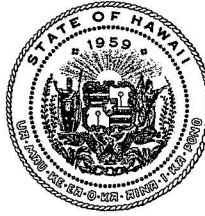


LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
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LAND
STATE PARKS

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

On House Bill 2527 – Relating To Smart Growth

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

FEBRUARY 11, 2008

House Bill 2527 requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to establish a system of greenways and trails; and requires the Office of Planning to coordinate smart growth planning. The Department supports the intent of this measure in regards to the promotion of smart growth, but is opposed to SECTION 2 and the proposed amendments to Chapter 198D, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), which creates a new program directing the Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife - Na Ala Hele Trails and Access Program (NAH) to establish a series of urban greenways and liner parks.

The Department strongly opposes the amendments to Chapter 198D, HRS, in SECTION 2 because it vastly expands the scope and intent of the NAH Program into urban transportation management. Linear parks and greenbelts for pedestrian and bicycle passage are designed and planned as an alternative recreational and transportation corridor in predominantly urbanized areas. Urban greenway planning and development is vastly beyond the scope and intent of the NAH Program. The NAH Program was established to manage multi-use hiking trails, restore public access to hiking trails either located on or bounded by private lands, and document and protect and where feasible, restore managed access to sensitive ancient and historic trails.

The actions required to initiate and manage this new greenway system across the state are beyond the training and expertise of NAH staff and equipment and tools in our program. The NAH Program and ancillary staff collectively manage and physically maintain approximately 309 miles of unpaved multi-recreational trails in rugged mauka watersheds, conservation lands, culturally sensitive ancient Hawaiian and historic trails.

The Department notes that there is no funding provision in this measure, and that NAH special and federal funding sources preclude using these funds towards the planning and subsequent development for urban greenways and liner parks. Management of an urban network of greenways and linear parks is more appropriately a county function similar to the management of bikeways – a comparable feature to greenways. In regards to SECTIONs 3, 4 and 5 addressing smart growth, the Department defers to the Office of Planning on the viability and application of these provisions.



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February 8, 2008

The Honorable Ken Ito, Chair
House Committee on Water, Land,
Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs
State Capitol, Room 312
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: H.B. 2527 Relating to the Smart Growth
Hearing Date: February 11, 2008 @ 9:30 a.m., Room 312

Dear Chair Ito and members of the House Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs:

On behalf of our 10,000 members in Hawaii, the Hawaii Association of REALTORS® (HAR) supports the intent of H.B. 2527 which requires the Office of Planning to coordinate smart growth planning.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HAR served on the Interim Task Force on Smart Growth created pursuant to HR 259, Regular Session of 2007 and was very pleased with the high level of cooperation and discussion that occurred at all of the meetings. HAR strongly supports the ten smart growth principles that include creating a range of housing opportunities and choices, mixed land uses, and transportation choices. Uncoordinated and unfocused planning can be disastrous and smart growth seeks to approach planning as a collaborative effort among all stakeholders to ensure that mixed use and mixed income housing opportunities are available. A government agency needs to coordinate all the components of this effort. H.B. 2527 will assign this role to the Office of Planning to ensure that a comprehensive approach to land development complies with smart growth principles, which have been proven to make better communities improve the quality of life in all neighborhoods.

HAR looks forward to working with our state lawmakers in building better communities by supporting quality growth, seeking sustainable economies and housing opportunities, embracing the cultural and environmental qualities we cherish, and protecting the rights of property owners.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HAWAII BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL, AFL-CIO
Gentry Pacific Design Center, Suite 215A
560 N. Nimitz Highway, #50
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
(808) 524-2249 - FAX (808) 524-6893

February 10, 2008

Honorable Representative Ken Ito, Chair
Honorable Representative Jon Riki Karamatsu, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources &
Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capital
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: IN OPPOSITION OF HB2527
RELATING TO SMART GROWTH
Hearing: Monday, February 11, 2008, 9:30 a.m.

Dear Chair Ito, Vice Chair Karamatsu and the House Committee on Water, Land,
Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs:

For the Record my name is Buzz Hong the Executive Director for the Hawaii
Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO. Our Council is comprised
of 16-construction unions and a membership of 26,000 statewide.

The Council opposes the passage of HB2527, which requires the Department
of Land and Natural Resources to establish a system of greenways and trails.
Requires the Office of Planning to coordinate smart growth planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in opposition of HB2527.

Sincerely,

William "Buzz" Hong

WBH/dg



WINDWARD AHUPUA'A ALLIANCE

From the Peaks of Na Ko'olau to the Outer Reefs

*Community-Based Planning
Sustainable Economic Development
Restoration, Preservation, Protection & Public Access
Educational & Cultural Programs*

Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair

Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Vice Chair

Public Hearing

9:30 am

Monday, February 11, 2008

Conference Room 312

HB 2527 - Relating To The State Plan

STRONGLY SUPPORT

My name is Shannon Wood, speaking on behalf of the *Windward Ahupua'a Alliance*, a 501c3 Hawai'i non-profit corporation, which was established in July, 2002, to create the Ko'olau Greenbelt & Heritage Trails System in order to restore, protect & provide public access to the *mauka* (mountain) lands on the Windward side of O'ahu along the base of *Na Ko'olau* up to the North Shore and Kawela Bay as well as to support locally-owned sustainable economic activities in the more developed areas. Over time, however, its mandate expanded well beyond these vitally important regional issues.

One of the major reasons we did so was that we were unable to get the necessary support from the county and state governments to work with us in developing the KG&HTS over a 30-year period. It wasn't that these governmental bodies were opposed to what we were trying to do but rather that the project did not fit in with their plans.

Initially, we contacted the administrator of Na Ala Hele back in early 2003 who told us that he could not commit any resources - human or financial - to any new programs until current needs & already-planned future acquisitions/programs were met. However, he wished us well and expressed his appreciation for our efforts to trying to make something happen. We met with him again in 2004 briefly to update him, but he still did not want to make any kind of commitment to the program.

At the *City* level, we began to make some significant progress in getting people to understand the relationship between public access and Smart Growth.

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However, once the current administration came into office in January, 2005, the project went from a *need-2-have* to a *nice-2-have*.

In the meantime, I'd begun to line up federal funds through Ed Case's office. As it turned out, money - or its lack - is not the killer because funds were - and still are - available from the *Departments of Transportation, Agriculture, and Interior*. Furthermore, there are several private foundations which have expressed an interest in the project.

However, every funder - federal or foundation - required that the state and county governments had to be involved, but I could not get that commitment.

By spring of 2005, we'd reluctantly put the Ko'olau Greenbelt & Heritage Trails System into a "sleep mode" with the hope that perhaps it could be resurrected sometime in the not-2-distant future.

We urge that you give the most serious consideration to HB 2527.