

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2376, HD1
A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE COUNCIL

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

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

March 14, 2008

Chair Inouye and Committee Members:

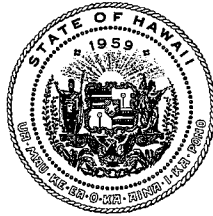
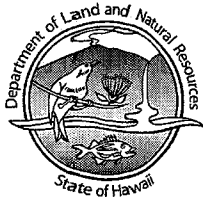
I am Major General Bob Lee, Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. I am providing written testimony in support of House Bill 2376, HD1.

This proposed bill appropriates funds and authorizes positions for the state fire council to develop a statewide brushfire mitigation plan. During the past several years the Department of Defense has supported numerous requests from the counties and State Department of Land and Natural Resources, including the active military for fire fighting assistance. This bill sets up a framework to mitigate the threat of brushfire in high fire hazard areas.

We support the intent of House Bill 2376, HD1 so long as it does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request.

Madam Chair, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

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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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

on House Bill 2376, House Draft 1 - RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE COUNCIL

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

March 14, 2008

House Bill 2376, House Draft 1 requires the State Fire Council to develop a statewide brushfire mitigation plan and appropriates an unspecified amount of 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 the county's on 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, particularly those in the leeward drier areas of the islands.



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

March 11, 2008

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Committee on Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 201
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Inouye:

Subject: H.B. 2376, H.D. 1 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, H.D. 1, 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 necessary. Four full-time positions, including an administrator and three administrative assistants, would cost approximately \$400,000. The SFC staff currently consists of only one part-time person funded by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. 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 Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
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March 11, 2008

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 2376,
H.D. 1.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kenneth G. Silva".

KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

KGS/LR:cn

CHARMAINE TAVARES
MAYOR



NEAL A. BAL
Interim Chief

COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

200 DAIRY ROAD
KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732
(808) 270-7561
FAX (808) 270-7919

March 11, 2008

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Committee on Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 201
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Inouye:

Subject: H.B. 2376 H.D. 1 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Neal A. Bal, Fire Chief of the County of Maui, Department of Fire & Public Safety and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). Our Department and the SFC support H.B. 2376, H.D. 1, 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 needed. Four full-time positions, including an administrator and three administrative assistants, would cost approximately \$400,000. The SFC staff currently consists of only one part-time person funded by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. 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.

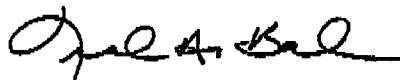
This bill would greatly increase the SFC's productivity and benefit communities and fire departments statewide.

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
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March 11, 2008

The SFC and the Department of Fire & Public Safety urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 2376, H.D. 1.

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

Sincerely,



NEAL A. BAL
Fire Chief

NAB:rgkm



COUNTY OF KAUAI
Fire Department
Mo'ikeha Building
4444 Rice Street, Suite 295
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

March 11, 2008

The Honorable Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Committee on Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 201
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Inouye:

Subject: H.B. 2376 H.D. 1 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 SFC and the KFD support H.B. 2376, H.D. 1, 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 needed. Four full-time positions, including an administrator and three administrative assistants, would cost approximately \$400,000. The SFC staff currently consists of only one part-time person funded by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. 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.

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye
March 11, 2008
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This bill would greatly increase the SFC's productivity and benefit communities and fire departments statewide.

The SFC and the KFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 2376, H.D. 1.

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 large, sweeping flourish over the name.

Robert Westerman
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/eld