



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
**State Fire Council**  
830 Punchbowl Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 25, 2008

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Oshiro:

Subject: H.B. 2376 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Kenneth G. Silva, Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support H.B. 2376, which proposes to reduce the danger of wildfires throughout the state by requiring the SFC to develop a comprehensive statewide brushfire mitigation plan. Large wildland fires continue to plague the state, endanger lives and property, tax fire protection resources for communities, and destroy the environment and irreplaceable plant and wildlife. The plan will seek to identify private and public methods of brushfire reduction, develop public education and prevention programs, and explore additional resources to prevent and mitigate the effects of brushfires.

In order to accomplish these objectives, an appropriation for funds to staff the SFC is included. The SFC staff currently consists of only one part-time person. The SFC was created in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's Office, which was a fully-funded state agency. Under the present organization, the SFC has had difficulty in amending the state fire code, pursuing and administering federal grants, and coordinating statewide training, data collection, and other council duties because such work must be performed by county fire department personnel, thus depriving the county fire departments of the services of its members.

This bill would greatly increase the SFC's productivity and benefit communities and fire departments statewide.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 2376.

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair  
Page 2  
February 25, 2008

Should you have any questions, please call HFD Legislative Liaison Lloyd Rogers at 723-7171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth G. Silva". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

KENNETH G. SILVA  
Fire Chief

KGS/LR:cn

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

LAURA H. THIELEN  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI  
FIRST DEPUTY

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ENGINEERING  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIRPERSON**  
**OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**on House Bill 2376 - RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE COUNCIL**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON**  
**FINANCE**

February 26, 2008

House Bill 2376 will require the State Fire Council to develop a statewide brushfire mitigation plan and appropriate funds. While the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure, the Department is nonetheless concerned with the fiscal impact this bill will have with the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

The Department has the training and experience to manage wildland fire prevention, presuppression and suppression activities throughout the State for lands under the Department's authority. The Department has mutual aid agreements with each county for wildland fire suppression and is actively involved with each county's wildland fire responses and coordination in the State. The Department is eager to work with the counties to develop a comprehensive statewide wildland fire mitigation plan that will benefit all citizens in the leeward areas of the islands.



COUNTY OF KAUAI  
**Fire Department**  
Mo'ikeha Building  
4444 Rice Street, Suite 295  
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

February 25, 2008

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Oshiro:

**Subject: H.B. 2376 Relating to the State Fire Council**

I am Robert F. Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The KFD and the SFC supports H.B. 2376, which proposes to reduce the danger of wildfires throughout the State by requiring the SFC to develop a comprehensive statewide brushfire mitigation plan. Large wildland fires continue to plague the State, endangering lives and property, taxing fire protection resources for all communities and destroying the environment and irreplaceable plant and wildlife. The plan will seek to identify private and public methods of brushfire reduction, develop public education and prevention programs, and explore additional resources to prevent brushfires and mitigate the effects of brushfires when they occur. An appropriation for funds to staff the SFC is included to accomplish these objectives. The SFC staff currently consists of only one part-time person.

The SFC was created in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's Office, which was a fully-funded state agency. Under the present organization, the SFC has had difficulty in amending the state fire code, pursuing and administering federal grants, and coordinating statewide training, data collection, and other council duties because such work must be performed by county fire department personnel, thus depriving the county fire departments of the services of its members.

This bill would greatly increase the productivity of the SFC and benefit fire departments and the entire statewide communities. The SFC and the KFD urges your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 2376.

Please call me at (808) 241-6500 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Westerman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Westerman  
Fire Chief, County of Kauai

RFW/eld



# HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO  
2305 S. BERETANIA ST., RM. 202, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826-1493  
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The Twenty Fourth Legislature  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance

Testimony by  
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

**H.B. No. 2376      Relating to the State Fire Council**

My name is Robert H. Lee and I am the President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 1,800 professional and 800 retired fire fighters throughout the State, the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association supports H.B. No. 2376, which requires the State Fire Council to develop a statewide brushfire mitigation plan and appropriates funds.

The HFFA supports H.B. No. 2376, because of the impact on fire fighters throughout the State. In 2007 alone, thousands of acres were decimated by brushfires and threatened homes and lives, including those of HFFA members on the front line. The development and implementation of a statewide brushfire mitigation plan will help prevent fires, save lives, and property.

This bill will help protect the community and fire fighters. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and we ask for your support of H.B. No. 2376.