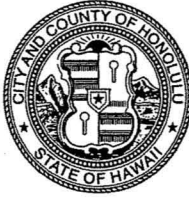


OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 300 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 523-4141 • FAX: (808) 527-5552 • INTERNET: www.honolulu.gov

MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu

Before the
House Committee on Judiciary

H.B. No. 2297, Relating to Counties

This is not the time to consider creating a new municipality on Oahu. Environmental issues such as solid waste and wastewater collection and outfall and mass transit solutions are island-wide in significance and cannot be separated by the wishes of a panel, no matter how expert.

If it is difficult for the city, as it currently exists with significant commercial and industrial sewer fee and real property tax revenues, to fund and complete mandated projects, it would be nearly impossible for a new entity to do so. Many significant city facilities such as H-Power and Waimanalo Gulch landfill are singular and would be reduced to serving only one portion of the island, while the other portion would struggle to build comparable facilities.

As proposed in the legislation, the division is arbitrary and confusing. For example, it is doubtful that Schofield Barracks and Haleiwa will ever want to be part of a "metropolis." It is difficult to think the residents of the Windward Oahu will find sufficient common ground with those on the Leeward Coast in terms of solving landfill, homelessness and traffic problems to name but a few.

The costs, for example, of creating a new police force, a new fire department or a new refuse collection agency will be astronomical, if not prohibitive. Determining with the unions how to "divide" the existing city workforce would be a nightmare. More practically, is it ever going to be possible to reconfigure existing, multi-million dollar general obligation and revenue bond issuances to the satisfaction of investors or even legal counsel?

Municipalities do not subdivide because they grow larger and small does not necessarily mean an improvement in operations. There is a reason the political entity on Oahu is called the City and County of Honolulu. This name recognizes that on this island are both densely populated urban areas, as well as developing suburban neighborhoods and still to great degree pristine agricultural and rural spaces.