



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

March 10, 2008

LATE

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair
Committee on Health
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 215
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Russell S. Kokubun, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection,
and Affordable Housing
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Ige and Kokubun:

Subject: H.B. 2438, H.D. 2 Relating to Cigarettes

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. 2438, H.D. 2, which would require that only reduced ignition propensity cigarettes be sold in Hawaii beginning July 1, 2009. We believe that this bill is in alignment with legislation passed by 22 other states, which affects 52 percent of the United States (U.S.), and Canada. Fifteen states have pending legislation requiring reduced ignition propensity cigarettes.

The SFC and the HFD recommend the following revisions to accomplish a successful enactment of the bill:

"SECTION 1. § -4 (a) Each cigarette certified under this subsection shall be recertified every three two years."

The recertification time period of two years will coincide with the biennial state budget cycle. With an estimated 2,100 different brand styles listed in Hawaii, \$250 would provide \$525,000 biennially or \$262,500 annually. This will provide a revenue source to

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assist the SFC in implementing, administering, and enforcing this program. Funding will also be necessary for compliance testing should it be deemed appropriate for brands determined or alleged to be noncompliant. The Hawaii State Attorney General estimates the cost to test each cigarette brand to range from \$760-\$2,000.

~~"SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on the first day of the thirteenth month after enactment; provided that section 3 shall take effect upon approval of this Act coincide with the effective date of a new cigarette tax rate and stamp scheduled for September 2010."~~

This revision would allow the SFC sufficient time to implement and administer the reduced ignition propensity cigarette program and would coincide with the scheduled new cigarette tax stamp and rate for the state. It would also allow retailers time to sell the remaining stock of noncompliant cigarettes.

In 2005, there were 82,400 smoking material fires in the U.S. that killed 800 people and injured 1,660 others. Ninety-three percent of the deaths and 78 percent of the injuries were in home fires. Property losses from smoking material fires total millions of dollars each year. In Hawaii, 438 fires were caused by cigarettes and resulted in \$1,461,125 in property damage, ten injuries and no loss of life between 2001 and 2006. H.B. 2438, H.D. 2 will help reduce the number of fire incidents, dollar loss, and injuries statewide.

The SFC and the HFD request your committees' support on the passage of H.B. 2438, H.D. 2.

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

Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

KGS/LR:cn