

TESTIMONY

HB 3272

LATE

RE: HB 3272 – relating to Public Lands: Auction; current Lessee; March 12, 2008; 2:45 pm, Conference Room 414
Fax: 586-6659, Senate Sgt.-at-Arms Office

Honorable Senator Clayton Hee
Committee on Water and Land, Chair

Honorable Senator Russell S. Kokubun
Committee on Water and Land, Vice Chair

LATE TESTIMONY

RE: HB 3272 – relating to Public Lands: Auction; current Lessee
and Improvements – IN SUPPORT with additions

Good Afternoon Chair Hee, Vice Chair Kokubun and Committee Members:

My name is Linda Wong, I am a resident of Pualei Circle in Diamond Head and use the businesses in the Kapahulu Ave. Area. I am also a member of the Diamond Head, Kapahulu, St. Louis Heights Neighborhood Board and other community groups. I find that HB 3272 is a vehicle to keep Public Lands an option for the General Public use, even though DLNR and BLNR wants to auction or lease all available public lands for the highest commercial gain. DLNR seems to be having some expense problems due to the funds repaid to DLNR by the Federal Government for Federally funded projects not being deposited into DLNR's account.

There are two small lots on Kapahulu Ave. and I think that keeping them open for Public use instead of the highest commercial gain should be a possible option and HB 3272 would give all communities this option. The 548 Kapahulu Ave. Property that was slated by the City Council for a Community Center for our area is an especially good example of this option not being recognized. The City also commissioned John Waylen to do the study on this vision.

There 2 small lots in the Kapahulu Ave. area, which represent public land not having the option to be used for public use are:

- 1) 548 Kapahulu Avenue, the former Dept. of Health Center Clinic, which is directly across from Uncle Bo's and Irifune Restaurants and St. Mark's Church. This property was left vacant after the Dept. of Health Center closed. The businesses in this area are paying a month-to-month parking fee to the State for their customers to use the lot for parking. There are a lot more customers using this lot. The Diamond Head, Kapahulu, St. Louis Heights Neighborhood Board, Kapahulu Business Association, and other community groups have all asked BLNR to lease the land to a commercial parking lot as DLNR would have an income stream and the public would be able to keep the parking it needs. I feel this property should continue to offer parking for our Public.
- 2) Property under the H1 Freeway (East bound) overpass bounded by Kapiolani Boulevard, S. King Street and Kapahulu Avenue. This is located across from Market City Shopping Center. This was the old Tree People site. It is a very odd shaped lot, but could serve as a Skateboard Park for several Neighborhoods, which have a large constituency that wants to take responsibility for making and running the Skatepark. The YMCA has promised to help plus others in the community. I have worked on skateparks before and am in contact with all stakeholders. This would replace the old Skatepark where the City now runs its City Vehicle program under the freeway.

I urge an addition to include a provision to continue Public Land usage for the Public as another condition under Auction of Public Lands. The Lessees may also be entitled to bid for the property, but it should also include for Public usage.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Linda Wong
3071 Pualei Circle #203
Honolulu, HI 96815



Kanoelehua Industrial Area Assn., Inc.

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March 12, 2008

The Honorable Russell S Kokubun
415 S Beretania Street Rm. 427
Honolulu, HI 96813

LATE TESTIMONY

The Kanoelehua Industrial Area Association (KIAA) is in support of HB 3272 Relating to Public Lands. This bill will help our business whom are currently reaching the end of their leases have a final option to stay at their current location if they so choose and can meet the financial and other obligations as outlined in the proposed bill.

These small businesses are an integral part of the Hilo economy and would be a detriment to the community without the existence of these companies. Your consideration in supporting HB 3272 is imperative for the economy of Hilo.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Allan Onishi

Allan Onishi, President 07-08
Kanoelehua Industrial Area Association (KIAA)

Testimony Pertaining to House Bill 3272

RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

State Capitol Room 414, 2:45 p.m.

March 12, 2008

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Neighborhood Board No. 5, Diamond Head/Kapahulu/St. Louis Heights, supports the basic tenants of this bill and would like to recommend that consideration be made to address an issue that has been of major concern in our community.

Further, we would like to request that an amendment be considered to prevent a recurrence of an issue we experienced. Recently, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) took action against the common interests of our community and optioned to submit for lease, a parcel of land at 548 Kapahulu Avenue for high-density development. As you are aware, traffic flow and parking in the Kapahulu area is stressed beyond reason.

The community and their elected officials collectively rallied to voice their concerns and to again express their desires for adequate parking with no success. The DLNRs position was their need to generate revenue for their Special Land Fund, and that the community was expected to sacrifice their needs for the greater good.

We strongly suggest that increased consideration be mandated to allow for the voice of the affected area residents and businesses.

In summary, the leasing of public lands without observing the desires of the affected community should not be tolerated. Especially if the underlying justification is to add an income stream to the DLNRs Special Land Fund at the expense of the citizens of this state.

In addition, we would respectfully request that a requirement be considered to direct that the DLNR be required to report on positions taken by the affected communities, including residents and businesses, public view plains, and recreational needs.

Bert T. Narita, Chairman
Neighborhood Board No. 5, Diamond Head/Kapahulu/St. Louis Heights

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(END)

LATE TESTIMONY

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT TO HB3272

TO Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senate Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Robert R. Kessler, Private Citizen

DATE: March 12, 2008

RE: **Qualified Support for HOUSE BILL 3272; Relating to Public Lands**

I am testifying to offer **qualified support** for House Bill 3272, **subject to** an amendment to specifically call for government attention to community needs.

I support the intent of the bill's wording. However, I believe the bill opens the door to short-sighted bureaucratic action with regard to public lands without considering the consequences to the surrounding community.

Prior to a firm decision to put a public land lease up for public auction, the bill should provide for a determination of consequences and effects on the surrounding community of the loss of the dispossessed tenant or use. Further, Highest and Best Use development criteria, when applied to public land, should conform to community needs and zoning limitations. The bill should be amended to be clear on these points.

As a member of the Board of the Waikiki Area Residents Association, I can assure you that careful and thoughtful use of public land is of utmost importance to our community.

Respectfully,



Robert R. Kessler
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Honolulu, HI 96815
Ph. 922-6188