.

Aloha,

Harry Kim
MAYOR

har1-En

From: rexandderry@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2008 2:36 PM
To: PSMtestimony
Subject: Support of HB2160

I support bill HB2160.
Derry Morris
Waikoloa, Hi

More new features than ever. Check out the new [AOL Mail!](#)

har1-En

From: Scott Carter [emeraldbuilders@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2008 3:08 PM

To: PSMtestimony

Subject: Establishing an emergency advisory radio station pilot project on the island of Hawaii

We support it.

Emerald Builders LLC

Scott Carter

Matty Vradenburg

Donald Keith

Doug Johnson

Jamielynn Leialoha

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har1-En

From: Julia Alos [julia@atchawaii.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2008 4:33 PM
To: PSMtestimony
Subject: Written Testimony on HB2160 "Emergency Advisory Radio Station; Pilot Program"
Importance: High

Aloha Public Safety & Military Affairs Committee:

I wish to confirm my support of the above referenced bill – YES I SUPPORT IT and IT IS VERY NECESSARY in our communities. Us Waikoloans have become victims of wild fires and once evacuation and my gravest concerns were expressed to Mr. Pete Hoffman shortly after our BIG FIRE of 8/06 whereby we were evacuated and there is NO SOUND SYSTEM for us 3000 AND SOON TO DOUBLE HOMEOWNERS here to be alerted of a wildfire in the night time. Winds rage here and fires move quickly and I'd hate to think that our only measure to inform sleeping Villagers would be door-to-door knocking or the police "bull-horning" messages and competing against the fierce winds that are fueling our fires and often may be louder than police just announcing something in the neighborhood!

GIVE US the tools we need to feel safe and avoid overloading phones to find out what is going on and what to do – give us SIREN SYSTEM at our Fire Department that can be heard the radius of the Village AND a radio emergency channel to listen to when we need to!

Mahalo for your acceptance of my electronic testimony. I look forward to your reply to a grievous situation that needs to be resolved, I don't think you'd want to be responsible for the death of so many victims that are already living in perhaps one of the LARGEST "CUL-DE-SAC's" IN THE NATION WITH ONE WAY IN AND ONLY ONE WAY OUT – get emergency roads in order too!

Sincerely yours,

Julia Alos

808-883-2666
A VERY CONCERNED AND WORRIED Waikoloa Village Resident

2/6/2008

har1-En

From: Norm Cohler [normndee2@juno.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2008 4:49 PM
To: PSMtestimony
Cc: kh6cq@arrl.net; edsculptor@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Emergency Advisory Radio Station; Pilot Program

Hi,

I strongly support the proposed bill, HB2160, to provide an emergency broadcast radio pilot project for Hawai`i County. So do many other ham radio operators from North Hawai`i. The Director of Civil Defense should be favorable as well.

Aloha, Norm Cohler, NH7UA