



Timothy Ho, Chief Deputy Public Defender
Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawaii to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

March 17, 2008, 9:00 a.m.

RE: H.B. 3002, H.D. 1: Relating To Prostitution

Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

This measure would make a third or subsequent conviction for soliciting a prostitute a class C felony.

The Office of the Public Defender opposes H.B. 3002, H. D. 1. We believe that treating a third offense as a class C felony is excessive, and a waste of court time and resources. Prostitution cases rarely go to trial, and a vast majority of the "john" cases are pled out at arraignment. If this measure passes, a felony prostitution case would require an establishment of probable cause, either by judicial review (felony information), preliminary hearing or a grand jury hearing. If probable cause is found, then a bench warrant would be issued, and an arraignment and plea hearing held at the circuit court. Subsequent to the arraignment and plea hearing, the case would be assigned to a trial judge, who would schedule a pretrial conference and subsequently a trial status conference. Furthermore, a person charged with the felony offense of prostitution would be entitled to a jury trial.

This measure may also run into equal protection problems, as one group, the "johns" would be singled out for harsher treatment than the prostitutes.

As evidenced by recent events, prostitution is prevalent at all levels of society. This measure will not deter prostitution, but rather force "johns" underground. They most likely turn to the internet, which could result in an increase in electronic enticement of minors cases.

We oppose H.B. 3002, H. D. 1. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

## testimony

From: Kevin Carney [kcarney@eahhousing.org]

Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2008 7:38 AM

To: testimony
Cc: Kevin Carney

Subject: HB3002 HD1 Hearing March 17, 2008 9:00am Room 016

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Vice Chair Hee: Thank you for this opportunity for EAH Housing to submit testimony in support of HB3002 HD1. EAH is in support of any and all measures that will rid our streets of prostitution.

We are the owner/managers of Kukui Tower, 380 affordable rental apartments located at the corner of Kukui Street and Nuuanu Avenue and a portion of Kukui Gardens, 389 affordable rental apartments adjacent to the intersection of Aala Street and Kukui Street. We represent over 2,000 residents in this area.

Prostitution seems to be a thriving business along Kukui Street because you can see it happening from one end of the street to the other all hours of the day and night. Just yesterday morning at 6:10am there were four (4) prostitutes standing at the intersection of Kukui Street and Pali Highway. I see them there in various numbers many times on my way to work. This is nothing new to those who live and work in the area, it has been going on for years. Prostitution has cost us money - We had to increase the security in our parking garage at Kukui Tower because prostitutes were plying their trade in between parked cars in the garage! Unfortunately, prostitution also brings with it a thriving drug business as well as increased criminal activity of all sorts. The really sad part is that the children of those who live in the area have to witness all this illegal activity on a daily basis as they walk to and from school, go to Zippy's at Vineyard for a snack and shop at the Longs, Safeway shopping center at the Vineyard-Pali Highway corner.

We would appreciate anything that can be done to curtail or eliminate prostitution in the area as we believe any reduction in prostitution will also result in a reduction in criminal activity. Our residents deserve nothing less than any other housing area on Oahu, a quiet, peaceful and safe neighborhood in which to raise their children. Thank you.

Sincerely yours, Kevin

### Kevin R. Carney, (B)

Vice President, Hawaii EAH Housing 841 Bishop Street, Suite 2208 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808-523-8826 Fax: 808-523-8827

Email: <a href="mailto:kcarney@eahhousing.org">kcarney@eahhousing.org</a>
Website: <a href="mailto:www.eahhousing.org">www.eahhousing.org</a>

### **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 3002 HD1**

Dear Senator Taniguchi and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

Last year the Board of the Honolulu Tower Association of Apartment Owners, voted unanimously to support HB 330, H.D. 1 and its concept relating to prostitution. This is a hot button issue in our community. This year's incarnation HB 3002 is important to us. We are a 396 unit residential condominium located at the corner of Maunakea and Beretania Streets. For years, prostitutes have plied their wares 24/7 in our back yard, on Kukui Street, all the way from A'ala Street to the Pali Highway. This has gone on even though the area is in a Weed and Seed Zone and a Prostitution Free Zone. The police are doing what they can, but they need more tools. The community too has been proactive, especially since the murder of a pimp on Nu'uanu Street, between Beretania and Kukui Streets. Residents hold signs. The Citizens' Patrol walks the area. But it is not enough. We need House Bill 3002. Right now the prostitutes get a slap on the wrist and return to ply their wares. We need increased penalties. We need to get the prostitutes off our streets permanently.

What may appear to the uninformed as several blocks of high rise buildings, is in reality a residential community of 6,000 people (Honolulu Tower, Kukui Tower, Maunakea Tower, and Kukui Plaza), of all income streams, from infants to nonagenarians. Every day our law abiding residents are accosted by prostitutes as they walk to Zippy's, Long's, Safeway, and Central Middle School. Yes, the impressionable Middle School students are also accosted. Couples and men walking their children are accosted. So are dog walkers.

The press routinely reports about the Kukui Street prostitutes. One Thursday evening last April, at 10:30 p.m., the Honolulu Police Department ran a sting operation, In one hour they arrested six johns ranging in age from 23 to 60 years, who live in various parts of Oʻahu.

Please help us by supporting H.B. 3002 and passing it now.

Should you have any questions I can be reached at 531-4260.

Sincerely, ...

Lynne Matusow, President Honolulu Tower AOAO 60 N. Beretania St., Apt. 1804 Honolulu, HI 96817



### Association of Owners

1255 Nu`uanu Avenue • Honolulu, Hawai`i 96817-4018 (808) 524-1255 • Fax (808) 528-4402

March 13, 2008

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Testimony for HB3002

Dear Chair Taniguchi,

For many years prostitution and its related criminal activity has posed a threat to families and individuals that live in the Kukui Plaza condominium located at 1255 Nuuanu Avenue. At this point, we are doing all we can, but the scope of the problem is larger than we alone can solve. We need legislators to step in and help make our community safer.

Many of our residents are afraid to walk on our block in the evening for fear of harassment and sexual solicitations from prostitutes walking on our streets. These incidents occur even in front of our residents' children. In July 2006, a related disagreement led to a person being murdered right outside of our facility, outside our residents' homes.

We have implemented numerous security measures to rid our area of prostitutes, including every recommendation made by the Honolulu Police Department. We increased exterior lighting and installed additional security cameras. We conduct special security patrols on an hourly basis to report criminal activity to police, and our residents perform weekly citizens' patrols in an attempt to take back our streets.

Unfortunately, these activities are not enough because when individuals are arrested for dealing in prostitution, the penalties are nothing to them. It's a petty misdemeanor and a small fine. They come right back to our streets.

We need you to pass bill HB3002. This bill would make a third and any subsequent conviction of a person paying for sex a Class C felony. It targets the individuals that bring the prostitutes out in the first place—those willing to pay for sex. Passing HB3002 is one more step to help deter this activity and remind everyone that prostitution is illegal in Hawaii. The police have told us that stiffer penalties are the most effective solution.



Kukui Plaza was built 30 years ago and some of our residents have lived here the entire time. I ask you to imagine that one day your neighborhood is filled with prostitutes on your streets. Then imagine a murder as a result. Would prostitution seem like a victimless crime then?

Please take this issue seriously. I urge you and the fellow judiciary committee members to please pass HB3002 at your committee hearing on Monday, March 17, 2008. Our management and residents have worked well with the Honolulu Police Department, but as we've seen in other tragedies recently in our state, sometimes it is the law that needs to be improved when everyone else is already doing all they can.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Lakey General Manager



### Association of Owners

1255 Nu'uanu Avenue • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817-4018 (808) 524-1255 • Fax (808) 528-4402

Re: Testimony in Support of HB3002

Dear Senators:

For many years now prostitution has been an ongoing problem for Kukui Plaza and the surrounding community. As if prostitution were not bad enough, the criminal activities it brings with it, such as increased violence and drug trafficking, pose an even greater concern. There is no doubt that prostitution and its related activities have been instrumental in making families throughout the community feel unsafe. We cannot forget that back in July of 2006 there was a shooting death of an individual steps away from our facility.

Over the years, Kukui Plaza has been vigilant in trying to combat this problem. The Association has increased exterior lighting and installed additional security cameras. Our security department completes special patrols of Kukui Street to report criminal activity. We also have a group of residents that perform a weekly citizen's patrol. Unfortunately, there is only so much that we as individual citizens can do.

Currently, those caught dealing in prostitution receive a petty misdemeanor along with a small fine. Often, these individuals are right back to performing the same activities within a few days. I have attached a copy of our security log for your review. The log provides a record of several months of phone calls our guards have made to the Honolulu Police Department in relation to prostitution. As you can see on the report, even with the tremendous response we have received from HPD, the problem is not going away. In fact, in February of 2008 we made more calls in relation to prostitution then we ever have.

It has come to my attention that the Committee on Judiciary and Labor will be holding a hearing for HB3002 on Monday, March 17, 2008. This bill would make a third and any subsequent conviction of a person paying for sex a Class C felony. I believe that providing tougher penalties may be the only solution we have left to combat this ongoing problem. In fact, in past meetings held with law enforcement officials they have stated that without having tougher penalties to back up their convictions there is little or nothing they can do towards eliminating or even decreasing prostitution.

I would like to urge you and the fellow judiciary committee members to please pass HB3002. The residents here at Kukui Plaza and throughout the downtown area deserve the same quality of life that those of us living outside the area take for granted. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Lakey General Manager

# Association of Owners of Kukui Plaza SECURITY CONSOLE ACTIVITY REPORT - DH TOWER

Thursday, March 13, 2008

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5/15/2007	12:32:42 AM 3	S3 KAPUY, FRANCISCO	RANCISCO	PROSTITUTION	На
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5/22/2007	1:46:00 AM 3	S3 KAPUY, FRANCISCO	RANCISCO	PROSTITUTION	Ha
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5/24/2007	2:26:46 AM 3	S3 KAPUY, FRANCISCO	RANCISCO	PROSTITUTION	НО
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Page 4 of 7

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Jate	Time	Shift Off	Officer	Activity	Console
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Association of Owners of Kukui Plaza

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Thursday, March 13, 2008

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Date	Time	Shift	Officer	Activity	Console
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Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair Committee on Judiciary and Labor

# Strong Support (with amendments) of HB 3002 HD1 – Relating to Prostitution

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, I writing to you in support of the passage of House Bill 3002, HD1 Relating to Prostitution.

For residents at Kukui Plaza, prostitution is a serious problem, specifically on Kukui Street extending from Pali Highway to River Street. Within recent years, it appears that the problem has escalated and has brought more criminal activities including the selling and use of drugs and a shooting death that occurred in July 2006. I no longer feel safe crossing the street to go grocery shopping or for a walk around the neighborhood.

The management of Kukui Plaza, residents and the community continue to make efforts to fight prostitution in our neighborhood. Kukui Plaza management installed new cameras and high-powered lighting and have organized community rallies to increase public awareness of the problem. The Chinatown Citizen's patrol walks the area regularly to deter and report illegal activities. Despite these efforts, prostitution remains a problem. The passage of HB 3002 HD1 would provide a tool in deterring prostitution and subsequent criminal activities in our neighborhood.

I urge the committee to pass HB 3002. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Diane Dunphy 55 South Kukui Street #2404 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for HB3002

Dear Chair Taniguchi,

I am a resident living at Kukui Plaza. For many years prostitution has been a problem for our complex. In addition to prostitution, the criminal activities that follow it, such as increased violence and drug trafficking, pose an even greater concern. There is no doubt that prostitution and its related activities have been instrumental in making families throughout the community feel unsafe. We cannot forget that back in July of 2006 there was a shooting death of an individual steps away from our facility.

Over the years, our Association has played a major role in trying to combat this problem. Management has increased exterior lighting and installed additional security cameras. Our security department completes special patrols of Kukui Street to report criminal activity. We also have a group of residents that perform a weekly citizen's patrol. Unfortunately, there is only so much that we as individual citizens can do.

It has come to my attention that a bill (HB3002) is going to be heard by your committee on Monday, March 17, 2008. This bill would make a third and any subsequent conviction of a person paying for sex a Class C felony. I believe that providing tougher penalties may be the only solution we have left to combat this ongoing problem. In fact, in past meetings held with law enforcement officials they have stated that without having tougher penalties to back up their convictions there is little or nothing they can do towards eliminating or even decreasing prostitution.

I would like to urge you and the fellow judiciary committee members to please pass HB3002. The residents here at Kukui Plaza and throughout the downtown area deserve the same quality of life that citizens living outside the area take for granted. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen W. 7 Les A Concerned Resident

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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A Concerned Resident

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A Concerned Resident

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Sincere

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for HB3002

Dear Chair Taniguchi,

I am head of the security department at Kukui Plaza and it is wonderful to hear that we are continuing the fight against prostitution. I want to extend my support of the bill (HB3002) which has been submitted in relation to the prostitution problem by making a third and any subsequent conviction of a person paying for sex a Class C felony. As an employee and a supervisor for the Association of Owners of Kukui Plaza, the state's largest condominium project, I assure you that prostitution has had an extremely negative impact on my place of employment.

Our establishment has worked very hard at following the suggestions that leaders in our community have given regarding these illegal activities, but only so much can be done without tougher penalties. The police have told our residents and management that existing laws only provide a slap on the wrist if and when offenders are convicted. Our security department feels a great deal of responsibility to continue our efforts to eradicate this activity. I will be including a history of all logs and calls made to authorities that our company has compiled in relation to the prostitution. Take the time to look over this so you can see how hard we work at keeping our employees and residents safe on a daily basis.

I am urging you and the fellow judiciary committee members to please pass HB3002. As an employee, I should not have to witness prostitution on the streets surrounding my place of employment. More importantly, the families living here at Kukui Plaza should not have to either. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard E, Lentes

Senior Security Supervisor – Association of Owners of Kukui Plaza

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Sincerely,

February 19, 2008

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor 415 South Beretania Street, Room 219 Honolulu. Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for SB2264

Dear Chair Taniguchi,

I am a resident living at Kukui Plaza. For many years prostitution has been a problem for our complex. In addition to prostitution, the criminal activities that follow it, such as increased violence and drug trafficking, pose an even greater concern. There is no doubt that prostitution and its related activities have been instrumental in making families throughout the community feel unsafe. We cannot forget that back in July of 2006 there was a shooting death of an individual steps away from our facility.

Over the years, our Association has played a major role in trying to combat this problem. Management has increased exterior lighting and installed additional security cameras. Our security department completes special patrols of Kukui Street to report criminal activity. We also have a group of residents that perform a weekly citizen's patrol. Unfortunately, there is only so much that we as individual citizens can do.

It has come to my attention that a bill (SB2264) has been submitted in relation to prostitution by making a third and any subsequent conviction of a person paying for sex a Class C felony. I believe that providing tougher penalties may be the only solution we have left to combat this ongoing problem. In fact, in past meetings held with law enforcement officials they have stated that without having tougher penalties to back up their convictions there is little or nothing they can do towards eliminating or even decreasing prostitution.

I would like to urge you and the fellow judiciary committee members to please hear and pass HB2264. The residents here at Kukui Plaza and throughout the downtown area deserve the same quality of life that citizens living outside the area take for granted. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Resident

KUKUI PLAZA #e906

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 530 SOUTH KING STREET ROOM 400 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96813 PHONE (808) 527-5749 • FAX (808) 527-5760 • INTERNET: http://www.honolulu.gov

## **Testimony of Thomas Smyth, Chair**

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor Monday, March 17, 2008 9:00 a.m. Room 016 On HB 3002 HD1 Relating to Prostitution

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee and Members of the Committee:

The Downtown Neighborhood Board strongly supports HB 3002 HD 1, as amended, that increases the criminal penalties for the customers of prostitutes who are repeat offenders.

Prostitution and the almost-always related criminal activities of assault, robbery, theft and drug use and distribution are the primary law and order issues in the Downtown/Chinatown area. Increasing penalties for these crimes will help provide our neighborhood with additional public safety enforcement strategies to help us recover a sense of security as we go about our daily lives in the area where we live and often work.

Our neighborhood has activity reacted to the increasing criminal activity associated with street prostitution. We are joining with HPD and City and federal prosecutors in continuing the enormous task of reducing these crimes. Increasing penalties for those involved in these illegal financial transactions will certainly help our efforts.

Much of our neighborhood was designated as a "prostitution-free zone" in 2000 but so far that designation and even the federal support provided by the first Weed and Seed area in Hawaii have only slightly reduced prostitution-related criminal activity. Some would say that there is even more prostitution now than before the designation.

Since an underlying symptom of this criminal activity is money, we do feel that increasing penalties for customers of prostitutes will help balance the justice scales. Hopefully, the prostitutes, who often find themselves unable to easily or safely leave, might see that there is a decline in their activity, and they may finally make the difficult effort to move on.

We would ask that you consider adding the provisions in HB 330 HD 1 to this measure, considering the concerns of the Office of the Attorney General as to technical elements of both bills. Combining these bills under either vehicle would create a more balanced approach to the penalties for what must be a two-party illegal transaction.

We are committed through our Neighborhood Watch and close cooperation with HPD, prosecutors and the Judiciary to making these increased criminal penalties a part of the overall effort to end the disturbing increase in crime in our neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.