

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2463  
A BILL RELATING TO DISASTER RELIEF

PRESENTATION TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

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

JANUARY 31, 2008

Chair Evans and Committee Members:

I am Major General Bob Lee, Director of Civil Defense, and State Department of Defense. I support the use of inmates from a minimum security correctional facility to assist in disaster response operations. Hawaii State Civil Defense has coordinated for the use of work line inmates in past disasters to assist in debris removal activities. The Department of Public Safety has been very cooperative in providing work line manpower in support of disaster-related projects.

Although Chapter 128 HRS provides the Governor and Director of Civil Defense the authority to utilize inmates, HB 2463 establishes and formalizes the Inmate Disaster Relief Program and provides for training of the inmate labor pool. I support the training aspect of the program and if this bill becomes law, will work with the Legislature and Dept of Public Safety to acquire the funding for training.

There are two housekeeping edits which are recommended:

- 1) Page 1, Section 1, line 5 refers to the "director of disaster relief". This should be changed to, "the director of civil defense".
- 2) Page 2, Section 2, line 17, change "section 127-" to "section 128-".

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

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR



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**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2463  
RELATING TO DISASTER RELIEF**

by  
Clayton A Frank, Director  
Department of Public Safety

House Committee on public Safety and Military Affairs  
Representative Cindy Evans, Chair

Thursday, January 31, 2008, 8:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Representative Evans and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety supports the intent of HB 2463. The department has been called upon many times by the Hawaii Civil Defense to assist in disaster relief by providing inmate work lines to help clean up after natural disasters.

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) will continue to assist the state and the community in times of natural disaster, with or without a formal agreement. However, if a formal agreement is the desired effect, a memorandum of agreement can be executed between PSD and Hawaii Civil Defense. There is no need for this agreement to become statutory, as any change would require much more time and effort to change a statute than to administratively change a memorandum of agreement.

PSD does request that the activation of the Inmate Disaster Relief Labor Program should only be by authority of the Director of the Hawaii Civil Defense. This will limit the number of "other agencies" authorized to activate the inmate work force. Should "other agencies" require the assistance of the department's inmate work lines, they may make a request to the director of public safety who would then determine if such a request is justified. If justified, the inmate work force may be activated by order of the director.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important initiative.